The Rise of China and the Middle East: Chinese Foreign Policy Towards Iran, Israel and Turkey (2001-2011)

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Abstract

"The Rise of China and the Middle East: Chinese Foreign Policy Towards Iran, Israel, and Turkey (2001-2011)"

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for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2017

Prof. Dr. Aydın Babuna, Dissertation Advisor

This dissertation examines China's cross-regional foreign policies – with a specific focus on non-Arab countries in the Middle East – within the framework of debates on China's rise in the period from 2001 and 2011. The research question of the dissertation is how the rise of China has influenced China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East over the same period.

The dissertation answers the research question by analyzing international crises in the Middle East such as Iran's nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question. The historical background of these crises, bilateral relations between China and the respective countries, and China's political and diplomatic position towards the crises are analyzed for each case study.

91,500 words

Özet

"Çin'in Yükselişi ve Ortadoğu: Çin'in İran, İsrail ve Türkiye'ye Yönelik Dış Politikası, (2001-2011)"

Kadir Temiz, Doktora Adayı, 2017
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Prof. Dr. Aydın Babuna, Tez Danışmanı

Bu tez Çin'in uzak bölge dış politikalarını Ortadoğu'da Arap olmayan ülkelerle ilişkilerine odaklanarak, Çin'in yükselişi tartışmaları çerçevesinde incelemektedir. Tez'in araştırma sorusu Çin'in yükselişinin, 2001-2011 yılları arasında, Ortadoğu'da Arap olmayan ülkelere yönelik Çin dış politikasını nasıl etkilediğidir.

Tez araştırma sorusuna İran nükleer krizi, Filistin-İsrail çatışması ve Kıbrıs sorunu gibi Ortadoğu'daki uluslararası krizleri inceleyerek cevap aramıştır. Her üç uluslararası krizde olayların tarihsel seyri, Çin'in ilgili ülke ile geliştirdiği ilişkiler ve ilgili olaylardaki siyasi ve diplomatik pozisyonu incelenmiştir.

91.500 kelime

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To Zahide and Mahinur

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

PRC	People's Republic of China
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
SOCs	State Owned Corporations
PLA	People's Liberation Army
EU	European Union
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
OBOR	One Belt One Road
AIIB	Asian Investment and Infrastructure Bank
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
EC	European Community
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WTO	World Trade Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
RMB	Renminbi (Official name of China's currency)
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
UN	The United Nations
KMT	Kuomintang
ROC	Republic of China
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNIKOM	United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
IEA	International Energy Agency

TPES	Total Primary Energy Supply
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
UAE	United Arab Emirates
EU-3	France, Germany, and the United Kingdom
P5+1	Permanent members of the UNSC and Germany
IRI	Islamic Republic of Iran
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
NIE	National Intelligent Estimate
LEU	Low-Enriched Uranium
TRR	Tehran Research Reactor
CNPC	China National Petroleum Corporation
NIOC	National Iranian Oil Company
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
PA	Palestinian Authority
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
MOFTEC	Ministry of Trade and Economic Cooperation
HAMAS	Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya (Islamic Resistance Movement)

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NOTE: The in-house editor of the Atatürk Institute has made recommendations with regard to the format, grammar, spelling, usage, and syntax of this dissertation in compliance with professional, ethical standards for the editing of student, academic work.

Some comrades are concerned that the collaboration between the Soviet Union and the United States will bring disadvantages to us. I always believe what Wang Xifeng says in A Dream of Red Mansions: "Bigness has the difficulties of being big."

– Mao Zedong, *There are Two Intermediate Zones*, September 28, 1963

1

Introduction

International relations (IR) scholars began to seriously discuss the international implications of China and Chinese foreign policy after China started to intensify its economic growth in the post-Cold War period. The roots of these discussions date back much further. Scholars and policy-makers discussed China's role in the international order long before China's opening-up reforms in 1978. Due to China's historical legacy of being the dominant power in its own region, figures as diverse as Napoleon Bonaparte and Great Britain's ambassador George Macartney emphasized the role of China in world politics.[1] This dissertation analyzes China's cross-regional foreign policy, with a specific focus on non-Arab countries in the Middle East, within the framework of debates on China's rise in the period between 2001 and 2011.

§ 1.1 The Rise of China and Changing Dynamics in In-ternational Relations

Although there is a common claim that the phenomenon of China's rise only began to be discussed after the 1978 opening-up reforms, discussions of China and its international relations are not actually so new. For example, John King

1 James L. Hevia, "A Multitude of Lords: Qing Court Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793," *Late Imperial China* 10 (December 1989): 72-105.

Fairbank's edited book *World Order: China's Foreign Relations* tries to understand China's view of the world order from the perspective of a broad historical analysis.[2] A numbers of other studies have examined the historical background of China's relations with other countries, as well.[3]

In the early period of the People's Republic of China, it was difficult to research Chinese political and foreign policy issues due to its isolation from the rest of the world. Except for a few published books, there was no full-fledged analysis of China's domestic and foreign policies.[4] However, after China's 1978 opening-up reforms, there was an increasing trend among China experts to learn the Chinese language and access Chinese archives.[5] It was thus during this period that political scientists and IR scholars first began to publish extensively on the subject.[6]

Although not the focus of this dissertation, it is worth noting that it was during this period, too, that scholars began to seriously discuss China's domestic politics and foreign policy-making.[7] According to Lampton, professionalism, specialization and bureaucratic differentiation are significant

2 John King Fairbank, *World Order China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Oxford University Press, 1968).

3 Henry Kissinger, *On China* (London: Penguin Books, 2011); Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York, London: W.W. Norton, 1990); John King Fairbank and Merle Godman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

4 James C. F. Wang, *Contemporary Chinese Politics: An Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1980); Werner Levy, *Modern China's Foreign Policy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953); Merle Godman, *Literary Dissent in Communist China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967); Stuart Schram, *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters 1956-1971* (London: Penguin Books, 1974).

5 Joanna Waley-Cohen, "The New Qing History," *Radical History Review*, 88 (2004): 193-206.

6 James R. Townsend and Brantly Womack, *Politics in China* (Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1986); John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations 1937-1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Stuart Schram, *The Thought of Mao Tse-Tung* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Brantly Womack, *Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Gerald Segal, *Openness and Foreign Policy Reform in Communist States* (London, New York: Routledge, 1992).

7 Zhiyue Bo, "Hu Jintao and the CCP's Ideology: A Historical Perspective," *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 9 (2004): 27-45.

examples that reveal the changing dynamics of Chinese foreign policy making in the beginning of 2000s.[8] Scholars have noted that several different bureaucratic entities influenced the Chinese foreign policy decision-making processes. These included, alongside the traditional role of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), new state-owned corporations (SOCs) and new economy-oriented bureaucracies such as the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC). For example, MOFTEC had pivotal control over nuclear, dual-use, and chemical exports. It was also responsible for handling the relationship between China and international institutions.[9] Moreover, firms from the United States, the European Union (EU), Japan, and Korea began establishing partnerships with SOCs.[10] As a result of these partnerships, Chinese SOCs started to prioritize their economic benefits in terms of foreign policy issues between China and these countries.

The stable transformation of China's domestic politics and changes in leadership also affected Chinese foreign policy decision-making processes over the last two decades. From 1992 until today, China has experienced three important leadership changes. Jiang Zemin, the second-most important political figure of the post-Mao period after Deng Xiaoping, stepped aside to give power to Hu Jintao, who served as president of China between 2002 and 2012. Although there were serious political scandals during the transition to Xi Jinping's presidency between 2012 and 2013, such as the Bo Xilai affairs, these did not significantly affect Chinese foreign policy at the time.[11] Xi Jinping was elected as General Secretary by the 18th Central Committee of the CCP in

8 David M. Lampton, "China's Foreign and National Security Policy-Making Process: Is It Changing and Does It Matter?," in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000* ed. David M. Lampton (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001): 10.

9 Ibid., 9.

10 Samuel S. Kim, "The Making of China's Korea Policy in the Era of Reform," in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000* ed. David M. Lampton (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001): 383.

11 Guoli Liu, "Leadership Transition and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 8 (2003): 101-117.

November 2012. Then, he was formally elected as president of the PRC by the 12th National People's Congress in March 2013.[12]

In 1993, China promulgated a "New Security Concept" in a white paper defining its national defense concerns. According to this new strategy, China would prioritize three important national interests in its foreign policies: preserving territorial integrity, sustaining economic development, and attaining great power status.[13] This was a message to the United States, which was the hegemonic power in the post-Cold War international order.[14] China intensified its criticism of unilateral actions by the US in international crises. However, during the 2000s, while China's traditional security threats—including the hegemonic threat of the United States and the threat posed by Japan and India—remained unchanged, the non-traditional threats that China outlines diversified from domestic and social problems to international terrorism.[15]

The 1978 opening-up reforms coincided with the great transformation of world economies from closed to open markets, especially with the Washington Consensus and neoliberal reforms.[16] Thus, the IR literature mainly discussed the rise of China within the framework of international political economy.[17] Although China's economic transformation was similar to global

12 Joseph Fewsmith, "Bo Xilai and Reform: What Will Be the Impact of His Removal?," *China Leadership Monitor* 38 (2012): 2; James Mulvenon, "The Bo Xilai Affair and the PLA," *China Leadership Monitor* 38 (2012): 1; Alice Miller, "The Bo Xilai Affair in Central Leadership Politics," *China Leadership Monitor* 38 (2012): 3.

13 Baiyi Wu, "The Chinese Security Concept and Its Historical Evolution," *The Journal of Contemporary China* 10 (2001): 278.

14 Jianwei Wang and Zhimin Lin, "Chinese Perceptions in the Post-Cold War Era: Three Images of the United States," *Asian Survey* 32 (1992): 902.

15 Susan L. Craig, "Chinese Perceptions of Traditional and Nontraditional Security Threats," *Strategic Studies Institute*, April 2, 2007, accessed March 11, 2017, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?PubID=765.

16 Mustafa Yağcı, "A Beijing Consensus in the Making: The Rise of Chinese Initiatives in the International Political Economy and Implications for Developing Countries," *Perceptions*, XXI (Summer 2016): 30.

17 Lisa Toohey, Colin B. Picker and Jonathan Greenacre, *China in the International Economic Order: New Directions and Changing Paradigms* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

transformations of other world economies, there were also differences that paved the way for a new discussion on the "Beijing Consensus versus the Washington Consensus."[18]

China's burgeoning economic reforms engendered concrete policy implementations in both domestic and foreign economic relations. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, the most significant discussions were about China's integration into existing liberal international economic institutions despite its incomplete transformation into a market economy. SOCs and their increasing investments in both China and the outside world became the most serious confrontational issue between Western and Chinese companies, especially in emerging markets in regions like Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. China prioritized the practical benefits of daily business with these countries and sustainable mass production at home rather than the transformation of its own economic structures. As described by Chinese authorities, China was trying a different model—one which required time for full integration into international institutions. To accelerate the process, China implemented various new economic policies by establishing special economic zones (SEZs), improving the financial system via regulation, and signing free trade agreements with other countries. All these efforts gained a new momentum in Third Plenary Session of the 18th Communist Party of China Central Committee in November 2013. Xi Jinping's first economic policy implementations emphasized the importance of a market economy and private ownership.[19] He also promoted the idea of economically integrating China with the outside world with a new motto: "China Dream." Under the guidance of Xi Jinping's new approach, China led new international initiatives such as the Silk Road

18 Joshua Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus: Notes on the New Physics of Chinese Power* (London: Foreign Policy Center, 2004); Randall Peerenboom, "Revamping the China Model for the Post–Global Financial Crisis Era: The Emerging Post-Washington, Post-Beijing Consensus," in *China in the International Economic Order: New Directions and Changing Paradigms* Lisa Toohey et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

19 Arthur R. Kroeber, "Xi Jinping's Ambitious Agenda for Economic Reform in China," *Brookings*, November 17, 2013, accessed on March 11, 2017, https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/xi-jinpings-ambitious-agenda-for-economic-reform-in-china/

Project, also known as OBOR (One Belt One Road),[20] and the Asian Investment and Infrastructure Bank (AIIB).[21] All these initiatives were indications of China's search for new economic partnerships to continue its economic growth.

The most serious obstacles confronting the growing Chinese economy in the last two decades are related to the country's energy needs. These have had an enormous impact on China's foreign policy. Indeed, China's energy dependence is the most important reason for China's activism in foreign policy in distant regions. China's need for foreign energy is growing, with China surpassing the United States as the largest importer of crude oil in 2016.[22] Energy-rich regions, such as the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa, have accordingly become the primary focus of China's foreign policy. As a consequence of its energy needs, China has been obliged to become involved in regional and international crisis in these regions.[23]

§ 1.2 China and the Great Powers

China's relations with other great powers have been another crucial topic of discussion among IR scholars. Among the great powers, the most significant relations are between China and the United States. Not only economic interdependence but also global and regional security confrontations have triggered a security dilemma between the two countries.

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20 Ravi Bhoothalingam, "The Silk Road as a Global Brand," *China Report,* 52 (2016):46.

21 "About AIIB: Who We Are?," *Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank,* accessed on March 11, 2017, https://www.aiib.org/en/about-aiib/index.html

22 "China Imports Record Oil as Higher Margins Boosts Purchases," *Bloomberg News,* April 13, 2016, accessed on February 21, 2017, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-04-13/china-imports-record-crude-oil-as-higher-margins-boosts-buying

23 Larry Attree, "China and Conflict-affected states: Between principle and pragmatism, Sudan and South Sudan case study," *Saferworld Report,* January 2012, accessed on March 11, 2017, http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/612-china-and-conflict-affected-states

Since the Sino-US rapprochement in 1979, Sino-US relations continue to be plagued by a number of problems.[24] The most critical example is related to the mutual perceptions of the two great powers.[25] According to Burcu Sarı Kardemir's unpublished doctoral dissertation, for instance, China has started to see US' foreign policy as the source of insecure political atmosphere in the Middle East, especially since the invasion of Iraq in 2003.[26] Before the Iraq invasion, Sino-US relations had started to improve after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States. China officially shared US concerns over the struggle against international terrorism throughout the world.[27] Even though there are severe political problems facing Sino-US relations—such as Taiwan, the South China Sea dispute, and the devaluation of the RMB—they have not directly confronted in a conflict, yet.[28]

The Sino-Soviet rift and the Sino-US rapprochement were the most critical strategic choices made by Chinese policy-makers during the Cold War.[29] Thus, it could be claimed that Sino-Russian relations entered the post-Cold War era with more historical baggage than Sino-US relations. Sino-Russian relations, however, improved more than Sino-US relations in the post-Cold War period.[30] One of the important reasons for this was the common security

24 Jia Qingguo, "Learning to live with the Hegemon: Evolution of China's policy toward the US since the end of the Cold War," *Journal of Contemporary China* 44 (2005):395.

25 David Lai, *The United States and China in Power Transition*, Strategic Studies Institute, December 2011, accessed on March 11, 2017, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub1093.pdf

26 Burcu Sarı Karademir, "A Constructivist Analysis on Balancing: The Impact of US War on Terror on China and Russia," unpublished doctoral dissertation, İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, 2012.

27 Robert Sutter, "US-China Relations after the Sixteenth Party Congress: Prospects and Challenges," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 38 (2003): 452.

28 "White Paper: China's Peaceful Development Road," *State Council Information Office of China,* December 22, 2005, accessed on March 11, 2017, http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm

29 Stephen Kotkin, "The Unbalanced Triangle: What Chinese-Russian Relations Meant for the United States," *Foreign Affairs* 88 (2009): 130

30 Niklas Swanström, "Sino–Russian Relations at the Start of the New Millennium in Central Asia and Beyond," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23 (2014): 480.

concerns of both countries vis-à-vis US hegemony in the international order in the post-Cold War era. Rising economic and regional security concerns also urged both countries to establish the Shanghai Five, a regional cooperation organization, in 1996. Five years later, joined by Uzbekistan, it became the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). From that time this SCO has become one of the most significant regional economic and security cooperation organizations in Central Asia.[31]

China-EU relations are more institutionalized than those between China and the United States or Russia due to the complex institutional structure of the European Union. A trade agreement signed in 1978 between the European Community (EC) and China was the breakthrough in bilateral economic relations.[32] This first trade partnership developed into economic cooperation between China and the European Union. European Commission's long-term policy adjustments which began in 1995, helped to this cooperation, as well.[33] Three years later, the first EU-China summit was held in Brussels and served as the basis for a more comprehensive partnership between China and the EU.[34] Since 1998, a China-EU summit has been held each year. Moreover, China published an EU White Paper (China's EU Policy Paper) for the first time in 2003.[35]

The European Union welcomes China's rising visibility in international relations and its great power status.[36] In terms of geopolitical considerations,

31 Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Central Asia, and the Great Powers, an Introduction," *Asian Survey* 53 (2013): 424.

32 Franco Algieri, "EU Economic Relations with China: An Institutionalist Perspective," *The China Quarterly*, 169 (2002): 69.

33 "Communication of the Commission of the European Union: A Long Term Policy for China-Europe Relations," July 1995, accessed on March 11, 2017, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/china/docs/com95_279_en.pdf

34 "Commission of the European Union, Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China," March 25, 1998, accessed on March 11, 2017, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&mode=XML&reference=A4-1998-0479&language=EN

35 "China's EU Policy Paper," accessed on March 11, 2015, http://www.china-un.ch/eng/ljzg/zgwjzc/t85896.htm

36 David Scott, "China and the EU: A Strategic Axis for the Twenty-First Century?," *International Relations* 21 (2007): 23.

Sino-EU relations can be thought of as an alternative to China's relations with both Russia and the United States.[37] For David Shambaugh, comprehensive Sino-EU economic and political relations are an indication of an emerging axis.[38] Accordingly, both China and the European Union seek ways to constrain US hegemony and its unilateral action in international crises. Apart from economic relations, the European Union has started to focus on other important topics of bilateral relations, such as financial reform, the rule of law, transition to an open society, legal and administrative reform, the environment, energy, and regional inequality.[39]

Sino-EU relations are also related to the EU's strategy towards Asia.[40] Accordingly, the European Union emphasizes various objectives in Asia such as: "to improve the European economic presence in Asia; to contribute to stability in Asia by promoting international cooperation; to support the development of the poorer and lesser developed regions in Asia; and to contribute to the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and human rights."[41] Moreover, for the European Union China is one of the most important countries in Asia due to its impact on political, economic, and social issues. Thus, the European Union has had to adjust its foreign policy objectives towards China.

§ 1.3 China and Regional Order in East Asia

The primary objective of China's foreign policy is to protect its national interests in its immediate region. This includes such matters as the Taiwan question, Sino-Japanese relations, the South and East China Sea disputes, and the issue of North Korea. Among these, Sino-Japanese relations are the most significant and problematic issue—for both China and Japan.

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37 Ibid., 37.

38 David Shambaugh, "China and Europe: The Emerging Axis," *Current History A journal of contemporary world affairs* 674 (2004): 243.

39 Algieri, "EU Economic Relations with China," 72.

40 "Commission of the European Communities, Towards a New Asia Strategy," COM(1994), 314 final, Brussels, July 13, 1994, accessed on March 11, 2017, http://aei.pitt.edu/2949/

41 Algieri, "EU Economic Relations with China," 76.

There are multiple problems between Japan and China: atrocities committed by Japan during World War II,[42] territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diayu islands, exclusive economic zones in the East China Sea, and rising nationalism in both countries.[43] In addition, the rise of China has also impacted Sino-Japanese relations. Since the 1990s, Japan has implemented a balancing strategy against China by drawing on US support in conflicts. Although the United States has provided a security umbrella for both Japan and South Korea, Japan still feels insecure due to the political and economic atmosphere of its immediate region. For example, after China's demands over disputed territory in the East China Sea, Japan started to discuss adjustments to its pacifist constitution.[44] Japanese fear of the rise of China has accelerated its perception of security threats against regional order. In response, China is trying to satisfy both Japan and the United States by emphasizing peaceful negotiations in disputes among regional actors. However, China's policies with respect to both the East and South China Seas increase fear among neighboring countries. Actually, economic relations between Japan and China have deepened in the last two decades. This has created a situation of mutual interdependence, though both sides continue to have number of problems in their bilateral relations. Nationalism and other domestic political concerns have prevented the further improvement of bilateral relations between the two countries.[45]

The Korean issue and North Korean nuclear crisis were other crucial political crises that increased regional and global concerns during the first decade of the twenty-first century. On this matter, the historical legacy of the Korean War (1950-1953) has a significant impact on Chinese domestic and foreign policy. The ideological similarity between China and the Democratic People's

42 Visits of Japanese officials to the Yasukuni Shrine are the most important symbolic example of these war atrocities. David S.G. Goodman, "Reinterpreting the Sino–Japanese War: 1939–1940, peasant mobilisation, and the road to the PRC," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22 (2013): 166.

43 Joseph Yu-shek Cheng, "China's Japan Policy: Seeking Stability and Improvement in Uncertainties," *China: An International Journal* 9 (September 2011): 246.

44 Ibid., 256.

45 Hiroki Takeuchi, "Sino-Japanese relations: Power, Interdependence, and Domestic Politics," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 14 (2014): 7.

Republic of Korea (DPRK) means that these countries have enjoyed strong relations since 1953. Beyond China's economic support of the DPRK, a number of factors—including ideology, the regional balance of power, and global concerns—have had a direct impact on China's policy-making.[46] China's close relations with the DPRK have caused friction with Japan, South Korea, and the United States. However, with respect to the North Korean nuclear crisis, China was seen as a balancer in the eyes of these powers. At the six-party talks on the issue, for example, China was the only actor capable of influencing North Korean policy-making.[47] Actually, China is opposed to North Korea's aggressive nuclear policies. But, in a similar fashion to its stance on the Iranian nuclear crisis, China's official stance has been to continue to support North Korea's development of nuclear energy for peaceful means.

The Taiwan question, however, is not only a problem between China and Taiwan but also between China and the United States because the latter has provided a security umbrella for Taiwan since the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979.[48] There are several reasons for the Taiwan problem: historical claims of both sides about representation of the mainland; social, economic, and cultural differences between the two societies; Taiwan's earlier industrialization and modernization; the fear of Chinese military intervention in Taiwan; US arms sales to Taiwan; and regional balances of power.[49] Thus, in the short term it is not possible to reach a solution between the disputing sides on the Taiwan question. In 2017, both sides are still in the same position.

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46 Balázs Szalontai and Choi Changyong, "China's Controversial Role in North Korea's Economic Transformation," *Asian Survey* 53 (2013): 276.

47 Hochul Lee, "China in the North Korean Nuclear Crises: 'interest' and 'identity' in foreign behavior," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22 (2013): 326.

48 Steve Tsang, "The US Military and American Commitment to Taiwan's Security," *Asian Survey* 52 (2012): 777.

49 Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "Taiwan's Political Development and U.S.-China Relations," in *The Future of United States, China, and Taiwan Relations* ed. Cheng Yi-lin et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 13.

§ 1.4 Literature Review

China's cross-regional policies have grown gradually more sophisticated since the 1990s. Like China's relations with Latin American and African countries, relations between China and Middle Eastern countries have improved during the period 1991-2011. There were few academic publications on China-Middle East relations in China before the 1990s. Zhu Li, an early contributor to studies on China and the Middle East, mentions only a few publications and institutions focusing on Middle East studies in China in 1984.[50] But since 1990, there has been an increase in academic publications on China and the Middle East. Indeed, Sun Degang's comprehensive analysis of studies on China and the Middle East shows that serious academic publications and institutions focusing on the field blossomed dramatically in 2011.[51]

Sun Degang states that after the establishment of the PRC in 1949, Chinese studies on China and the Middle East have undergone three stages: beginnings (1949-1978), growth (1979-1999), and acceleration (2000-2010). According to this development spectrum, Chinese-Middle East studies in the first three decades were influenced by the ideology and political pressures of the Cold War. In this period there were no serious academic studies on the Middle East except for some cultural studies such as translations of Arabic poems and the Quran. Since the opening-up reforms in 1978, however, economic development and modernization have been top priorities for China. China valued study of Middle Eastern countries to learn the experience of the region on economic development.[52] However, it has only been since the 1990s that Middle East Studies has institutionalized as a field in China—with the founding, for example, of the West Asia and Africa Institute at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the World History Research Institute of Inner Mongolia University for the Nationalities, the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai

50 Zhu Li, "A Brief Introduction to Middle Eastern Studies in China," *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)* 11 (1984): 172-175.

51 Degang Sun, "Six Decades of China Middle East Studies: A Review," *Bustan: The Middle East Book Review* 2 (2011): 15-32.

52 Sun, "Six Decades of China Middle East Studies: A Review," 19.

International Studies University, the School of International Relations of Yunnan University, and the Middle East Studies Center of Beijing University. It is important to note that Chinese scholars have paid special attention to the study of Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish in these institutions.[53]

As a consequence of political uncertainties during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), domestic political concerns dominated Middle East Studies in China in the early period (1949-1978).[54] Thus, until the 1990s, there were few publications specifically on China and the Middle East in the Chinese literature. By the following decade, however, China's improving relations with the Middle East began to draw the attention of Chinese scholars. Wang Bo's book *The Relations between the Middle East and the Big Power [Zhongdong yu Daguo Guanxi]* is one of the earliest studies analyzing the role of great powers in such areas and issues as post war Iraq, the Iran nuclear crisis, democratization, and Islam and terrorism.[55] In similar fashion, Zhu Xiaoli analyzes the Middle East from an international strategic perspective by focusing on great powers, including Japan, in her book *The Middle East in the Perspective of International Strategy [Guoji Zhanlue Shiyezhong de Zhongdong]*. [56] Another Chinese scholar, Li Yi, specifically focuses on security issues in the Gulf region in her book *The Security Situation in the Arab Gulf and China's Strategic Choices [Haiwan Anquan Jushi yu Zhongguo de Zhanlüe Xuanze]*, in which she discusses the political, economic, and cultural aspects of China's strategic choices in the Gulf region.[57]

Apart from general, comprehensive analyses of Chinese-Middle Eastern relations, Chinese scholars have also written on energy-related issues, terrorism, and cultural issues. For example, Ma Lirong's two significant books

53 Ibid., 19.

54 Kyle Haddad-Fonda, "The Domestic Significance of China's Policy Toward Egypt, 1955-1957," *The Chinese Historical Review*, 21 (2014): 45-64.

55 Bo Wang, *Zhongdong yu Daguo Guanxi [The relations between Middle East and the big powers]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2012).

56 Zhu Xiaoli, *Guoji Zhanlue Shiyezhong de Zhongdong [The Middle East in the Perspective of International Strategy]* (Beijing: Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe, 2010).

57 Li Yi, *Haiwan Anquan Jushi yu Zhongguo de Zhanlue Xuanze [The Security Situation in the Arab Gulf and China's Strategic Choices]* (Beiing: Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe, 2010).

contribute to the literature by focusing on the cultural aspects of relations between China and the Middle East. Ma Lirong specifically analyzes orientalist discourse in Western academic literature on the Arabs and Islam.[58] While Qian Xuewen's book *A Study of Terrorism in the Middle East [Zhongdong Kongbu Zhuyi Yanjiu]* analyzes the historical and contemporary roots of terrorism in the Middle East,[59] and Tang Zhichao specifically focuses on the Kurdish issue in four countries: Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran.[60] It is important to note that the Chinese literature gradually started engaging in more detailed discussions of the Middle East after 2000. In addition to China's growing relations with energy-rich countries in the Middle East, dramatic changes in the region, such as the Arab Spring, also triggered more detailed publications on China and the Middle East.[61]

There was also an increasing literature outside of China about China and the Middle East relations especially after the opening-up reforms in 1978. For example, a few publications in those years warn that China's foreign policy might become more active in Muslim Central Asia than in the Middle East.[62] In addition, early academic discussions of China and the Middle East started appearing just before the Sino-American rapprochement in 1979. For example, Nigel Disney's early analysis of China's Middle East policies clearly demonstrates the transformation of ideologically-oriented Chinese foreign policy.[63]

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58 Lirong Ma, *Xifang Baquan Yujingzhong de Alabo-Yisilan Wenti Yanjiu [Arab-Islamic Problem Research in the Western Hegemonic Context]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2007); Lirong Ma, *Zhongdong Guojia de Qingzhensi Shehui Gongneng Yanjiu [Study on the Social Functions of Mosques in the Middle East Countries]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2011).

59 Xuewen Qian, *Zhongdong Kongbu Zhuyi Yanjiu [A Study of Terrorism in the Middle East]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2013).

60 Zhichao Tang, *Zhongdong Kuerde Minzu Wenti Toushi [Kurdish Issue: History and Future]* (Beijing: Shehui Kexue Wenxian Chubanshe, 2013).

61 Xiaolin Ma, *Alabo Jubian: Xiya, Beifei Da Dongdang Shenceng Guancha [Arabian Upheaval: In-Depth Observation on Turbulent West Asia and North Africa]* (Beijing: Xinhua Chubanshe, 2012); Zhongmin Liu and Weilie Zhu, *Zhongdong Diqu Fazhan Baogao: Zhuanxing yu Dongdang de Eryuan Bianzou [Reports on Middle East Development: The Middle East in Transformation and Turmoil]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2013).

62 William A. C. Adie, "China's Middle East Strategy," *The World Today* 23 (1967): 317-326.

63 Nigel Disney, "China and the Middle East," *MERIP Reports* 63 (1977): 3-22.

As a response to Nigel's argument, Rene Theberge claimes that China still implementing a revolutionary foreign policy and that the CCP and the "Theory of Three World" still existed in China even after the death of Mao Zedong.[64]

Another important feature of the early literature on China and the Middle East outside of China concerned the role of Arab countries in China's foreign policy in the Middle East.[65] The literature tends to attribute more importance to Arab countries.[66] However, China's recognition of Israel in 1992, the end of Iran-Iraq War in 1988, and Turkey's post-Cold War foreign policy activism have paved the way for the study of non-Arab countries in the Middle East.

Before the 1990s, there were few books and articles on the Middle East outside of China. One of the earliest, comprehensive books on China and the Middle East is Yitzhak Shichor's *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy, 1949-1977*, which was published in 1979. Although Shichor broadly analyzes China's political, economic, and military relations, his comments and analyses were heavily influenced by Cold War political thought, which separated the world into the camps of the Unites States and the Soviet Union.[67] Another crucial book was published in 1980 by Hashim Behbehani: *China's Foreign Policy in the Arab World, 1955-75: Three Case Studies*. In this book, Behbehani

64 Theory of Three World is a term describing countries that has a minor role in the international system. It broadly discussed during the Cold War, since some political leaders such as Mao Zedong of China has used the term to define China's new position in the international system after Sino-Soviet split. For a detailed discussion, see: https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-1a/red-dawn.htm; Rene Theberge, "["China and the Middle East"]: Response," *MERIP Reports* 69 (1978): 24-25.

65 Yitzhak Shichor, "In Search of Alternatives: China's Middle East Policy After Sadat," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 8 (1982): 101-110.

66 Liangxiang Jin, "Sino-Arab Relations: New Developments and Trends," *Middle East Policy* 11 (2004): 113-121.; Mohamed Bin Huwaidin, *China's Relations with Arabia and the Gulf, 1949–1999* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Mohamed Bin Huwaidin, "China in the Middle East: Perspectives from the Arab World," *Arab Insight* 2 (2008): 67-76.

67 Yitzhak Shichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

specifically focuses on China's foreign policy behavior in Palestine, Oman, and Kuwait.[68]

At the beginning of the post-Cold War period, with China's burgeoning economic and diplomatic activities in the Middle East, two new books contributed to the body of literature on China and the Middle East. In 1991, John Calabrese analyzed China's increasing role in the Middle East by examining the period 1949-1989 in his book *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East*.[69] The other book was Lillian Craig Harris's *China Considers the Middle East*, which contributed to the field with its account of the long history of relations between China and the Middle East.[70]

During the active pragmatist foreign policy period that commenced after 2001, China specialists outside of China published sophisticated and specific books. In 2006, John Garver's book *China and Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-imperial World* filled a significant gap in the literature on China and Middle East relations. Garver's book covers Sino-Iranian relations, emphasizing both historical and contemporary connections. Garver's systematic research on Chinese and English literature provides new sources on critical matters, such as Iran's nuclear crisis.[71] More recently, Garver and Alterman's book *The Vital Triangle: China, the US and the Middle East* clearly demonstrates that energy is the common interest of the United States, China, and the Middle East.[72] Meanwhile, Ben Simpfendorfer's book *The New Silk Road: How a Rising Arab World is Turning Away from the West and Rediscovering China* analyzes the rise of China from the perspective of the Arab world. According to him, "the

68 Hashim Behbehani, *China's Foreign Policy in the Arab World, 1955-75: Three Case Studies* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1981).

69 John Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East* (New York: Pinter Publishers, 1991).

70 Lillian Craig Harris, *China Considers the Middle East* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993).

71 John W. Garver, *China and Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-imperial World* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006).

72 Jon B. Alterman and John W. Garver *The Vital Triangle: China, the US and the Middle East* (Washington: The CSIS Press, 2008).

importance of China to the Arab world extends beyond oil and the creation of wealth."[73]

Further, Hannah Carter and Anoushiravan Ehteshami's *The Middle East's Relations with Asia and Russia* comprehensively analyzes Asian geostrategic realities and their impact on the Middle East, focusing on country studies of Russia, China, and Central and Southeast Asian countries.[74] In addition, Geoffrey Kemp's book *The East Moves West: India, China, and Asia's Growing Presence in the Middle East* also fills a significant gap in the literature of Asia and the Middle East by specifically focusing on the relations of India, China, Japan, and South Korea with the Middle East.[75] The World Bank's comprehensive report *Strengthening China's and India's Trade and Investment Ties to the Middle East and North Africa* takes China and India's trade and investment relations into consideration. Although this report was published in 2009, the statistical data on which it was based was drawn from the period 2000-2006.[76] Bryce Wakefield and Susan L. Levenstein's edited volume *China and the Persian Gulf: Implications for the United States* addresses the economic implications of China's involvement in the Middle East.[77] Following Behbehani, Shichor, Calabrese, and Harris's contributions to the analysis of relations between China and the Middle East, Muhamad Olimat's *China and the Middle East: From Silk Road to Arab Spring* has filled important gaps in the history of China's Middle East relations. In his book, Olimat offers the latest statistics and developments

73 Ben Simpfendorfer, *The New Silk Road: How a Rising Arab World is Turning Away from the West and Rediscovering China* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

74 Hannah Carter and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *The Middle East's Relations with Asia and Russia* (London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).

75 Geoffrey Kemp, *The East Moves West: India, China, and Asia's Growing Presence in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Brooking Institution Press, 2010).

76 "Strengthening China's and India's Trade and Investment Ties to the Middle East and North Africa," The World Bank Orientation in Development Series Report prepared by a team led by Miria Pigato (Washington, D.C.: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 2009).

77 Bryce Wakefield and Susan L. Levenstein, *China and the Persian Gulf: Implications for the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2011).

in political, economic, and military relations between China and Middle Eastern countries.[78]

During the period 2001-2011, academic journals, research institutions, think tanks, and popular magazines around the world have also started to devote more space to China-related issues. This dissertation classifies this literature on China and Middle East relations in the period between 2001 and 2011. China's increasing role in the region triggered the question of a hegemonic struggle over energy resources among the great powers. As discussed in detail in the following chapters, Sino-US competition was the main subject of this literature. According to James Chen, China's growing influence in the Middle East will negatively affect US capabilities in the region.[79] According to Yetiv and Lu, China's growing economic and military relations, especially in the Persian Gulf, could instigate a serious conflict between the United States and China.[80] Blumenthal is also pessimistic about China's presence in the region and accuses China of providing arms to regional countries in return for help meeting its energy needs.[81] In addition, another pessimist perspective sees China's role in military and arms supply as a disruptive factor in the region.[82]

Contrary to pessimist arguments about China's presence in the Middle East, some argue that China is not seeking a confrontation with the United States in the Middle East,[83] but that China is a power broker in the region. According to Ma Haiyun, for example, China's close relations with the United

78 Muhamad Olimat, *China and the Middle East: From Silk Road to Arab Spring* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

79 Chen, James. "The Emergence of China in the Middle East," *Institute for National Strategic Studies, Natinal Defense University* December 2011, accessed on December 2016, http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratforum/SF-271.pdf

80 Steve A. Yetiv and Chunlong Lu, "China, Global Energy, and the Middle East," *Middle East Journal* 61 (2007): 199–218.

81 Dan Blumenthal, "Providing Arms: China and the Middle East," *Middle East Quarterly* (2005): 11-19.

82 Frank J. Gaffney, "China Arms the Rogues," *Middle East Quarterly* (1997): 33-39.

83 Muhamad S. Olimat, "The Political Economy of the Sino-Middle Eastern Relations," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 15 (2010): 310.

States and Israel may alienate Muslim people in the Middle East.[84] For Shichor, China has used Middle East relations as a "rehabilitation" strategy after the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. China's role in Gulf crisis has proved that China tried a balancing strategy toward the US isolation strategy against China by seriously criticizing Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.[85]

China's economic relations have also been an important focus in the literature. According to some views, China cannot become the only actor in the Middle East since US economic presence is very strong in the region.[86] Pan Guang suggests that although China has tried to diversify its energy resources, its dependence on Middle Eastern energy resources would not come to an end in the short term, thus directly affecting China's active foreign policy in the region. He also describes China's role in the region as that of a diplomatic mediator.[87] Jin Liangxiang also supposes that China's energy needs have urged it to pursue an active foreign policy in the Middle East.[88] Leverett and Bader's article on Sino-US competition over energy resources in the Middle East suggests that China's growing influence in the region could cause a conflict between the two countries.[89] However, according to the optimist perspective of Olimat, China does not intend to challenge the US presence in the region but merely to engage with energy-rich countries in the Middle East.[90]

Beyond these economic and energy issues, China's involvement in the Middle East—and especially its political involvement—has been analyzed by

84 Haiyun Ma, "The Chinese Diplomatic Pivot to the Middle East and Beijing's Middle East Studies Establishment," *Informed Comment*, May 12, 2013, accessed on March 13, 2017, http://www.juancole.com/2013/05/diplomatic-beijings-establishment.html

85 Yitzhak Shichor, "China and the Middle East since Tiananmen," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 519 (1992): 86-100.

86 Gouda Abdel-Khalek and Korayem Karima, "The Impact of China on the Middle East," *Journal of Developing Societies* 23 (2007): 397-434.

87 Pan Guang, "China's Energy Strategy and Primary Role of the Middle East in This Strategy," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 2 (2008): 62-72.

88 Jin Liangxiang, "Energy First: China and the Middle East," *Middle East Quarterly* (Spring 2005): 3-10.

89 Flynt Leverett and Jeffrey Bader, "Managing China-U.S. energy competition in the Middle East," *The Washington Quarterly* 29 (2005): 187–201.

90 Olimat, "The Political Economy of the Sino-Middle Eastern Relations," 308.

different scholars. Tom Pemper-Finn claims that there are other reasons beside oil and energy needs for China to get involved in the Middle East—Xinjiang, Iran's nuclear crisis, and providing security for the Gulf of Aden among them.[91] Thus, China's military involvement in the Middle East has come to the fore in the discussion of China's role in the region. This dissertation shares the view that not only economics but also China's national security concerns play a crucial role in China's foreign policy.[92]

§ 1.5 Research Question, Objectives, and Methodology

The dissertation analyzes China's cross-regional foreign policy within the framework of debates on the rise of China in the international relations literature by focusing on non-Arab countries in the Middle East. The research question is how the rise of China has influenced China's foreign policy behaviors towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East in the period 2001-2011. The dissertation answers the research question by analyzing international crises in the Middle East such as the Iran nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question.

Although China's geography and population demonstrate that it is no ordinary power in the international system, IR literature did not define China as a great power until the 1990s. But since then, China's unprecedented economic growth has gradually affected not only its own regional order, but also the international political and economic orders. Thus, this dissertation analyzes contemporary Chinese political, economic, and military advancements and their effects on its foreign policy behaviors.

The dissertation uses several resources to examine China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East between 2001 and 2011. Since the research subject concerns contemporary history, the primary sources of the dissertation are not archival documents. Rather, it draws on daily newspapers published in Chinese, Turkish, and English, official United Nations

91 Tom Pember-Finn, "China and the Middle East: The Emerging Security Nexus," *Greater China* (Summer 2011): 37-46.

92 Richard A. Bitzinger, "Arms to Go: Chinese Arms Sales to the Third World," *International Security* 17 (1992): 84–111.

documents such as resolutions and meeting reports, and official statements of the respective countries. However, the dissertation relies mainly on secondary sources to analyze the research question. It was critical to assess Chinese sources to understand both official and academic perspectives. For example, *The Journal of West Asia and Africa* (*Xiya Feizhou*), *Arab World Studies* (*Alabo Shijie*), and *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* are the most important journals presenting the views of Chinese academics vis-à-vis China's relations with the Middle East. *Beijing Review* was another important resource providing detailed information on China's diplomatic positions towards Middle Eastern countries. In addition, fieldwork carried out by the author in both Beijing and Shanghai directly contributes to the findings of the dissertation.

After an initial stage of research and fieldwork, it became apparent that the subject of China's relations with the Middle East is not only an emerging research subject among non-Chinese IR scholars, but a key interest of Chinese scholars, as well. Similar to the English-language literature, the lack of specific case studies and research subjects is one of the important drawbacks of Chinese-language literature. Thus, this dissertation focuses on specific cases (non-Arab countries in the Middle East) and research subjects (three international crises, namely the Iran nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question). A specific historical period was defined to limit the discussion of the dissertation's research question.

Due to methodological preference of the dissertation, it did not broadly examine Uyghur issue in terms of Chinese foreign policy towards the Middle East. The dissertation just focused on case studies which has relatively less influence to China's domestic politics. In addition, China is not directly part of any international crisis which are examined in the dissertation. Only exception to that is P5+1 which established in 2006 to negotiate Iran's nuclear crisis.

There are number of reasons for choosing a contemporary period to examine the question of this dissertation. First, 2001 was critical in the history of international relations and significantly affected global politics. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States changed US national security strategies. The US-led international order, which started after the Cold War, turned chaotic through its unilateral military intervention in Iraq in 2003. As discussed in

detail in the ensuing chapters, these unilateral actions by the US negatively affected China's improving relations with energy-rich Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq and Iran.

Meanwhile, China became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 after a fifteen-year negotiation process. China's membership in the WTO paved the way for another critical development in the history of international relations by increasing China's involvement in economic relations around the world. China's overall bilateral trade volume with Middle Eastern countries increased to unprecedented levels between 2001 and 2011. The export-oriented Chinese economic development model triggered serious global and regional changes all around the world.

The year 2011 was chosen because of regional political developments in the Middle East. The Arab Spring affected almost all political, economic, and military discussions in the Middle East. NATO intervention in Libya caused a dramatic turn in the diplomatic positions of Russia and China during the Arab Spring.[93] China's involvement in the Middle East in the aftermath of the Arab Spring must be evaluated using new theoretical frameworks and conceptualizations since China's active pragmatist foreign policies neither prevent conflict nor provide a stable regional order in the Middle East.

This dissertation provides new concepts for understanding the transformation of China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East. For example, while the "non-Arab" conceptualization provides a new understanding of China's traditional Middle Eastern foreign policies, the concept of active pragmatism explains how China's foreign policies are evolving in the Middle East. Pragmatist foreign policy, which is generally attributed to China's resource-oriented objectives, is not a static concept. China's pragmatist policies actually started with the increase of its energy needs in the 1990s. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, this pragmatism continued with active Chinese foreign policy involvement in resource-rich regions such as Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

93 Mordechai Chaziza, "The Arab Spring: Implications for Chinese Policy," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 17 (2013): 74.

Pragmatism and active pragmatism are the central concepts for defining China's involvement in the Middle East, especially in the last two decades. The 1990s were the initiation of China's opening to the global economy since it became an oil-importer for the first time in 1993. The lack of necessary resources for economic development created a rupture in Chinese foreign policy. This led to a pragmatism that directly affects China's overall national interests regardless of the ideological and political conditions of Middle Eastern countries. China's foreign-policy priorities varied according to its efforts to secure resources and market access that it views as vital to its development.

During the active pragmatist period between 2001 and 2011, China placed more importance on both institutional and diplomatic tools. While Confucius institutes, economic cooperation forums, business associations, Chinese envoys, and the establishment of China-related associations in Middle Eastern countries demonstrate China's rising institutional power, the increase in visits of Chinese officials to Middle Eastern countries demonstrate China's rising diplomatic involvement in the region. Since the dissertation focuses on the period 2001-2011, it does not analyze the post-2011 period, though active pragmatism is still in effect full in Chinese foreign policy towards the Middle East.

China's foreign policy behaviors, objectives, and intentions differ from one sub-region to another. For example, China's foreign policy behaviors change according to its national interests and priorities in the Gulf region, Arabian Peninsula, the Levant, and the Mediterranean region. This dissertation, however, focuses on non-Arab countries that have the capacity to influence different sub-regions in the Middle East. For example, Iran has been chosen to understand China's broader strategic interests in the Gulf region. While Israel is a crucial actor in the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant, Turkey is one of the significant actors in both the Mediterranean region and the Levant. Therefore, the questions of how China's foreign policy has transformed and what specific factors urged China to implement more active foreign policies in the Middle East are answered on the basis of case studies in Iran, Israel, and Turkey.

Another reason for the non-Arab classification is related to these countries' capabilities to affect their regional orders. Beyond non-Arab countries' own crises, such as the Iranian nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict,

and the Cyprus question, they are also involved in other crises in the Middle East. Turkey is one of the most stable, democratic countries in the region. In addition to its geostrategic location, as a NATO member it has the potential to influence the foreign policies of both regional and global powers. Iran's sectarian politics and energy resources make it one of the most strategic countries in the region. Israel's economic superiority and modern technologies have strengthened its deterrence capabilities in the region. Israel is also the most important US ally in the Middle East, a fact which has the potential to change the regional balance of power.

Non-Arab countries and their roles in other conflicts have the capacity to change the political structure of the region. In addition, the basic problems of and conflicts in the Middle East are related to non-Arab countries' foreign policy objectives and their competition for power. Turkey, Iran, and Israel are generally more stable and powerful than Arab countries. Turkey, Iran, and Israel's role in any given conflict could easily change the direction of that conflict. Although national power capacities of each non-Arab country differ from each other, their power dynamics can be defined as "game changers" in terms of the regional balance of power.

Most importantly, to understand China's Middle East policies as a "cross-regional foreign policy" issue it is necessary to offer a geopolitical analysis. Among the great powers in the Middle East, China is the farthest from the Middle East itself. Even though this distance has a negative effect on bilateral relations, China has tried to overcome this by finding alternative ways to reach the Middle East such as energy and economic interdependence. The Middle East can easily be divided into three geographical regions: the Arabian Peninsula in the south, the Gulf in the east, and the Levant in the northwest. China can be more influential in these geographical locations by improving relations with non-Arab countries. Non-Arab countries are key actors in these locations. The political, economic, and social effects of all these conceptualizations are analyzed in the case studies to show the significance of China's Middle East policy in the terms of a non-Arab perspective.

§ 1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters, including the introduction and conclusion. The second chapter focuses on the theoretical assumptions of the dissertation, and the third provides a general overview of China's Middle East policy in the period 2001-2011. After that, three case studies are analyzed in three chapters, respectively addressing the Iranian nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question.

The first chapter of the dissertation begins by broadly outlining China's international relations with a focus on great power politics and China's relations with its immediate neighbors. The following section, offers a review of the literature on China and the Middle East; with special attention on the gaps in and drawbacks of the current literature. After that, the research question, research subjects, and objectives of the dissertation are discussed.

The second chapter is the theoretical grounding of the dissertation. It discusses debates on the rise of China and power transition in the framework of two mainstream IR theories, realism and idealism. Although there are number of theoretical discussions on the rise of China, particularly pessimist and optimist arguments have been chosen to limit the framework of the theoretical discussion. Since the 1990s, debates on the rise of China and power transition have resulted in an enormous body of literature, including books, academic articles, think-tank reports, short essays, and commentaries in daily newspapers. Therefore, my discussion only focuses on the political, economic, and military aspects of the rise of China and excludes cultural, religious, and social aspects. In the last part of the theoretical chapter, the four main arguments of the dissertation are discussed within the framework of China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East.

The third chapter of the dissertation is divided into three and focuses on China's Middle East policy. The first part analyzes the historical background of China's Middle East policies by dividing it into four different periods: ideologically-oriented foreign policy (1949-1971), the quest for an independent foreign policy (1971-1991), pragmatist foreign policy (1991-2001), and active pragmatist foreign policy (2001- present). The second part of the chapter analyzes the active pragmatist foreign policy period and proves China's activism

by focusing on three main drivers of China's foreign policy: political, economic, and military considerations. The last part of the chapter offers a strategic assessment of China's Middle East policies on the basis of the country's domestic, regional, and global concerns.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters are case studies. These explain and classify China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East. The same methodology has been implemented for each of the case studies in the dissertation. Each is divided into four. In the first part, the international crisis (the Iranian nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question, respectively) is defined to understand the main reasons for the conflict, the intentions of the conflicting sides, and new developments in the period 2001-2011. In the second part, China's relations with non-Arab countries (namely Iran, Israel, and Turkey) are analyzed to show the national interests of China in the political, economic, and military fields. In the third part, China's political and diplomatic position is analyzed in relation to the international crises with a specific focus on the period 2001-2011. The last part of each case study offers a strategic assessment of China's involvement in the international crisis.

In the concluding chapter of the dissertation, China's general Middle East policies and the main drivers of its foreign policy towards non-Arab countries are briefly summarized, and the four assumptions of the dissertation are analyzed to indicate the main findings.

2

China's Rise and Power Transition Debates: Changing Power Dynamics at the Turn of the Century

China's rise and power transition debates in the international relations (IR) literature intensified in the 1990s, a period that marked the beginning of China's economic development and integration into global politics.[1] As soon as the Cold War ended, debates began about the hegemonic status of the United States in the international system and new, potential challengers to US hegemony.

As is defined by China expert Thomas J. Christensen, the main discussion on China's rise is between "optimistic" and "pessimistic" perspectives which are generally attributed to realist and idealist theories.[2] While the basic characteristics of mainstream realist arguments about China's rise are pessimistic, idealist arguments are optimistic and emphasize the peaceful integration of China into the international system. In terms of theoretical discussions, the realist and idealist IR perspectives created two main arguments on the rise of China and power transition debates. According to the first assumption, China's rise is a threat to the current international order.[3] Contrary to the first

1 Denny Roy, "The China Threat Issue: Main Arguments," *Asian Survey* 36 (1996): 758.

2 Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2015), 1.

3 Charles Krauthammer, "Why We Must Contain China," *Time*, July 31, 1995, p. 72.; Robert Kagan, "The Illusion of 'Managing' China," *Washington Post*, May 15, 2005.; Joseph Nye, "The

assumption, optimists argue that the rise of China is not a threat but rather an opportunity for the current international order to establish a peaceful, integrated system of global governance.[4] However, two decades after the start of China's rise, IR scholars began to discuss a third alternative arguing that neither the threat nor peaceful engagement assumptions have enough evidence to prove their arguments. In fact, China neither challenges the current international status quo nor fully integrates into international political and economic institutions and global norms.[5] The theoretical assumptions of this dissertation are close to this last argument. China's rise is a process we are still trying to understand since it continues to affect both China's domestic and foreign policies. China's rise has produced no concrete policies that changed its own internal dynamics, the balance of power in its region, or the current international order. China's rise continues to affect its overall policies, including foreign relations. The last part of this chapter focuses on one aspect of this—namely, China's Middle East policy. All other theoretical perspectives, such as those of constructivists and globalists, have adjusted their arguments according to these mainstream debates between pessimists and optimists.[6]

Challenge of China," in Stephen Van Evera, ed., *How to Make America Safe: New Policies for National Security* (Cambridge, Mass.: Tobin Project, 2006): 73-79.; Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro, "The Coming Conflict with America," *Foreign Affairs*, 76 (March/April 1997): 18-32; John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001)

4 Ian Alastair Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" *International Security*, 27 (Spring 2003): 5-56; Michael O'Hanlon, "Why China Cannot Conquer Taiwan," *International Security*, 25 (Fall 2000): 51-86; Joseph Fewsmith, "The Political and Social Implications of China s Accession to the WTO," *China Quarterly* 167 (September 2001): 573-591; Yongjin Zhang, "Reconsidering the Economic Internationalization of China: Implications of the WTO Membership," *Journal of Contemporary China* 37 (2003): 699-714; Zheng Bijan, "China's Peaceful Rise to Great-Power Status," *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2005): 18-25

5 Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?," *International Security* 27 (2003); John G. Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?" *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2008); Steve Chan, *Looking for Balance: China, the United States, and Power Balancing in East Asia* (Standford, California: Standford University Press, 2012).

6 While constructivists emphasize the historical, social, and cultural aspects of China's rise, globalists generally focus on global inequalities and capitalist accumulation of power. For detailed discussions see Peter J. Katzenstein, *Sinicization and the Rise of China: Civilizational*

The main theoretical problem is not China's economic growth, but the effects of this growth on its relations with other countries and international institutions. However, for pessimists, the most important problem is China's increasing military budget, the growth of which has paralleled that of its economy. Although China lags behind the United States in many areas, such as per capita income, technological advancement, and aging population, the long-term trends suggest that China's uninterrupted economic rise has not been confronted with any serious obstacle so far.

China's rise debates have generally centered on issues related to Asia Pacific and the United States.[7] Although China's cross-regional foreign policies had been ignored in the literature of international relations, they started to be studied after the Cold War. Actually, China's energy needs and its search for alternative markets for its wealth of export products forced it to expand its influence all over the world, especially after becoming a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. Thus, China's cross-regional foreign policies in such areas as Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East became a crucial part of China's rise debates during the period 2001-2011.

In the first part of the chapter, two mainstream approaches in the IR literature – idealism and realism – are discussed to show the basic arguments involved in debates over China's rise. The political, economic, and military dimensions of the rise of China will be broadly analyzed. In the second part of the chapter, all these theoretical discussions will be evaluated in terms of China's Middle East policies toward the non-Arab countries of Iran, Israel, and Turkey between 2001 and 2011.

China and its prospective status in the international order is not a new discussion in the history of international relations. As cited by Kaplan in "The Geography of Chinese Power," Alfred Mackinder supposed in 1904 that China had the potential to become a great land and sea power in the Eastern

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Processes beyond East and West (London and New York: Routledge, 2012); Yaqing Qin, "International Society as a Process: Institutions, Identities, and China's Peaceful Rise," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3 (2010): 129–153.

7 Gill Bates, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institutions, 2010), ix.

Hemisphere. According to him, as paralleled the rise of US hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, China's rise as a great power could only be a threat to US global hegemony in the future.[8]

The chaotic political and economic atmosphere of the interwar period decreased China's ability to become a leading power in the Eastern Hemisphere. However, the victory of the communists over the nationalists in the Chinese civil war in 1949 accelerated the process of China's becoming a regional and global power. Even though China lacked the capacity to become a great power at that time, the Cold War's bipolar international system created an advantage for China. After the short period in which it practiced a "leaning to one side" strategy,[9] China began to implement its own strategy independent of that of the Soviets. China's "third world" strategy proposed that neither American nor Soviet imperialism could provide peace in the international system. Under the controversial political and economic discussions of the Cold War, China's alternate discourse did not produce a "third block" in the international system, but it did resonate in some countries that already had great disputes among leftist factions.[10]

The most concrete example showing China's power capabilities was its successful nuclear tests in 1964.[11] After the nuclear tests, China began to be labeled with such terms as the "sleeping dragon," "potential superpower," and "leader of the third world" during the Cold War.[12]

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8 Robert D. Kaplan, "The Geography of Chinese Power: How Far Can Beijing Reach on Land and at Sea?," *Foreign Affairs* 89(2010):23.

9 Zedong Mao, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," in Commemoration of the Twenty-eighth Anniversary of the Communist Party of China, June 30, 1949, accessed January 28, 2017, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-4/mswv4_65.htm

10 Çağdaş Üngör, "Türkiye Solunda Çin Etkisi: Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık Hareketi Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme (1969-1977)," in *Türkiye'de Çin'i Düşünmek: Ekonomik, Siyasi ve Kültürel İlişkilere Yeni Yaklaşımlar* ed. Selçuk Esenbel et al. (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 173.

11 Leo Yueh-yun Liu, *China as a Nuclear Power in World Politics* (New York: Taplinger Pub. Co, 1972): 31.

12 Samuel S. Kim, "China's Path to Great Power Status in the Globalization," Asian Perspective 27(2003):36.

Similar to the rise of China is the case of Japan, whose rise was also broadly discussed in the IR literature during the period of Japanese economic development in 1980s. Japan's success in the production and invention of new types of computers and communication technologies was seen as a "third industrial revolution," succeeding the English industrial revolution and the American assembly-line revolution implicated by Henry Ford.[13] These similarities reveal that debates about China's rise are not unique in the history of IR.

In the history of IR theory, the definition of states' power (debates over China's rise) and their international status (power transition) are both significant. On the side of realism, Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz were central figures whose assumptions on IR theory shaped future discussions of the realist school. Although classical realism was influential among realist scholars of IR of until the 1980s, Waltz's famous book *The Theory of International Politics,* first published in 1979, has since dominated realist schools of IR with its structural realist arguments.[14] According to mainstream structural realist assumptions from Waltz onward, the international system is hierarchic and anarchical.[15] As its main actors, states struggle to survive in a self-help system in which there is no higher authority to provide them a secure environment in the international system. Under these circumstances, states generally adjust their stance according to their readings of power relations in the international system. Thus, the nature of the international order—unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar—pushes states to establish new relations according to their power capabilities. In this international system, structure determines the behavior of states. Although mainstream realist schools may allow for other determinants of state behavior, their view of the basic characteristics of international politics

13 Willian Horsley and Roger Buckley, *Nippon: New Super Power Japan since 1945* (London: BBC Books, 1990), 142.

14 Tim Dunne and Brian C. Schmidt, "Realism" in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* ed. John Baylis et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 148.

15 For a detailed discussion on structural realism, see: Jonathan Kirshner, "The tragedy of offensive realism: Classical realism and the rise of China," *European Journal of International Relations* 18 (2012):53.

retains this general shape.[16] The main characteristic of realism is a "pessimistic" outlook that claims that states' endless desire to increase their own power could easily end with catastrophic wars such as World War I and II.

On the other hand, idealism offered an alternative reading of international relations. Again to the transformation from classical to structural realism, idealism has transformed from the liberal idealism of the inter war period to liberal institutionalism, which has been the dominant idealist IR theory in the post war period.[17] Contrary to realism's pessimistic and conflict-oriented assumptions, ideas and values shape international relations according to idealists. Thus, individual rights, freedom, and justice are the main values that must be protected by institutions from state violations and inter communal conflicts. Although there are different theoretical discussions among idealist scholars, values and institutions are the common characteristic of idealist IR theories.

These two grand theories of IR also dominate discussions about the rise of China. Pessimist approaches mostly focus on China's malign intentions, which can be seen predominantly in the economic and military realms; on the other hand, optimists focus on China's benign intentions and integration with international institutions. However, there are some arguments supported by both approaches with respect to the rise of China: namely that China's rise is not immune from domestic problems relating to regime stability, the environmental effects of economic development, and its aging population. Accordingly, positive and negative assessments of the rise of China depend on a full-fledged evaluation of China's domestic power capabilities.

§ 2.1 China's Global Status and International Politics

China's rising international status and the consequences of that rise have been the most serious dilemmas for IR theories since the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. At the beginning of the Cold War,

16 Ibid., 50.

17 Tim Dunne, "Liberalism," in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* ed. John Baylis et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 163.

China's close relations with the Soviets led both the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to adopt strategies to isolate China. Under the ideological axes in the international system during the Cold War, the bipolar mentality provided China with both advantages and disadvantages. After the Korean War (1950-1953), China found an opportunity to consolidate its political and economic development with the help of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the political consequences of establishing a close relationship with the Soviets long isolated China from the rest of the world.

China's involuntary obedience to unilateral Soviet policies, especially between 1953 and 1963, ended with the Sino-Soviet rift—one of the most serious crises of the Cold War. After the first armed conflict between the Soviets and China in 1969, the Soviets became China's most serious enemy in the decade to follow.[18] It is interesting to note that the Sino-US rapprochement also began at that time. After long negotiations, China was granted a place in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 1971.[19] This was an important turning point in discussions of China's rise and international status since seven years later, in 1978, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) would promulgate the most comprehensive reform program in the history of the PRC—the "opening-up reforms" (*gaige kaifang*-改革开放).[20]

Until China's entry into the UNSC, classical Cold War thinking placed China in the communist block alongside the Soviet Union. The first serious pessimistic warnings about China's prospective global power status came from two distinguished IR scholars at that time: A.F.K. Organski in 1968 and Robert Gilpin in 1981.[21] According to them, in addition to its geography and population, China's potential political and economic development could easily pave the way for a power transition in world politics. For Gilpin, the

18 Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 84.

19 Ibid., 239.

20 John W. Garver, *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016): 355.

21 A.F.K Organsky, *World Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1968), 238.

emergence of a powerful China would have a destabilizing effect in contemporary world politics.[22]

After ten years of opening-up reforms, the Tiananmen massacre in China in 1989 and the end of the Cold War urged IR scholars to put China in a correct theoretical perspective in terms of the country's rise and of power transition debates in international politics. Early on, Conable and Lampton argued that the United States and China should cooperate to integrate China into the international political and economic system. According to their assumptions, the social problems and political uncertainties inherent to China's system of one-party rule would seriously impede it from becoming a true challenger to US hegemony in East Asia.[23] Moreover, Gerald Segal—a distinguished expert on China studies—also contributed to early discussions in his 1999 article "Does China Matter?"[24] According to Segal, accounts of China's rise were exaggerated. According to him, China was instead a "merely middle power" with serious domestic political and economic problems.[25]

Segal and Lampton's reading of the issue of China's rise are but two of a number of perspectives among IR scholars. The most comprehensive edited volume on the subject, *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* was published in 1999. Although it was an early book on China's emerging power capabilities, it caused a significant divergence among IR scholars on the matter of "engagement vs. containment" strategies. The book itself favored the former. According to idealist assumptions, China would engage with the international system through international institutions, norms, and rules.[26] However, this engagement and integration would not be easy for the United

22 Robert Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 91.

23 Barber B. Conable and David M. Lampton, "China: The Coming Power," *Foreign Affairs* 71 (1992):135.

24 Gerald Segal, "Does China matter?" Foreign Affairs 78 (September/October 1999): 24.

25 Ibid. 35.

26 Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (New York: Routledge, 1999), xii.

States or other countries in the international system, since China was but one of a number of rising powers.[27]

In terms of the political dimensions of discussions on China's rise, two important questions became central to almost all theoretical discussions in the beginning of the first decade of the twenty-first century. While the first question concerned China's national power capacities, which were gradually rising, the second question was related to the effects of this power accumulation on the international system. Pessimist and optimist IR scholars both agreed that these were crucial questions, but offered completely different answers.

According to offensive realist John Mearshimer, China will try to become a regional hegemon since it is impossible for any state to become a true, global hegemon. Although a hegemon is a powerful state dominating others, it is impossible to achieve a global hegemony.[28] In addition, for Mearshimer, each state has the same drive to accumulate power. Thus, China will probably behave like the United States did when it dominated its region in the beginning of the twentieth century.[29] However, according to him, not Europe but the Middle East and Central Asia would be the areas of strategic competition between the United States and China. The regional hegemonic stability of China and the United States depends on their ability to expand the influence beyond the home regions.[30] There are arguments against Mearshimer's pessimistic analysis of China's national power capabilities. Although the exact definition of status-quo power and revisionist power remained unsettled in the IR literature, the current international distribution of power has generally been accepted as a main criterion for IR scholars.[31] Alastair Iain Johnston, in an early commentary on China's rise and its effects for the international system,

27 Patrick Stewart, "Irresponsible Stakeholders? The Difficulty of Integrating Rising Powers," *Foreign Affairs* 89 (2010): 45.

28 John Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3 (2010):387

29 John Mearshiemer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 21.

30 John Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3 (2010):392.

31 Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?," *International Security* 27 (2003):8.

claimed that China was not a revisionist state but rather a status-quo power by analyzing five indicators of status-quo power.[32]

However, the most serious idealist/optimist argument came from a liberal institutionalist perspective claiming that China's rise neither necessarily threatens the United States or the international system since it will not cause a hegemonic transition. According to this view, the rise of China has taken place within the system of current international institutions. Until now, there has been no concrete evidence of China's challenge to these institutions. As long as China plays the game according to rules, it cannot change the international system. Thus, China's rise stands to strengthen rather than weaken international institutions.[33] John G. Ikenberry claims that power transitions among great powers do not necessarily lead to war. Peaceful transitions can exist since norms and rules determine the future of the international system.[34]

Debates over China's rise have also resonated among Asia specialists in the IR literature. David Kang's "Asian exceptionalism" has been severely criticized by Amitav Acharya. According to Kang, Western, European IR theories—especially realist theories—have difficulty explaining Asia's complex state structures and regional policies. For example, contrary to the balance of power theory, Asian countries do not implement balancing strategy against China but rather bandwagon together with it.[35] In response, Acharya criticizes Kang's Asian exceptionalism by claiming that "Asia's future will not resemble its past."[36] Steve Chan, however, claims that "East Asian elites have collectively

32 Namely, 1) participation rates in international institutions, 2) degree of compliance with international norms, 3) behavior toward the "rules of the game," 4) revisionist preferences, and 5) distribution of power and revisionist behavior. Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" *International Security* 27 (2003):6.

33 John G. Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?" *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2008):24.

34 Ibid., 30.

35 David C. Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks," *International Security* 28 (2003):58.

36 Amitav Acharya, "Will Asia's Past Be its Future?." *International Security* 28.3 (Winter 2003/2004): 149; David C. Kang, "Hierarchy, Balancing, and Empirical Puzzles in Asian International Relations," *International Security* 27 (2003):165.

pivoted to a strategy of elite legitimacy and regime survival based on economic performance rather than nationalism, military expansion, or ideological propagation."[37]

China's own official statements and those of Chinese scholars use an idealist/optimist perspective when they criticize pessimistic perceptions of China's rise in the international system. For example, in the 2003 Bo'ao Forum for Asia held in the town of Bo'ao in China's Hainan Province,[38] Zheng Bijian, then deputy of the Central Party School, articulated for the first time that China's only choice is to strive to rise (*heping jueqi*-和平崛起) peacefully.[39] One year later, in the 2004 Bo'ao Forum, Hu Jintao, then President of China, emphasized the idea of peaceful development (*heping fazhan*-和平发展) rather than the notion of a "rise," reassuring pessimists with respect to the question of China's rise.[40] Wang Yiwei is another distinguished Chinese IR scholar who proposed that China is not a threat to international system since the Chinese style of development (*Zhongguo tese fazhan* 中国特色发展) does not seek global hegemony, only to be powerful in its own region.[41]

In the Chinese IR literature, two main approaches have been adopted to offer different perspectives on China's rise and on power transitions in the international system. Wang Jisi's more idealist/optimist arguments propose a peaceful integration with international institutions.[42] In its "march to the west" (*xijin*-西进) strategy, China's current political and economic development model urges it to adopt policies that open the country more fully to the

37 Steve Chan, *Looking for Balance: China, the United States, and Power Balancing in East Asia* (Standford, California: Standford University Press, 2012), 4.

38 Guoguang Wu, "The Peaceful Emergence of a Great Power?," *Social Research* 73 (2006):324.

39 Zheng Bijian, "China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status," *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2005):19.

40 Bonnie S. Glaser and Evan S. Medeiros, "The Changing Ecology of Foreign Policy-making in China: The Ascension and Demise of the Theory of 'Peaceful Rise'," *The China Quarterly* 190 (2007): 292.

41 Yiwei Wang, "China's Rise: An Unlikely Pillar of US Hegemony," *Harvard International Review* 29 (2007): 58.

42 Kadir Temiz, "Stratejik Derinliğin Eksik Halkası: Yüzyılın Başında Uzakdoğu Asya ve Çin," in *Stratejik Zihniyet: Kuramdan Eyleme Ahmet Davutoğlu ve Stratejik Derinlik* ed. Talha Köse et al. (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2014), 331.

West.[43] On the other hand, the more revisionist IR scholar, Yan Xuetong claims that "the Chinese regard their rise as regaining China's lost international status rather than as obtaining something new."[44] Although Yan uses a moderate discourse to define China's new role in the international system, he openly proposes a revisionist perspective that is seeking out a new status for China. Another Chinese account is that of Zhang Weiwei, who advocates Chinese exceptionalism. According to Zhang, "from a long-term historical perspective, China's rise.....is not that of an ordinary country, but the rise of a civilizational state (*wenmingxing guojia*-文明型国家)."[45]

All in all, from China's own domestic political problems to international status discussions, debates over China's rise and power transition still continue among IR scholars. But these vague political discussions must be supported with concrete examples of economic, military, and foreign policy analysis. In the next section, both economic and military divergences on the rise of China among IR scholars are discussed.

§ 2.2 Economic Aspects of Debates on China's Rise

Three decades of exponential Chinese economic growth caused another divergence among IR scholars. Although US global economic supremacy still plays a significant role in the international political economic order, especially coupled with its political and military advances, uncertainties over China's rise have given rise to concerns in both the United States and rest of the world about the future of global political and economic structures. The most important question concerns China's unprecedented economic growth and its possible effects on the global economy. If China surpasses the United States to become the world's largest economy, to what kinds of changes will this lead in

43 Jisi Wang, "'Xijin': Zhongguo Diyuan Zhanlue de Zai Pingheng [March the West: China's Geostrategic Re-Balance], *Huanqiu*, October 17, 2002, accessed January 28, 2017, http://opinion.huanqiu.com/opinion_world/2012-10/3193760.html

44 Yan Xuetong, "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes," *Journal of Contemporary China* 26(2001):34.

45 Weiwei Zhang, *The China Wave: Rise of a Civilizational State* (New Jersey: World Century Publishing Corporation, 2012), 2.

global economic institutions? Will the liberal international economic order continue without China's intervention? What will happen to Western liberal institutions? The most serious question is how the United States and other countries will respond to China's economic rise. While pessimists focus mostly on the potential negative effects of China's economic rise, optimists instead emphasize global economic interdependence.

China's economic growth has been defined as a "miracle" by several distinguished economists.[46] It has transformed its command economy to a market-based one. From the 1990s until 2011, China's annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate was approximately 10 percent. In addition, more than five hundred million people were lifted out of poverty.[47] In the beginning of the 1990s, China's share of total global production was around 3.8 percent, reaching 14 percent in 2011.[48] By 2009 it had surpassed Germany and became the second largest country in terms of total trade volume.[49] China's total trade volume, in turn, reached 3.6 trillion dollars in 2011, up from 200 billion in 1978. Meanwhile, while China's GDP was around 150 billion dollars in 1978 at the beginning of the reform process, it had reached 7.5 trillion dollars by 2011. In terms of GDP per capita on purchasing power parity (PPP), China's GDP grew from 796 dollars in 1990 to 8,394 dollars in 2011.[50] China's global trade surplus reached 155 billion dollars in 2011. In addition, two of the top ten banks in the world belong to China, and Chinese companies have entered global Fortune 500 lists. China possesses the world's second-largest highway network, three of the longest sea bridges, and six of the ten largest container ports in

46 "China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative Society," World Bank and the Development Research Center of the State Council, P. R. China, accessed December 28, 2016, http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/02/27/china-2030-executive-summary

47 Weiwei Zhang, *The China Wave: Rise of a Civilizational State*, 2.

48 "World Economic Outlook Database," International Monetary Fund, September 2011, accessed January 8, 2017, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/02/weodata/index.aspx

49 David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013): 125.

50 International Monetary Fund, "World Economic Outlook Database," September 2011, accessed January 8, 2017, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/02/weodata/index.aspx

the world.[51] According to estimates, while GDP predictions for the United States and European Union through 2030 suggests that they will decline by 14 percent, the GDP of other emerging powers, including that of China, will increase dramatically.[52]

All these statistics and examples clearly demonstrate that China's economic development has already become one of the important, unique experiences of the world economies. There are three aspects of pessimist and optimist assumptions with respect to China's economic rise. Firstly, the global influence of China's economic rise—including China's role in international economic institutions, export-oriented trade surpluses, and foreign direct investments—directly affect the current global economic order. Secondly, other countries' responses to China's economic rise are another important aspect that will probably influence future discussions. Optimists and pessimists think differently about whether other countries believe that China's economic rise will be detrimental to the current global economic order. Thirdly, China's domestic economic problems—in terms of its population demographics, the political structure of its system of one-party rule, corruption, and state intervention—also caused divergence among IR scholars. The main subjects of this debate are the characteristics of the Chinese socialist market economy and China's integration into Western liberal economic institutions.

According to one view, if the speed of China's GDP growth continues, China will surpass the United States in the coming years. China already became the second-largest economy after the United States in 2011.[53] These economic trends indicate that a power transition (power shift) is inevitable between the United States and China in the coming years. Under the current

51 The World Bank, "China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative Society," accessed December 28, 2016, http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/02/27/china-2030-executive-summary

52 Muhammed Kürşad Özekin, "An Empirical Critique of the Notion 'Power Shift' from the US-led West to the China-led East," *Journal of the Human and Social Science Researches* 2 (2013):99.

53 Justin McCurry and Julia Kollewe, "China Overtakes Japan as World's Second-largest Economy," *The Guardian*, February 14, 2011, accessed January 28, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/business/2011/feb/14/china-second-largest-economy

Chinese political and economic structure, this power shift cannot be realized without conflict.[54]

On the other hand, another assumption claims that GDP is not the only tool to measure the economic development of a country. GDP growth does not necessarily mean that China will also be able to establish an economic hegemony in the current international economic order.[55] Even though China's GDP growth seriously affects the United States and other countries, according to GDP per capita on PPP, China is far behind the United States. For instance, while China's GDP per capita was around eight thousand dollars in 2011, that of the United States was around forty-six thousand dollars.[56] In addition, China's aging population and negative effects of economic development such as pollution in big cities and social security problems are other indications showing that China's economy has important obstacles, as well.

According to another important argument, China is a socialist country in which state-owned corporations (SOCs) are supported by the government. Because of that, China has serious problems with liberal economic institutions such as the WTO. For example, there are number of cases in which China has been sued by the WTO. These examples harm both China and the global economy since they weaken the global competitiveness of China's state-owned companies.[57] However, China's main concern about international economic institutions is not whether to be part of them but rather its limited role in their governance. For example, China consistently pressures other countries to increase its voting rights in the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to one view, if China succeeds, it can easily change rules without completely integrating into current liberal international institutions.[58]

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54 James Hoge, "A Global Power Shift in the Making: Is the United States Ready?," *Foreign Affairs,* 83(4), (2004): 3.

55 Carl E. Walter and Fraser J. T. Howie, *Red Capitalism: The Fragile Financial Foundation of China's Extraordinary Rise* (Singapore: Wiley, 2012), xiv.

56 International Monetary Fund, "World Economic Outlook Database," September 2011, accessed January 8, 2017, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/02/weodata/index.aspx

57 Arthur R. Kroeber, *China's Economy: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 242.

58 Ibid., 245.

As a response to this argument, it is claimed that China has joined almost all international economic agreements and institutions and has endured long negotiations to do so. For example, it took fifteen years for China to become a WTO member. Thus, the rules and norms of current international institutions bind China not to act against the current rules and norms of the system. Since China has already adjusted its own institutions according to the rules of liberal international institutions, it has already become part of these institutions. According to this argument, the most serious question is whether China will play the game according to the rules. The unregulated structures of Chinese SOCs and China's one-party rule support the idea that China will never play according to the rules. But from 2001 to 2011, China's actions created no serious crisis in the global economy despite unfair advantages to its SOCs such as cheap financing and other incentives. However, it is important to note that China is not a developed country but a developing one. Thus, for now, China is not actually playing the game according to the rules. But its regional and global integration cannot be ignored. Its regional integration probably paves the way for a true open-market economy in China, as well. By 2011, for example, China had signed free trade agreements with thirteen countries in addition to those already covered by its membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) trade network.[59] This shows that China's efforts to engage in trade and economic partnership with other countries are continuing to develop.

However, the trade deficit between China and other countries is another important matter in debates over China's economy. China has a huge surplus from trade relations with other countries. This imbalance harms production and causes unemployment in other countries.[60] With Turkey, for example, China has almost a 90 percent surplus from the total trade volume between the two countries. An undervalued Renminbi (RMB) and obstacles to market access for Chinese trade partners are the two main causes of these large

59 Shambaugh, *China Goes Global* , 126.

60 Christensen, *The China Challenge,* 72.

Chinese trade surpluses.[61] With respect to the first of these, China does not maintain a market-based floating exchange rate but instead keeps the rate low by intervening in the currency market.[62] According to critics, the United States and other countries must implement similar policies to prevent the negative effects of China's currency manipulation.[63]

On the other hand, such measures could cause another big problem for the global economy since currency wars will not solve the basic problems between China and the rest of the world in an age of global economic interdependence.[64] For example, China is a workforce for the world. There are no concrete, alternative places for investment that are more rational than China. Despite trade wars, China's economic interdependence should be supported by increasing its dependence on other markets such as the United States.[65]

However, China's buying of US Treasury bills—one indication of economic interdependence—has created an important dilemma for the current global economy and Sino-US relations. The main concern is that China can easily use its immense dollar reserves to increase financial investments. In this way, it could potentially coerce the United States in the event of a global or regional political crisis.[66]

Moreover, current global economic interdependence is not a one-sided phenomenon. If China uses its US dollar reserves as a political tool, this would affect its own export-oriented economic development model, as well. On the other hand, the large US budget deficit and inflation are important concerns for China, as the value of China's dollar reserves fell significantly after the

61 Arvind Subramanian, *Eclipse: Living in the Shadow of China's Economic Dominance* (Washington D.C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2011): 169.

62 China pegged its currency at 8.28 RMB to the US dollar from 1994 until 2005. Since 2005, China has changed its monetary policy and the RMB has appreciated against the dollar.

63 Ibid.,170.

64 Wei Ge, "The Chinese Currency and Global Rebalancing: A Discussion," *China: An International Journal* 11 (2013): 74.

65 Ibid., 75.

66 Subramanian, *Eclipse: Living in the Shadow of China's Economic Dominance,"* 196.

2008 financial crisis.[67] At the time, Zhou Xiaochuan, then chief of China's Central Bank, suggested that relying on one nation's currency could be a trouble for the international financial system.[68] Zhou suggested establishing a new "super sovereign reserve currency" managed by IMF. However, according to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, China has actually used the debate on the dollar's foreign reserve status as a political tool rather than as an actual threat. By placing the issue of the dollar reserve in the headlines, China shifted global attention from the RMB's appreciation against the dollar.[69] Currency war rhetoric also increased nationalist sentiment and conspiracy theories in both China and elsewhere in the global financial system.[70] Thus, China started to diversify its reserves and implement alternative policies, such as the internationalization of the RMB and currency-swap agreements with Argentina, Belarus, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Korea.[71]

The issue of China's "currency manipulation" is an important debate. It is one of the most serious discussions between China and other countries, since China's intervention in foreign exchange markets has caused negative effects in bilateral trade. The United States and the European Union, for example, have both complained to the WTO about China's currency manipulation.[72] If China ceased intervening in foreign exchange markets, other countries would stand to gain from current trade relations.

China's rising energy needs also affect the global energy market, as discussed in the following chapters with respect to China's Middle East policy.

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67 Melissa Murphy and Wen Jin Yuan, *Is China Ready to Challenge the Dollar? Internationalization of the Renminbi and Its Implications for the United States* (Washington D.C.: CSIS, 2009),2.

68 "China calls for end to dollar's reign as global reserve currency," *The Guardian,* March 24, 2009, accessed January 2, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/business/2009/mar/24/china-reform-international-monetary-system

69 Murphy and Yuan, *Is China Ready to Challenge the Dollar?,* 4.

70 Melissa Murphy, *Decoding Chinese Politics: Intellectual Debates and Why They Matter* (Washington D.C.: CSIS, 2008), 21.

71 Murphy and Yuan, *Is China Ready to Challenge the Dollar?,* 11.

72 Qingjiang Kong, "China's Currency Devaluation and WTO Issues," *China: An International Journal* 10 (2012): 110.

Not only oil and gas but rare earth minerals are the targets of China's newly emerging companies, which are in the process of developing industrially and technologically. China became the world largest energy consumer in 2010. For the first time in 2011, China's dependence on foreign crude oil reached 55.2 percent, surpassing that of the United States.[73]

China, however, has also tried to satisfy other countries to increase its foreign direct investments (FDI). Even though, for some scholars, FDIs are an indication of China's economic aggressiveness, they are also an indication of economic interdependence. According to Chinese statistics, its net FDI flows reached 74.65 billion dollars in 2011, an increase of 8.5 percent over 2010. However, in 2011, approximately more than 13,000 Chinese investing companies established 18,000 oversea enterprises in 177 countries.[74] While China was the sixth in terms of outgoing FDI flows, the United States was the leader with FDI flows of 396.66 billion dollars in 2011.[75] However, that same year, China's top ten non-financial corporations ranked according to outgoing FDI stock were in the energy and logistics sectors and included China Petrochemical Corporation, China Ocean Shipping Company, and the Aluminum Corporation of China.[76]

Although China has successfullly increased its global economic influence, China's domestic problems nevertheless present serious obstacles to the continuation of its current economic growth. The fragility of China's domestic economy could cause the greatest global economic depression in history. In addition, according to pessimists, the fragile structure of China's domestic economy does not allow free capital flow or free competition among firms, even though China has officially been a "market-based economy" since it joined the WTO in 2001.[77]

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73 Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, 128.

74 Jingxiong Yu, *"2011 Nian du Zhongguo dui wai zhi jie tou zi tong ji gong bao" [2011 statistical bulletin of China's outward foreign direct investment]*, (Beijing: Zhongguo Tongji Chuban She, 2012), 71.

75 Ibid., 72.

76 Ibid., 91.

77 Clara Brandi, "Rising Powers in the Global Trading System: China and Mega-Regional Trade Negotiations," *Rising Power Quarterly* 1 (2016): 80.

China also faces other crucial domestic problems, including an aging population, a lack of social security mechanisms in large cities, and unequal economic development. Even if China becomes the number one economy in the world in terms of GDP, it will still need to manage income inequalities, especially between the eastern and western parts of China. In terms of the demographics of China's economic development, the country will face the loss of demographic advantages—young age workforce—in the coming years. According to statistics, "within twenty years, China will have 300 million pensioners, causing the ratio of workers per retiree to plummet from 8 to 1 today to 2 to 1 by 2040."[78] Similar to the experience in Japanese, China's population will start to shrink and will probably be as old as that of Japan by 2050 according to one estimate.[79]

On the other hand, the previous status of the US, which had gained from globalization, negatively changed during the period of the rise of China. As described by China expert Martin Jacques, "In the longer term, as Chinese companies relentlessly climb the technology ladder, the US economy will face ever-widening competition from Chinese goods, no longer just at the low-value end, but also increasingly for high value-added products as well, just as happened earlier with Japanese and Korean firms."[80]

Chinese style economic development is another discussion among IR scholars. As it is under the influence of socialist and communist political and economic thought, China cannot become part of current liberal economic institutions. According to another view, China is a "transitional" post-Communist economy in the process of economic transition, even though one-party rule continues to be in effect in its governance.[81] Thus, it was not difficult for Chinese politicians to change the economic model, which has depended heavily on an export-oriented model of economic development. Actually, China

78 Michael Beckley, "China's Century? Why America's Edge Will Endure," *International Security* 36 (Winter 2011/2012): 61.

79 Kroeber, *China's Economy: What Everyone Needs to Know* , 236.

80 Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009): 365.

81 Ibid., 6.

started to change its economic development strategy right after the 2008 financial crisis. In 2009, China saw the limitations of export-oriented economic development. It turned to a domestic economic development model by urging "consumption-oriented" economic strategies.[82]

§ 2.3 Military and Security Aspects of Debates on China's Rise

China's modernization and the development of its military and military industry is an indispensable part of its economic and social development. A white paper published by the Information Office of the State Council of the PRC in 2010 analyzed a number of topics including the current international security situation; China's national defense policy; the modernization of the People's Liberation Army (PLA); the deployment of the armed forces; national defense mobilization and reserve force building; the military legal system; defense expenditure; military confidence-building; arms control; disarmament issues; and science, technology, and industry for national defense.[83]

According to the white paper the security situation is stable for China and its most serious security concerns revolve around the status of Taiwan, East Turkestan, and Tibet. In terms of international security, the world is peaceful and stable according to China. Although there are a number of complex, traditional, and non-traditional security concerns, both developed and developing countries around the world are capable of managing current conflicts.[84] The paper recommends that cooperation and coordination should continue among major powers through the G-20, United Nations, and other international institutions to secure common prosperity and development throughout the world.

China's official discourse on national and international security issues is mostly peaceful and moderate. However, there are some indications of China's revisionist demands in the white paper, such as reform of the international

82 Peilin Li, "China's New Stage of Development," *China: An International Journal* 9 (March 2011):134.

83 "China's National Defense in 2010," *Xinhua,* March 31, 2011, accessed December 29, 2016, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-03/31/c_13806851.htm

84 Ibid.

system and prospects for multipolarization of global governance. In addition, the white paper clearly states that,

> suspicion about China, interference and countering moves against China from the outside are on the increase. The United States, in the defiance of the three Sino-US joint communiques, continues to sell weapons to Taiwan, severely impeding Sino-US relations and impairing the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations.[85]

Contradicting pessimist accounts of China's rise, the same report clearly states that "China will never seek hegemony, nor will it adopt the approach of military expansion now or in the future, no matter how its economy develops."[86] According to China specialist David Shambaugh, even after the Anti-Secession Law which legalized the use of force against Taiwan in 2004, China has made little progress in increasing its military power capabilities. For example,

> no aircraft carrier battle groups are being constructed; few destroyers capable of operating in the open ocean have been built; no military bases are being acquired abroad; training over water or far from China's shores is minimal; no long-range bombers are being manufactured; and no airborne command and control aircraft have been deployed.[87]

Although China has not made serious attempts to increase its power capabilities outside its own territory, China's military threats against Taiwan have worried neighbors. As a concrete example of such threats, China has deployed more than six hundred short-range ballistic missiles near Taiwan.[88] China has only one aircraft carrier (Liaoning, formerly Varyag) which it purchased from

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

87 David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* 29 (2004/2005): 86.

88 Ibid., 86.

the Ukraine in 2000. The aircraft carrier entered service in the Chinese navy with low technological capabilities in 2012.[89]

China's overall military capacity, including its defense budget, is another important discussion. The PLA was actually a guerilla army—the armed force of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—up until the 1940s. During the long civil war between the communists and nationalists, the PLA gradually became a conventional army with Soviet assistance. This Soviet assistance was carried out with large-scale training and equipment. However, the Sino-Soviet rift in the 1960s negatively impacted military relations. From that time, the PLA's military capacity has developed in parallel with China's economic development. Thus, the CCP's political dominance over the PLA continues to affect China's overall military strategies. Prior to the 1978 opening-up reforms, China had carried out a successful nuclear test in 1964 and had tested its first land-based intermediate-range ballistic missile in 1971.[90]

After 1978, China reduced military expenditures from 4.6 percent of GDP to 1.5 percent by 1989 and 1.0 percent by 1996.[91] After the Tiananmen massacre in 1989, the United States and European countries imposed arms embargoes and economic sanctions. Even though the Western embargoes negatively affected the PLA, China deployed short-range ballistic missiles along the Taiwan Strait in 1996. The bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999 alarmed the PLA once again. After that, and for the first time, the PLA promulgated a specific combat-doctrine manual (*zhandou tiaoling*-战斗条令) for each branch of its armed forces. In 2004, China's President Hu Jintao promulgated the PLA's "new historic mission" (*xin de lishi shiming*-新的历史使命), which reorganized party-army relations in the framework of Hu's scientific

89 "China's first carrier enters service amid naval tensions," *South China Morning Post,* September 25, 2012, accessed January 2, 2017, http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1046902/chinas-first-carrier-enters-service-amid-naval-tensions

90 John Wilson Lewis and Litai Xue, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), 137.

91 China Statistical Yearbooks, 2012, accessed December 20, 2016, http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2012/indexeh.htm

development concept for the military.[92] China's current military structure and modernization still follows this doctrine.

Actually, the modernization of the PLA and the consistent increases in the military budget began during the 1996 Taiwan crisis. Annual growth was around 11 percent between 1996 and 2015. China's military modernization focused on increasing capabilities to handle a conflict in the Taiwan Strait—stressing air and naval forces, conventionally armed ballistic missiles, and cyber capabilities.[93]

China's military budget increasingly parallels its economic development. There are also serious discussions of transparency with respect to statistical information. China's own statistics and international statistics on China's military budget differ. According to China's white paper,

> China's GDP was RMB 31,404.5 billion in 2008 and RMB 34,090.3 billion in 2009. State financial expenditure was RMB 6,259.266 billion in 2008 and RMB 7,629.993 billion in 2009, up 25.7 percent and 21.9 percent respectively over the previous year. China's defense expenditure was RMB 417.876 billion in 2008 and RMB 495.11 billion in 2009, up 17.5 percent and 18.5 percent respectively over the previous year.[94]

China's increasing military budget, the rate of which surpasses the growth rate of its GDP, is a serious concern for pessimists. If China continues to increase its military budget, it will catch up to US expenditure in the Asia Pacific, an area China prioritizes in terms of its national security, in the near future. On the other hand, this does not necessarily threaten US national security; the US defense budget was almost half a trillion dollars (eight times greater than that of China) over the same period."[95] As a counterargument, the United States

92 James Mulvenon, "Chairman Hu and the PLA's 'New Historic Missions'," *China Leadership Monitor* 27 (2009):1.

93 Eric Heginbotham, *The U.S.-China Military Scorecard: Forces, Geography, and the Evolving Balance of Power, 1996-2017* (Santa Monica, Calif: RAND Corporation, 2015), xx.

94 "China's National Defense in 2010," *Xinhua,* March 31, 2011, accessed December 29, 2016, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-03/31/c_13806851.htm

95 Beckley, "China's Century?," 73.

Department of Defense claims China's real military spending is two to two-and-a-half times as high as the announced figures.[96]

According to another perspective, the United States is more powerful than China in terms of military capabilities, China's incredible military achievements notwithstanding.[97] Thomas J. Christensen claims that China's military capabilities are increasing, but with only limited capacity to be a "peer competitor" of the United States.[98] In other words, the United States will continue to dominate East Asia with its superior naval and strategic forces.[99]

China's nuclear capacity, however, has created anxiety in the United States and neighboring countries. According to the Defense Intelligence Agency, China has forty-five long-range missile, twelve submarine-based missile, and 100 short-range missile.[100] Although China has expressed that first-use is not a nuclear strategy for China, especially in the context of a crisis involving Taiwan, other actors are in doubt about a serious military reaction from China.[101] China conducted an anti-satellite ballistic missile test to destroy one of its satellites in orbit for the first time in 2007. China's capability to use this sophisticated missile technology also caused great concern among neighboring countries and the United States.[102] China's anti-access/area denial capabilities have also increased in recent years. These capabilities include

> a large number of highly accurate ballistic missiles, high quality anti-ship cruise missiles, submarines, sophisticated long-range air defense systems, and counter-C4ISR (command, control, communication, computer, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) capabilities,

96 Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, "A Critique of the China Threat Theory: A Systemic Analysis," *Asian Perspective* 31 (2007):49.

97 Beckley, "China's Century?," 43.

98 Thomas J. Christensen, "Posing Problems Without Catching Up: China's Rise and Challenges for U.S. Security Policy," *International Security* 25 (2001):11.

99 Al-Rodhan, "A Critique of the China Threat Theory," 50.

100 R. Kutay Karaca, *Güç Olma Stratejisi: Çin* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2008), 25.

101 Kang, "Hierarchy, Balancing, and Empirical Puzzles," 177.

102 T. X. Hammes, "Great Power War: Historical Inevitability or Deterrable Choice?," *Asia-Pacific Review* 21 (2014): 23.

including counterspace, electronic warfare, cyberwarfare, and anti-radiation systems.[103]

As discussed in the following chapters, especially with reference to Iran's nuclear issue, China's policy of arms control and non-proliferation is another serious area of divergence among IR scholars. According to the white paper, China opposes any kind of nuclear proliferation. It believes countries with nuclear weapons should cooperate with international institutions like the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to control all forms of nuclear activity. In addition, as a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), China supports the goals set out at the NPT Review Conference held in 2010. China also supports the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.[104]

China's defense industry is also seriously behind the United States. For example, US military spending reached its highest level by 2011, accounting for about 40 percent of world military spending. After 2011, it gradually declined to 2002 levels—about 35 percent of world military spending.[105] China was second in terms of military spending after the United States in 2011.[106]

China's offshore defense capabilities are another concern for pessimistic perspective since it is a clear example of China's global ambitions. According to one argument, China's hegemonic tendencies are indicated by its attempts to develop overseas naval capabilities. According to China's white paper, China is developing its capacity to conduct operations in distant waters.[107] However, China's participation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping

103 Heginbotham, *The U.S.-China Military Scorecard*, 4.

104 "China's National Defense in 2010," *Xinhua* March 31, 2011, accessed December 29, 2016, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-03/31/c_13806851.htm

105 Dinah Walker, "Trends in U.S. Military Spending" *Council on Foreign Relations Report* July 15, 2014, accessed January 2, 2017, http://www.cfr.org/defense-budget/trends-us-military-spending/p28855

106 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 2012: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, accessed on December 14, 2016, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2016-03/SIPRIYB12Summary.pdf

107 Wang Li and Paul Dottin, "Behind China's Peacekeeping Missions in Africa: Interpreting Beijing's Strategic Considerations," *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi* 14(2011):4.

operations is important evidence for optimists, who claim that China's strengthening military does not threaten international peace. The white paper clearly stated that "as of December 2010, China has dispatched 17,390 military personnel to 19 UN peace-keeping missions. Nine officers and men have lost their lives on duty."[108]

Technological capabilities and the modernization of the PLA are the most serious issues contributing to the China threat thesis common to pessimist perspectives. Although China's official discourses are moderate in terms of national and international security, China has accelerated its military modernization and technological capabilities in parallel with its economic development.

The most significant discussion concerns the quality and quantity of China's sophisticated weapons and its nuclear strategy. Since the PLA has shifted its focus from "quantity and scale" to "quality and efficiency," China's naval forces, according to Rodhan, carry out offensive operations more than one hundred miles from its shores.[109]

§ 2.4 China and the Middle East: Foreign Policy Aspects of Debates on China's Rise

In preceding sections, this chapter analyzed two mainstream IR theories and their sub-categories to show the great divergence that exists among IR scholars on the question of China's rise and power transition debates. Although pessimists and optimists have different arguments with respect to China's rise and its consequences, the concrete examples they offer focus on international political changes, the economic consequences of these changes, and the military advances of China.

The main drawback of these theoretical arguments is the lack of concrete evidence they provide when examining the implications of China's national power for its foreign policy behavior and diplomatic positions in international

108 "China's National Defense in 2010," *Xinhua,* March 31, 2011, accessed December 29, 2016, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-03/31/c_13806851.htm

109 Al-Rodhan, "A Critique of the China Threat Theory," 51.

crises. Beyond economic indications and military advancements, the foreign policy of a rising China is an important indication of its capability to affect the current international order.

Although pessimist and optimist arguments have created fruitful discussions about the rise of China, pessimists, particularly treat the issue of China's rise as if it inevitably ends with Chinese hegemony in the world. Thus, according to them, the United States and other countries should implement policies as parallel to China's new hegemonic status. Some optimists, on the other hand, argue that China's rise will eventually create a peaceful international order.

This dissertation contributes to both the pessimist and optimist perspectives, though it differs form both on some points. According to the main argument of the dissertation, the rise of China is not a phenomenon that has already been realized. It is a process that started with the 1978 opening-up reforms. It continues to shape China's political, economic, military, and foreign policies. If we assume that the rise of China is a process, we can also assume that there are ups and downs—continuities and ruptures—in China's political, economic, and military development. These fluctuations also affect Chinese foreign policy behavior. This dissertation also argues that it is necessary to analyze Chinese foreign policy to understand China's national power capabilities. As laid out in the following chapters, the political, economic, and military development of China directly affects its foreign policy and diplomatic positions in international crises. Therefore, this dissertation analyzes Chinese foreign policies vis-à-vis non-Arab countries in the Middle East during the period 2001-2011, focusing on three international crises—namely, Iran's nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question—to understand the main dynamics of the rise of China.

China is clearly a rising power with the capacity to change the behaviors of other countries in the political, economic, and military fields. But among these three fields, the economic advancements of China have prevailed over the other two fields. Thus, it can be claimed that China is not heavily involved in the political or military fields. However, China's economic advancements have paved the way for an active diplomacy in the Middle East in the period 2001-2011. As discussed in the next chapters, China is not a dominant power

nonetheless has reservations and is dissatisfied about international crises in the Middle East. Although it does not openly challenge US hegemony there, China's economic and diplomatic efforts have increased its bargaining capabilities against the United States and other great powers.

The main argument of the dissertation revolves around several specific questions. What is the effect of the rise of China on the Middle East? How do we define the diplomatic capabilities of China in international crises? Are there indications of power transition or hegemonic transition in the Middle East? How does the phenomenon of China's rise resonate in non-Arab countries of the Middle East? Is China an aggressive or moderate actor in terms of its foreign policy behaviors in international crises? In the framework of these questions, the political, economic, and military dimensions of China's rise will be examined in the context of non-Arab countries.

Contrary to pessimist perspectives, China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East has accommodated both regional and global political realities. A few exceptions are evaluated in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.

This dissertation proposes four specific arguments about Chinese foreign policy toward non-Arab countries in the Middle East, filling a gap in the theoretical discussions of China's rise and power transition debates between optimists and pessimists.

First, the phenomenon of the rise of China mainly concerns China's unprecedented economic development. Thus, political and military achievements do not play the same role in its foreign policy behaviors. In terms of China's foreign policy towards non-Arab countries in the Middle East, the level of relations can be categorized according to China's economic dependence on any country. For instance, relations between China and Iran are the most well-developed of any of the countries studied here. The reason is that China needs Iranian oil and gas resources. Despite its various economic priorities, China's political and military relations are limited with respect to all non-Arabian countries in the Middle East.

Second, contrary to pessimistic assumptions, China is not to threating the international political order and economic institutions. In the case studies examined here, China did not challenge the current status quo through the use

of coercive force or hard power. Rather than strict policy instruments, Chinese foreign policy generally relied on such soft power mechanisms as economic leverage and diplomatic tools.

Third, contrary to optimistic assumptions, China has serious reservations and is dissatisfied about specific political, economic, and military issues. This means that China will not integrate easily into the current international order and institutions.

Last, contrary to pessimistic assumptions about China's global hegemonic tendencies, China places more importance on its own domestic and regional political and economic problems than on global or cross-regional crises. In the cases of international crisis addressed in this dissertation, China generally makes analogies and comparisons between its own regional and domestic problems and international crises in the Middle East. The most crucial examples of this are the issues of Xinjiang and Taiwan.

Although overall the findings of this dissertation are closer to those offered by optimistic accounts, it does not ignore pessimistic arguments. Since China's rise is a newly emerging phenomenon in the IR literature, it did not come to an end with a concrete political, economic and military superiority of China over the current balance of power in the Middle East. The findings of this dissertation suggest that the rise of China and China's influence over the region continue to be shaped by China's foreign policy objectives and strategies. Thus, alongside current discussions among IR scholars, China's intentions and strategic advancements in the ongoing chaotic political atmosphere of the Middle East pave the way for further discussion in the future.

3

China's Middle East Policy

Analyses of China's Middle East policies have so far generally focused on economic and diplomatic dimensions of bilateral relations. Actually, this focus was a practical necessity since China's foreign policy engagements in the Middle East had no full-fledged political and strategical objectives until the 2000s. After China's increasing visibility in international relations in the fields of trade, diplomacy, and the military, China's Middle East policy reached a complexity that should be redefined. This chapter discusses how China's political and economic visibility in global politics forced it to reestablish a new Middle East policy framework during the period 2001-2011. In the first part of the chapter, China's international visibility is analyzed by narrating the historical background of China's Middle East policies. This narrative is divided into five different parts that the China's foreign policy shifts and continuities.

In the first part, the challenges and confrontations of Imperial China are analyzed to distinctly define China's foreign policy transition in the age of nation-states. In the second part, the communist revolution in 1949, China's revolutionary political understanding and China's ideologically-oriented foreign policy towards the Middle East are analyzed.[1] In the third part, China's first

1 John Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East* (New York: Pinter Publishing, 1991), 20.

foreign policy transition and the quest for an independent foreign policy during the period 1971-1991 are analyzed under the new framework of China's permanent membership in the United Nation Security Council (UNSC).[2] As the fourth part, China's foreign policy towards the Middle East during the period 1991-2001 is analyzed to understand China's pragmatist foreign policies. The ends of the Cold War and the 1991 Gulf War directly transformed China's foreign policy towards pragmatic ends.[3] In the last part, this pragmatism reached active and dynamic foreign policy objectives after China's WTO membership in 2001 and the US War on Terror in the post 9/11 period.

The fifth narrative is broadly analyzed to show China's specific national interests and policy objectives in the Middle East. As a potential challenger to the dominance of the US in the international power structure, China's degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction matters in the context of the Middle East. Therefore in the second part of the chapter, China's political and security relations, economic and energy dependence, and soft power capabilities in the Middle East are broadly discussed to show the degree of China's satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

§ 3.1 Historical Background of China's Middle East Policy

In the classical, imperial ages, the search for security and immunity from neighboring communities urged China to establish a system of alliance and patronage on its western frontiers. For example, for the first time in the history of Imperial China, an envoy was sent to the western frontiers to establish alliances against communities surrounding China's interior during the Han Dynasty. Zhang Qian, the first envoy to the western frontiers, set out on two expeditions outside of Chinese territories in 138 and 116 BC, respectively. According to Harris, there was no direct contact between China and the

2 The periodization of China's independent foreign policy between 1971 and 1991 has partly borrowed from Lillian Craig Harris. Lillian Craig Harris, *China Considers the Middle East* (New York: I.B Tauris, 1993), 175.

3 P. R. Kumaraswamy, "Introduction," in *China and The Middle East: The Quest for Influence* ed. P. R. Kumaraswamy (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999), 15.

outside world at the time, but as a result of these expeditions and immense amount of Chinese goods and merchants reached Parthia and Rome, indicating the first concrete relations between China and outside world.[4] Morever, the ancient Silk Road played crucial role for China's integration to faraway regions including Inner Asia, Anatolia, the Middle East, and even Europe.

3.1.1 *Imperial China and Common Reflections on Modernity*

According to one Chinese historian, John King Fairbank, the earliest reciprocal foreign economic activities started when Arabian and Persian merchants arrived in China's southern seas in approximately the third century.[5] Beyond these economic activities, the first political and cultural confrontations with West Asia (西□-Xi Ya) became apparent when Islam expanded to the western frontiers of China during the seventh century.[6] In the middle ages of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), Chinese and Muslim cultural connections brought about a peaceful integration of the two different civilizations. The first Muslim Chinese community flourished during the age of the Tang Dynasty. However, the first military confrontation with Muslim political entities also took place in this era. In 751 Talas War, which ended with an Arab victory over the Tang Dynasty, is one of the critical confrontations between Chinese and Muslims.[7]

Mongol military advances were other important historical ruptures creating new ties among Inner Asia, the Middle East, and the Chinese. After the invasion of Inner Asia and the Middle East, the Mongols established the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), the first to be governed by a non-Han ethnic group in Chinese history. Furthermore, General Zheng He's expeditions to the Middle

4 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 9.

5 Denis Crispin Twitchett and John King Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China: Sui and Tang China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 30.

6 The Chinese international relations literature and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs used the term "West Asia" (西亚-Xi Ya) to refer to Middle Eastern countries. The usage of "Middle East" (中东-Zhong Dong) started in recent decades, revealing the interactions between the Chinese and Western international relations literatures.

7 John King Fairbank and Merle Godman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 82.

East during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) can also be defined another important interaction between China and the Middle East.[8] As a Muslim Chinese, Zheng He was looking for new economic opportunities for China in the changing atmosphere of the world economy.[9] Zheng He visited more than thirty cities around the world including Middle Eastern cities such as Mecca. However, these efforts to connect China to outside world were stopped by an imperial edict in the middle of sixteenth century due to illicite trade and lack of official control.[10]

Great Britain consolidated the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf at the beginning of nineteenth century and became the new dominant power in the East Asia and the Middle East. While the industrial revolution provided a new economic supremacy for Great Britain, the French revolution triggered establishment of modern nation states all over the world. The French and industrial revolutions created a common historical experience for both China and Ottoman Empire, which governed almost all Middle Eastern lands at the time. Great Britain, for example, started to sign new agreements to open these political and social entities up to the market economy. The Ottomans signed the Baltalimanı Agreement in 1838 and China signed the Nanjing Treaty on August 26, 1842 right after being defeated by Great Britain in the Opium War.[11]

Meanwhile, during the nineteenth century, economic, social, and political transformations triggered a similar process accelerating the collapse of the two

8 Zheng He was a Chinese Muslim who served as a diplomat and commander during the early period of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). He commenced several different expeditions to faraway regions with highly sophisticated ships—from South Asia to the Middle East—between 1405 and 1433. For a detailed discussion, see Chun Hing Hui, "Huangming Zuxun: Zheng He he Xiaxiyang [Huangming Zuxun and Zheng He's Voyages to the Western Oceans]," *Zhongguo Wenhua Yanjiusuo Xuebao* 51 (2011):70.

9 Charles O. Hucker, "Ming Government" in *The Cambridge History of China: The Ming Dynasty 1368-1644*, ed. Dennis Twitchett et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 23.

10 James Geiss, "The Chia-ching reign, 1522-1566" in *The Cambridge History of China: The Ming Dynasty 1368-1644,* ed. Dennis Twitchett et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 490.

11 Fairbank and Godman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 200.

empires.[12] While nationalist rebellions and new independence movements slowly broke the Ottoman Empire apart, the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), Muslim Rebellions from 1855-1873 and Tungan Rebellions from 1862-1876 weakened the Qing dynasty.[13] In addition, Russian and Great Britain's competition for power over Central Asia made China's western frontiers less secure and instable at the end of the nineteenth century. Therefore, the Qing administration implemented several reforms such as the Tongzhi Restoration (1860-1874) which was similar to the Ottoman Empire's Tanzimat reforms.[14]

At the beginning of twentieth century, both the Qing and Ottoman Empires collapsed. In the Qing Empire, inefficient reforms and inaccurate changes in foreign relations engendered the Xinhai Revolution in 1911. However, the Xinhai Revolution stirred up new reforms and political struggles among various ideological groups including the nationalists and communists after a short period of warlords.[15]

Before the collapse of the two empires, both the Chinese and Ottomans tried to learn from each other about how to prevent the collapse of their states. For example, Kang Youwei, one of the important reformists in the Qing Empire, visited Istanbul in 1903. During his visit, he tried to understand the current political and social conditions of the Ottomans.[16] On the other hand, the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress sent several officials to the western frontiers of China to learn about the latest situation in China and Central Asia during the World War I.[17]

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12 Seda Altan, "Osmanlı'ya Doğu'dan Bakmak: 20. Yüzyıl Dönümünde Çin'de Osmanlı Algısı ve Milliyetçilik" in *Türkiye'de Çin'i Düşünmek: Ekonomik, Siyasi ve Kültürel İlişkilere Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, ed. Selçuk Esenbel et al. (İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013), 92.

13 Fairbank and Godman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 233.

14 Reşat Kasaba, "Treaties and Friendships: British Imperialism, the Ottoman Empire, and China in the Nineteenth Century" *Journal of World History* 4 (1993): 217.

15 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 262.

16 Giray Fidan, *Çin'den görünen Osmanlı: Çinli Düşünür Kang You Wei'in Türk Seyahatnâmesi* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2012), 15.

17 Yusuf Gedikli, *Asya'da Beş Türk* (İstanbul: Ötüken Yayınevi, 1998), 11.

The political and economic consequences of World War I created disappointment in both Chinese and Ottomans. None among the Chinese, Arabs, Turks, and Persians were satisfied with consequences of World War I.[18] After the war, tense criticism of and protests against their current administrations intensified among the Ottoman and Chinese people. The Turks started a war of independence against its occupiers between 1919 and 1922. As a result of this long, stressful war, the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923.[19] While Anatolia and a small part of Thrace became the new borders of the republic, Arabs were obliged to make various agreements with occupiers in their lands and established their own nation-states such as Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.[20] In 1919, the Chinese people arranged new, nationalist demonstrations against foreign powers that occupied the eastern ports of China. These demonstrations became the basis for the later political struggle between the nationalists and communists.[21]

The new republic in China established its first diplomatic relations with Iran and Turkey in 1920 and in 1934, respectively.[22] Even though civil war (the first stage of which was between 1927-1937) and Japanese occupation (1937-1945) created negative political conditions, the Nanjing government continued to expand foreign relations in the Middle East. But these relations were not stable and the atmosphere was not sufficiently positive to conduct full-fledged foreign policy with Middle Eastern countries.[23]

3.1.2 *Revolutionary Politics and Ideology, 1949-1971*

After a long civil war and an instable political and economic environment, the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) under the leadership of Mao Zedong

18 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 31.

19 Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 133.

20 Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 81.

21 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China,* 334.

22 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 59.

23 Ibid., 60.

announced its victory over the Kuomintang (KMT).[24] After the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, China's foreign policy was mainly shaped by the feeling of isolation from the outside world. To overcome this, China leaned on one side—namely to the USSR—in the beginning of 1950s.[25] The KMT, which lost the civil war, was obliged to flee Taiwan (Farmosa Island) as soon as the CCP declared its authority over the mainland. In response to the CCP, the KMT declared the establishment of the Republic of China (ROC), claiming similar sovereign rights as the PRC.[26] From that time, controversial issues between mainland China and Taiwan continue to affect China's foreign relations with other countries.[27]

Despite the ideological similarity, Sino-Russian diplomatic relations were not harmonious in the 1950s. China desired to establish equal relations, but Stalin's perception of Chinese revolution was not friendly.[28] Because of that, China has consistently tried to expand its diplomatic relations by diversifying its foreign policy objectives since 1949. China decided to implement a different foreign policy by declaring the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" at the Bandung Conference in 1955.[29] Looking for support from the Third World became China's priority at the time. In terms of Middle East policy, China had three priorities: international recognition, increasing bilateral trade, and the provision of foreign aid.[30]

According to Mao Zedong's understanding of world politics, the Middle East was an "intermediate zone" between two powers: the Soviets and the

24 Mao Zedong, "Proclamation of Central People's Government of the PRC," in *The Writings of Mao Zedong 1949-1976 Volume 1* ed. Michael Y. M. Kau et al. (New York: M. E. Sharper, Inc., 1986), 10.

25 Sergei Goncharov et al., *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War* (California: Standford University Press, 1993), 77.

26 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China,* 510.

27 "Full text of Hu Jintao's report at 17th Party Congress," *Xinhua*, accessed December 14, 2016, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749_9.htm

28 Goncharov et al., *Uncertain Partners*, 76.

29 Marc Lanteigne, *Chinese Foreign Policy: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 133.

30 Muhamad Olimat, *China and the Middle East: From Silk Road to Arab Spring* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 18.

United States. China could take advantage of this "intermediate zone" by implementing anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist policies that would attract Middle Eastern countries.[31] According to Harris, this ideologically-oriented foreign policy discourse did not attract Middle Eastern countries since many had pro-western governments at the time, including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. For example, in August 1950 the Arab League recognized the ROC as a legitimate representative to the UN rather than the PRC.[32] However, this situation changed after the Suez War of 1956 when some Middle Eastern countries started establishing diplomatic relations with the PRC. Until 1971, only a few Middle Eastern countries had recognized the PRC as the legitimate representative of China—Israel in 1950; Egypt, Syria and Yemen in 1956; Iraq and Morocco in 1958; and Algeria in 1962.[33]

Not only the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) but the negative experiences of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1961) and the Hundred Flowers Campaign (1956) created a tense political atmosphere in the domestic politics of China.[34] All these changes determined the main features of China's foreign policy

31 Mao Zedong, "There Are Two Intermediate Zones," September, 1963, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, accessed in March 16, 2017, Translation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and the Party Literature Research Center, eds., *Mao Zedong on Diplomacy* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1998), 387-389. http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121207.pdf?v=8d8b07d69e21da7a223599963adc01ba

32 Yitzhak Shichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 27.

33 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 73.

34 The Hundred Flowers Campaign was a brief period of liberalization in Chinese politics that allowed intellectuals and artists to express their opinions on the communist revolution. Nevertheless, it was suppressed by Mao Zedong's abrupt policy changes. In response, an anti-rightist campaign was started to prevent ongoing criticism of the communist regime. However, the Great Leap Forward was a social and economic campaign to accelerate China's economic development from an agricultural to an industrialized economy. Nevertheless, it caused great famine due to lack of correct policy. All these developments urged China to question its international status during the Cold War. Although Mao Zedong tried to reestablish the CCP's political discourse during the Cultural Revolution, Chinese international integration also started in the midst of this revolution, including permanent membership in the UNSC in 1971 and rapprochement with the US in 1972.

during this period. Even though China's Middle East policy was limited and restricted by great competition for power at the time, China intensified its "third world" foreign policy discourses by supporting national liberation movements in the Middle East. However, China's traditional "non-intervention by outside powers policy" with respect to the Middle East gained momentum in this period. According to Harris, the "China model" was also an important discussion among Middle Eastern countries and especially political parties affiliated with the leftist and communist ideologies at the time.[35]

During the period between 1949 and 1971, China directly supported socialist and communist political movements and parties such as the Dhofar Liberation Front in Oman and the Algerian National Liberation Front in Algeria.[36] The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established in 1964 and the first Fatah delegation visited China, after which China directly supported the Palestinian cause and the struggle against Israel, a fact which is broadly discussed in the related chapter. During this period, China placed more importance on diplomatic relations with Egypt since the Arab nationalist political discourses of Gamal Abdel Nasser, then president of Egypt, was popular among Middle Eastern countries. According to China, Egypt was central to its Middle Eastern policy. Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai visited Egypt five times between 1963-1965 to show the special attention given by China to the Middle East and Egypt. China's first cotton imports—from Egypt—were during this period.[37]

Although Egypt is still strategically important for the Chinese, Egypt's relative power decreased and remained less than that of regional powers such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Iran in the post-Cold War period. In addition to Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries, non-Arabian countries (Turkey, Iran, and Israel) became strategically important in Chinese foreign policy during the period 2001-2011.

35 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 98.

36 Hashim Behbehani, *China's Foreign Policy in the Arab World, 1955-75: Three Case Studies* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1981), 5.

37 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 110-111.

3.1.3 *The Quest for an Independent Foreign Policy, 1971-1991*

The ideologically-oriented foreign policy of China was challenged by three critical historical developments during this period. One was China's permanent membership in the UNSC in 1971. Actually, Sino-US rapprochement which had already started by the end of 1960s, triggered new power relations among the superpowers. Thus, China was obliged to change the direction of its foreign policy objectives.

China's membership in the UNSC was voted on in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) upon Albania's motion to recognize the PRC as the only legal China in October 25, 1971. According to UNGA voting records, 131 member countries of the UN participated in the vote. While seventy-six of them voted in affirmative, thirty-five loaded in the negative. Seventeen members abstained and three did not participate in the voting. Except for Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, the majority of Middle Eastern countries voted in the affirmative, including Iran, Israel, Turkey, and Egypt.[38] In this way, the one China policy became the central issue for each country wishing to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC.

A second challenge to its ideologically-oriented foreign policy came from within Chinese politics in the form of the opening-up reforms (gaige kaifang-改革开放) which started to become apparent after eleventh CCP Party Congress in 1978. While China changed the direction of its foreign policy in favor of political rapprochement with great powers, the opening policies have also stirred up a new economic orientation towards a market economy with Chinese characteristics (Zhongguo Tese-中国特色).[39]

China adopted a more moderate, independent foreign policy during this time. But domestic politics and power struggles inside the CCP dominated Chinese foreign policy, as well. After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, Deng Xiaoping's reformist domestic and foreign policy agenda prevailed over other

38 "Restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations," accessed December 20, 2016, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/327/74/IMG/NR032774.pdf?OpenElement

39 Fang Cai, *Demystifying China's Economy Development* (New York: China Social Science Press and Springer, 2015), 1.

controversial issues inside the government and in Chinese society. It was not only beginning of a new reform era or all social strata but also the fastest transition in history of China's foreign policy.[40]

In 1982, four years after the promulgation of the opening-up reforms, an independent foreign policy was promulgated by the new party elites in the twelfth CCP Conress consolidating power in the post-Mao era.[41] While opening-up policies mainly concerned economic and institutional reforms, the CCP Congress focused on shifts in foreign policy as well, integrating China's domestic and foreign policies. The first important development was the establishment of Sino-US diplomatic relations in 1979. One year prior to that, in 1978, China had recognized Israel's right to exist even if it did not yet officially recognize the State of Israel. Chinese and Israeli representatives to the UN had been meeting in New York to discuss diplomatic rapprochement between the two countries since 1977.[42]

A third challenge to its ideologically-oriented foreign policy, the Iran-Iraq war between 1981 and 1988, created an important opportunity for China to become more involved in Middle Eastern affairs. China had already started to sell arms to Middle Eastern countries, and the war accelerated this process. From that time, China has been seen as an alternative power that can interfere with the balance of power in the Middle East through an arms race, provision of high-tech weapons, and diplomatic support in the UN. As is broadly discussed by Garver, China provided arms for both sides during the Iraq-Iran War, but its stance was more pro-Iranian.[43] Event though Garver provides no concrete evidence to prove China's neutrality or pro-Iranian stance, given Cold War strategic thinking and the lack of trust between the United States and China, it is plausible that China did not want a powerful US ally in the Middle East at the time.

40 Lanteigne, *Chinese Foreign Policy,* 47.

41 Ibid., 128.

42 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,* 127.

43 John Garver, *China and Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-Imperial World* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 94

High-level diplomatic visits to the Middle East increased during this period. For example, Premier Zhao Ziyang visited Egypt in 1982, for the first time since 1965 that a premier had done so. Moreover, President Li Xiannian visited Jordan in 1984 and President Yang Shangkun visited the Middle East in 1989. China increased aid to Palestinians after recognizing the state of Palestine in 1988.[44] China has improved its new independent foreign policy by establishing diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia in 1990. These diplomatic activities prove that China was preparing for a transition in its Middle East policy.[45]

The Tiananmen massacre slowed Chinese diplomatic activities and its new model of integration with outside world. It also showed that rapid reformation in China's domestic economic and political spheres cannot be pursued without the support of political forces in Chinese politics such as the party, the army, and new liberal-minded business elites. As a result of political struggles among these forces in Chinese politics, Jiang Zemin, who supported the opening-up reforms, became president in 1993.[46] These internal dynamics also mitigated the negative effects of post-Cold War transition periods in China's foreign policy towards the Middle East.

3.1.4 *Pragmatist Foreign Policy, 1991-2001*

During the period of pragmatist foreign policy between 1991 and 2001, two important developments, namely the ends of the Cold War and the 1991 Gulf War, shaped regional political and economic structures in the Middle East. These developments also affected China's foreign policy towards the region. For example, in response to the first development—which was related to the Soviets' decline and the new US supremacy over the region—China looked for new ways to engage in the region during the period 1991-2001.

For the first time, China supported one Arab country over another by strongly criticizing Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991. After the opening-up

44 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 234.

45 John Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East*, 147.

46 Lanteigne, *Chinese Foreign Policy,* 127.

reforms, China focused on economic relations with Middle Eastern countries.[47] For that reason, the invasion of Kuwait and ensuing Gulf War negatively affected China's primary national interest in the Middle East. Indeed, China lost 2 billion dollars in contracts and remittances at the beginning of the Gulf War. For the first time, China took sides, warning the Iraq government to withdraw and restore Kuwait's sovereignty. Furthermore, China supported ten successive UNSC resolutions urging Iraq to stop its invasion of Kuwait and threatening to end all commercial and military trade with Iraq.[48] This was the first indication of China's pragmatism in the Middle East.

China does not adopt ideologically-oriented foreign policies anymore, and rational, pragmatist foreign policy decisions have bacome the norm. The only change is the intensity of the pragmatism implemented in different periods. Although China's objectives after the Cold War, such as its economy and energy first diplomacy were pragmatist, it did not possess the necessary diplomatic tools and institutions to force countries in the Middle East to develop closer relations that would favor China's national interests in the period 1991-2001.

Meanwhile, not only competition for power but domestic political concerns urged China to become more pragmatist in its foreign policy. After the US embargo following the Tiananmen massacre, China faced another risk of becoming isolated. Deng Xiaoping, the central political figure managing and leading the political and economic processes in post-Mao China, reignited the process of reform in 1992. One year later, China became a net-oil importer in 1993.[49] This was a historical moment in China's Middle East policies since then China's energy dependence on the Middle East has increased enormously.

Although the priority of Chinese leaders was the economic sphere, they were aware of the importance of foreign policy which went hand-in-hand with economic development during the new period characterized by the

47 Yitzhak Shichor, "Decisionmaking in Triplicate: China and the Three Iraqi Wars" in *Chinese National Security Decisionmaking Under Stress* ed. Andrew Scobell et al. (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2005), 195

48 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 246

49 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,* 43.

Washington Consensus and the neo-liberal orientation of the world economy. China has taken advantage of the globalization of world economies and of the victory of open-market economies over state-controlled economies during the 1990s.[50] China poured its immense population into the Chinese economy. In this way, China created incredibly cheap labor, attracting foreign companies wanting to invest. However, China's main obstacle was to sustain current economic development structures that largely depended on outside energy resources. Therefore, China pursued pragmatist foreign policies towards energy-rich Middle Eastern countries.[51]

In the diplomatic sphere, China immediately established official diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia in 1990 and with Israel in 1992.[52] At the beginning of the 1991-2001 period, China did not intend to get involved in conflicts such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and Iran's nuclear issue. China took advantage of US supremacy in the Middle East during that time since the US was the only super power providing stability in these energy-rich regions, which in turn provided energy security for China.

§ 3.2 Active Pragmatism and the Main Drivers of China's Middle East Policy, 2001-2011

Two decades of China's foreign policy transitions between 1991 and 2011 reveal different objectives and strategies. The main definition of active pragmatism concerns China's rising political, economic, and military capabilities which contribute to its security concerns and national interests both in regional and global politics. In terms of Middle Eastern politics, the period 2001-2011 clearly exemplified China's active pragmatism as it established new tools and diplomatic mechanisms to pursue its overall foreign policy objectives. These included establishment of a Middle East envoy, active participation in UN

50 Giovanni Arrighi, "China's Market Economy in the Long Run," in *China and the Transformation of Global Capitalism* ed. Ho-Fung Hung (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 23.

51 Kumaraswamy, *China and the Middle East*, 13.

52 Ibid., 12.

peacekeeping operations, establishment of Confucius Institutes, and increasing economic relations.[53]

In the period 2001-2011, three developments had a crucial impact on the foreign policy of China in the Middle East. First, new US security arrangements after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Greater Middle East Initiative urged China to become more involved in Middle Eastern politics. Second, China's economic priorities and energy needs affected China's foreign policy concerns with respect to the Middle East. Last, political and social changes in old, authoritarian Middle Eastern regimes have renewed long standing instability throughout the region.

China has responded to those three dramatic developments in the Middle East. First, in response to the heavy military and intervention of the US, China became more involved in the region by using new political and diplomatic tools such as the China-Arab Cooperation Forum in 2004 and Confucius Institutes in 2005. Second, in line with the primary objective of China's national economic development, energy has predominated over other issues in relations with countries in the region. Third, in response to social and political changes in the region, China has aligned with incumbent regimes since it opposed structural changes in the region.[54]

3.2.1 *Politics and Security*

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, China's security perception and strategies started to change in accord with new dynamics in both regional and global politics. In terms of Middle Eastern politics, China had a dilemma. On the one hand, China's dependence on the Middle East for energy forced it to compromise with existing regimes; on the other, unilateral military operations by the US forced China to remain neutral between the United States and countries in the region up until 2011. Therefore, China was drawn into Middle Eastern politics since its energy needs prevailed other issues. Since 2001, China has increased its political, military, security, economic, and cultural

53 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,* 88.

54 Ibid., 57.

influence over the region, protecting its national interests in the region's chaotic atmosphere.

During the period 2001-2011, China's Middle Eastern policies turned to active pragmatism, taking advantage of the chaotic security environment that had begun with the invasion of Iraq by the United States. Although China did not directly support the unilateral US intervention in Iraq, it voted in favor of UNSC resolution 1441 which harshly criticizes Saddam Husein's regime for not cooperating with IAEA's inspectors in 2001.[55] China also voted affirmatively on UNSC resolution 1368 which opened the way for intervention in Afghanistan in 2001.[56]

However, the invasion of Iraq by the United States was a significant concern for China from the beginning of the operations against Saddam Hussein and China's political and military allies. For example, Chinese media coverage strongly advocated for Iraq's sovereign right to exist and for the legitimacy of Saddam Husein's regime even after his capture in December 2003. According to Chinese media, the main intention of the US was not to bring peace and order to Iraq. The invasion was a tactic used by the Bush administration to strengthen its hegemony through a so-called counter-terrorism campaign. It was a kind of empire-building strategy, as well.[57]

Terrorism and China's domestic concerns such as the Uyghur issue were one of the biggest security concerns of China which affects its relations with Middle Eastern countries. The basic problem in Uyghur issue concerns the political, economic, and social conditions of local ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, from 2001 until today, China has considered the Uyghur issue as threats to China's national security and territorial integrity.[58] Therefore, the Uyghur issue has been handled with discourses of national security and

55 Ibid., 29.

56 "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts," accessed December 21, 2016, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/533/82/PDF/N0153382.pdf?OpenElement

57 Yuanying Pei, "More Troubles Ahead," *Beijing Review*, accessed December 14, 2016, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/200402/World-200402(B).htm

58 Kılıç Buğra Kanat, "The Securitization of the Uyghur Question and Its Challenges," *Insight Turkey* 18 (2016):202

nationalism by China. New non-traditional security concerns such as terrorist attacks and illegal migration have become one of the main reasons to improve relations with Middle Eastern countries. According to Blumenthal, rising energy cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia has also paved the way for cooperation on Uyghur problem.[59]

Another important security concern that affects China's foreign policy towards the Middle East is Japan. Following Saddam Husein's capture and rising enmity towards the US-led operation in Iraq, Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi decided to send Japanese Self-Defense Forces to Iraq. Right after this decision, Chinese media blamed Japan for expanding its military power in the Middle East. According to the Chinese, in defiance of the pacifist Japanese constitution, Japan had for the first time sent military personnel with heavy military equipment.[60]

In terms of political and diplomatic relations, China's main concern was stability in Middle Eastern countries since secure energy depends on a stable political and social order. For this reason, high-level visits have generally been made to energy-rich countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran. In addition to diplomatic visits, China established a Middle East envoy to improve relations with countries in the region, especially at moments of crisis. Since 2001, this envoy has visited several countries for the purposes of negotiation and cooperation.[61] Moreover, the China-Gulf Countries Forum was established in 2003 and the China-Arab Cooperation Forum was established in 2004, improving relations between China and Middle Eastern countries.[62] All these new mechanisms indicate the active pragmatism of the period, balancing unilateral action by the US and improving China's relations in the region.

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59 Dan Blumenthal, "Providing Arms: China and the Middle East," *Middle East Quarterly* Spring (2005):11

60 Haikuan Gao, "Sending Troops to Iraq Could Backfire on Japan" accessed December 14, 2016, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/200405/World-200405(A).htm

61 Zhiqun Zhu, "China's New Diplomacy in the Middle East and Its Implication for the United States," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 4 (2009):46.

62 A. Steve Yetiv and Chunlong Lu, "China, Global Energy, and the Middle East," *Middle East Journal* 61 (2007): 202

Competition for power in the Middle East is also one dynamic that China has taken under consideration. As a latecomer to the region, China found a region separated into several spheres of influence—of the United States, Russia, and the European Union. Therefore, it was not easy at the beginning to persuade the other great powers and the regional powers of a benign relationship depending on mutual interest. The lack of trust and misperceptions are still a crucial disadvantage with respect to Chinese foreign policy towards the Middle East.[63]

From a military perspective, rather than increasing offensive military capabilities in the region, China wants to improve its capabilities as an alternative arms supply. China wants to be one of the alternative suppliers in the region where there is an intense competition on the arms market. In the cases of Turkey, Iran, and Israel, China has enormously raised its share vis-à-vis traditional suppliers such as the United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, and Germany.[64] According to the statistics, China's arms supply rate was still under 1987 levels, but from 2007 to 2011 its tendency was to increase. According to the same statistics, Iran, Yemen, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Algeria were respectively the largest beneficiaries from Chinese arms exports to the Middle East.[65] However, beyond improving bilateral military relations, those arms sales can be considered a challenge to US supremacy in the region. Although China did not react to cancellations of its military projects with countries in the region under pressure from the United States, such as the Phalcon deal with Israel, it also did not abondon the role of being an alternative supplier.[66]

63 Zuokui Liu, "Perceptions and Misperceptions between Chinese and Turkish People: A Preliminary and Tentative Research," in *Sino-Turkey Relations: Concept, Policies and Prospects* ed. R. Kutay Karaca et al. (İstanbul: İstanbul Gelişim university Press, 2015), 228

64 "SIPRI Yearbook 2012: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security," accessed December 14, 2016, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2016-03/SIPRIYB12Summary.pdf

65 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,* 61-62.

66 A. Richard Bitzinger, "Arms to Go: Chinese Arms Sales to the Third World" *International Security* 17 (1992): 103.

Table 3.1 Main Importers and Exporters of Major Arms, 2010[67]

Exporter	Global Share (%)	Importer	Global Share (%)
USA	30	India	10
Russia	24	S. Korea	6
Germany	9	Pakistan	5
France	8	China	5
UK	4	Singapore	4
China	4	Australia	4
Spain	3	Algeria	4
Netherlands	3	USA	3
Italy	3	UAE	3
Israel	2	Greece	3

Another crucial military involvement on the part of China was under the umbrella of UN peacekeeping operations. China's contribution to UN peacekeeping operations around the world significantly increased during the period 2001-2011. For example, according to UN statistics, China contributed 103 military employees to UN peacekeeping operations worldwide in 2001. This number reached 1,924 including police (71), military experts (40), and troops (1813) by 2011. The UN had five peacekeeping missions—namely the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (Golan), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)—in the Middle East in 2001. In 2001, China contributed to the UNTSO with five military employees and to UNIKOM with eleven. In 2011, China contributed to UNFICYP with two military employees, to UNIFIL with 344 and to UNTSO four. Although China's heaviest military contribution to UN peacekeeping missions was in Africa during the period 2001-2011, the number of military employees in Lebanon proves China's active participation in Middle Eastern peace processes.

67 "SIPRI Yearbook 2012: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security." accessed December 14, 2016, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2016-03/SIPRIYB12Summary.pdf

3.2.2 *Economy and Energy Dependence*

Along with political and security issues in the Middle East, China placed importance on economy in its bilateral relations with the countries in the region. Trade and foreign investments with all Middle Eastern countries increased during the period 2001-2011. Meanwhile China's rising energy needs also increased the level of anxiety about energy security issues. Therefore, China used a two-fold strategy to secure its energy. First, trade partnerships and foreign direct investments increased the reputation of the Chinese as a reliable partner in the Middle East. Second, China signed bilateral energy agreements with Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Gulf countries for the purpose of creating a competitive energy market in the region.

Table 3.2 Producers of Crude Oil (2011, Mt-megatons-)[68]

Producers	Mt	% of World Total
Saudi Arabia	517	12.9
Russian Federation	510	12.7
United States	346	8.6
Islamic Rep. of Iran	215	5.4
People's Rep. of China	203	5.1
Canada	169	4.2
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	149	3.7
Venezuela	148	3.7
Mexico	144	3.6
Nigeria	139	3.5
Rest of the world	1471	36.6
World	4011	100.0

68 International Energy Agency, "Key World Energy Statistics 2012," accessed March 16, 2017, http://alofatuvalu.tv/FR/12_liens/12_articles_rapports/IEA_rpt_2012_us.pdf

Table 3.3 Net Exporters and Importers of Crude Oil (2011)[69]

Net Exporters	Mt	Net Importers	Mt
Saudi Arabia	353	United States	500
Russian Federation	247	People's Rep. of China	251
Islamic Rep. of Iran	122	Japan	177
Nigeria	121	India	172
United Arab Emirates	114	Korea	125
Iraq	108	Germany	90
Venezuela	93	Italy	77
Kuwait	89	France	64
Canada	82	Singapore	58
Angola	79	Netherlands	57
Others	574	Others	508
Total	1982	Total	2079

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the total primary energy supply (TPES) in the world in 2011 reached approximately 3 million toe (metric tons of oil equivalent) in coal, 3 million toe in oil, and 2.5 million toe in natural gas. When the coal supply included, China's shares of the TPES became 20.9 percent, second after the 40.5 percent share of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Although China needed energy from outside sources, in terms of coal production and consumption China was the biggest producer and consumer. According to the same statistics of IEA, China's coal production was 45.3 percent of total world production. Negative environmental effects of coal consumption made China's cities the most polluted over the last decade. Therefore, China started to diversify its energy sources.

69 International Energy Agency, "Key World Energy Statistics 2013," accessed December 14, 2016, http://www.observatoire-du-nucleaire.org/IMG/pdf/2013-keyworld-aie.pdf

Table 3.4 Producers of Natural Gas (2011, bcm-billion cubic meters)[70]

Producers	bcm	% of World Total
Russian Federation	677	20
United States	651	19,2
Canada	160	4,7
Qatar	151	4,5
Islamic Rep. of Iran	149	4,4
Norway	106	3,1
People's Rep. of China	103	3,0
Saudi Arabia	92	2,7
Indonesia	92	2,7
Netherlands	81	2,4
Rest of the world	1126	33,3
World	338	100,0

Table 3.5 Net Exporters and Importers of Natural Gas (2011)[71]

Net Exporters	bcm	Net Importers	bcm
Russian Federation	196	Japan	116
Qatar	119	Italy	70
Norway	99	Germany	68
Canada	63	United States	55
Algeria	49	Korea	47
Indonesia	46	Ukraine	44
Netherlands	33	Turkey	43
Turkmenistan	29	France	41
Nigeria	26	United Kingdom	37
Malaysia	22	Spain	34
Others	152	Others	279
Total	834	Total	834

70 International Energy Agency, "Key World Energy Statistics 2012," accessed March 16, 2017, http://alofatuvalu.tv/FR/12_liens/12_articles_rapports/IEA_rpt_2012_us.pdf

71 Ibid.

China was the second biggest importer of crude oil after the United States in 2011. In terms of natural gas, China was not among the top ten net importer countries in 2011. It is important to note that China's oil consumption reached 9.5 MMbd (millions of barrels per day) in 2011, up from 4.8 MMbd in 2001. According to the statistics, China's net crude oil imports from the Middle East reached to 5.5 MMbd in 2011 up from 1.4 MMbd in 2001. The huge increases in China's oil consumption are largely supplied by Middle Eastern countries. Among major Middle Eastern countries, Saudi Arabia and Iran were the biggest exporters to China, supplying 20 and 11 percent, respectively.

Table 3.6 China's Oil Consumption and Top Ten Sources of Crude Oil Imports, 2001-2011[72]

China's Oil Consumption in thousands of barrels per day		Top ten source countries for China's crude oil import in 2011	
Year	Mbd		
2001	4859	Saudi Arabia	20%
2002	5262	Angola	12%
2003	5771	Iran	11%
2004	6738	Russia	8%
2005	6944	Oman	7%
2006	7437	Iraq	5%
2007	7817	Sudan	5%
2008	7937	Venezuela	5%
2009	8201	Kazakhstan	4%
2010	9057	Kuwait	4%
2011	9510	Others	19%

72 International Energy Agency, "People's Republic of China; 2012 Key Datas," accessed December 20, 2016, https://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/China_2012.pdf

Table 3.7 China's Growth Rates; Oil Production, Consumption, and Net Imports in MMbd; and Oil Import Percentages from the Middle East, 2001-2011[73]

Year	Growth Rate	Production	Consumption	Net Imports	Oil Import
2001	7.3	3.434.535	4.917.882	1.483.347	56.2
2002	8	3.529.761	5.160.714	1.630.953	49.6
2003	9.1	3.559.006	5.578.111	2.019.105	50.9
2004	9.1	3.657.452	6.437.484	2.780.031	45.4
2005	9.9	3.781.760	6.720.000	2.939.240	47.2
2006	10.5	3.844.870	7.201.278	3.356.404	40.22
2007	11.4	3.900.958	7.817.000	3.677.000	39.95
2008	9.6	3.725.000	7.937.000	4.212.000	46.0
2009	9.2	3.995.620	8.537.860	4.210.000	52.0
2010	10.3	4.071.000	9.057.000	4.986.000	47.0
2011	9.2	4.100.000	9.510.000	5.505.900	46.0

The main objective of China's Middle East engagement is to provide secure energy for China's economic development. According to the statistics, China's oil consumption reached to 9.5 MMbd in 2011 from almost zero in 1960, while its oil production in 2011 was approximately around 4 MMbd. This means that China needs to import more than two times its own production. According to the China statistical yearbook, China provides almost 45 percent of its oil needs from the Middle East. In 2011, China's net oil imports from Middle Eastern countries were around 5.5 MMbd.[74]

All these numbers prove that China has heavily depended on Middle Eastern energy resources during the period 2001-2011. Although China planned to diversify its energy resources with pipelines through its southern neighbors and Central Asian countries, there were no pipelines fully-integrated into Chinese energy market by 2011. Thus, this created an energy security problem for China. Within the framework of this energy security problem, there are three crucial developments that can possibly affect China's current energy relations in the Middle East.

73 "China Statistical Yearbooks, 2012," accessed December 20, 2016, http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2012/indexeh.htm

74 Ibid., 42.

First, domestic and regional instabilities around energy-rich countries such as Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia can negatively affect oil production and security of energy lines. The US invasion of Iraq and rising resistance movements to the invasion triggered enormous inflows of terrorists to Iraq. Second, since energy agreements with energy-rich countries depend on bilateral relations, any deterioration of bilateral relations may cause a reduction in China's energy supply. In the example of Iran's nuclear issue, one of China's main concerns was a reduction in its oil supply from Iran. Last, China's heavy dependence on Middle Eastern energy resources could change its current relations with the United States. As of 2011, there were no indications of Chinese or US dissatisfaction with its current energy relations with Middle Eastern countries. But if one claimed superiority or privileges over Middle Eastern energy resources, it could easily change the direction of competition over these resources.[75]

In bilateral trade relations, however, China has surpassed the United States and Japan and has become one of the main trade partners for Middle Eastern countries in 2011. There are several factors affecting rising trade relations of China with Middle Eastern countries. First, China's energy needs and security are accentuated by trade relations. Chinese goods and services found a flourishing market in the Middle East, especially between 2001 and 2011. Second, traditional trade partners of Middle Eastern countries have also started to change over that time. For example, the amount of bilateral trade of both Europe and the United States dramatically decreased. As an alternative, China became a reliable trade partner for Middle Eastern countries. Last, China's export-oriented economic development also triggered trade relations with Middle Eastern countries. In this period, no other country had the capability to compete with China's goods and services in the Middle East.

China's total trade volume with Middle Eastern countries (including Cyprus and North Africa) reached around 256.6 billion dollars in 2011, up from 18.9 billion dollars in 2001. The approximate growth rate in the period 2001-2011 – 1250 percent – proves economic interdependence of China and Middle

75 Flynt Leverett and Jeffrey Bader, "Managing China-U.S. energy competition in the Middle East," The Washington Quarterly 29 (2005):192.

Eastern countries. The largest beneficiaries of China's trade with the Middle East were Saudi Arabia (64.3 billion dollars), Iran (45.1 billion dollars), the United Arab Emirates (35.1 billion dollars), and Turkey (18.7 billion dollars). Even though Turkey is not an energy-rich country like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, it was fourth in terms of total trade volume. Meanwhile, Iraq's total trade volume with China increased from 469 million dollars in 2001 to 14.2 billion dollars in 2011, showing that China actively participated in the post-war Iraq reconstruction process in terms of trade relations.[76]

The 2008 global financial crisis negatively affected China's trade relations with Middle Eastern countries. According to China's statistical yearbook, trade values with almost all Middle Eastern countries decreased enormously between 2008 and 2009, falling from 171.1 billion dollars in 2008 to 138 billion dollars in 2009. Just one year later, trade volumes reached a new high (188.5 billion dollar)—an indication of a fast recovery.[77]

Apart from bilateral trade relations, China's FDI also shaped its economic influence both at the global and regional levels. In 2011, China's global FDI net flows became 74.65 billion dollars, increasing 8.5 percent over 2010. Thus, China's global FDI net stock reached 424.78 billion dollars by the end of 2011, including 18 thousand overseas enterprises. According to the World Investment Report, China (excluding Hong Kong) ranked sixth among all countries in terms of outward FDI flows and thirteenth in terms of stock.[78] From 2002 until 2011, China's FDI net stock increased 1320 percent (from 29.9 billion dollars in 2002 to 424.78 billion dollars in 2011).

For Middle East countries including North Africa and Cyprus, China's total FDI net flows became five billion dollars in 2011. In the same interval of time, China's FDI net stock reached its highest level—around 6.6 billion dollars. Iran was a major country in terms of both total FDI flows and stocks between 2005 and 2011. In addition to Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria,

76 China Statistical Yearbooks, 2012; accessed June 3, 2017 http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2012/indexeh.htm

77 Ibid.

78 Jingxiong Yu, *"2011 Nian du Zhongguo dui wai zhi jie tou zi tong ji gong bao" [2011 statistical bulletin of China's outward foreign direct investment]*, (Beijing: Zhongguo Tongji Chuban She, 2012), 71.

Saudi Arabia and Turkey were among other countries attracted FDI net flows from China. Some Middle Eastern countries did not attract FDI net flow from China as much as others did such as Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Bahrain, and Tunusia over the same years. The global financial crisis of 2008 negatively affected China's FDI flows to Middle Eastern countries. Iran was the most affected by both global financial crisis and by UN sanctions which had started in 2006. However, just one year later, China's FDI flow to Iran increased enormously, reaching 124.83 million dollar in 2009.[79]

3.2.3 *Culture and Soft Power Diplomacy*

Beyond China's political and economic activities in the Middle East, cultural relations also played crucial role. China's emerging soft power is a new asset in terms of bilateral relations in the region. Since China was never a colonial power in the Middle East, its image is different from that of western powers including the United States. Since China's soft power capabilities had newly increased in the Middle East, it was not yet possible to see the results of China's soft power diplomacy between 2001 and 2011. Along with current political, economic, and military relations, China's new soft power diplomacy improved current bilateral relations in the Middle East.

As described by Harris, not only Sino-Arab relations but also the Persian, Turkish, and Jewish people's first confrontations with Chinese culture were under the umbrella of the famous Silk Road trade connections.[80] Even though China was a newcomer to the region after World War II, historical perception of the Silk Road continues to affect current cultural relations through China's soft power diplomacy. In every diplomatic visit, Chinese officials mention the thousand-year historical relations of Chinese civilization with Middle Eastern countries. This discourse not only helps improve current economic and political relations but also makes China a reliable partner in the Middle East.

In terms of mutual perception, China's activities in the Middle East are seen as positively by Arabian countries. For example, according to an Arab

79 Ibid., 72.

80 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East, 7.*

youth survey, China was favored over the United States among 18-24 year olds.[81] While the US image in the region was declining due to its military interventions, China's image was rising.[82] In another research of Brookings Arab Public Opinion Poll, China improved from third place in 2009 to second in 2010. The US was in sixth place among the seven countries that included France, China, Germany, Britain, Russia, and Pakistan.[83] On the other hand, according to another research on the mutual perceptions of the Chinese and Turkish people, rates were not positive.[84]

81 "U.S. Seen More Positively than China in Europe, Latin America, but Not Middle East," accessed December 15, 2016, http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/06/23/global-publics-back-u-s-on-fighting-isis-but-are-critical-of-post-911-torture/pg_15-06-18_u-s-vs-china_web/

82 James Chen, "The Emergence of China in the Middle East," *Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University* accessed December 15, 2016, http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratforum/SF-271.pdf

83 Shibley Telhami, "2010 Arab Public Opinion Survey," *The Brookings Institution* accessed December 15, 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0805_arabic_opinion_poll_telhami.pdf

84 Liu, "Perceptions and Misperceptions between Chinese and Turkish People..," 228.

Table 3.8 Confucius Institutes in Middle Eastern Countries (2016)[85]

Country	
Bahrein	Confucius Institute at University of Bahrain
Egypt	Confucius Institute at Cairo University
	Confucius Institute at Suez Canal University
Lebanon	Confucius Institute at Saint-Joseph University
Iran	Confucius Institute at University of Tehran
Israel	Confucius Institute at Tel Aviv University
	Confucius Institute at Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Jordan	Ammen TAG Confucius Institute
	Confucius Institute at Philadelphia University
Morocco	Confucius Institute at University Mohammed V-Agdal
	Confucius Institute at the University of Hassan II
Turkey	Confucius Institute at Boğaziçi University
	Confucius Institute at Middle East Technical University
	Confucius Institute at Okan University
	Confucius Institute at Yeditepe University
United Arab Emirates	Confucius Institute at Zayed University
	Confucius Institute University of Dubai

The lack of language education and student exchange programs was a main barrier between China and Middle Eastern countries. But Confucius Institutes, which started being established in 2005, accelerated the process of academic exchange and the expansion of China's culture and language in Middle Eastern countries. In 2016, there were seventeen Confucius Institutes in nine countries. That year, four of seventeen Confucius Institutes were in Turkey.

Along with the Confucius Institutes, CRI (China Radio International) was operating in Middle Estern countries as another of China's propaganda and public diplomacy tools. CRI currently broadcasts in all Middle Eastern languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Hebrew. China's religious minorities, such as Uyghurs and Huis, also contribute to the improving relations with the Middle East. China's Muslim minorities and their longstanding

85 Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters, "About Confucius Institutes," accessed December 15, 2016, http://english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm

historical relations to the Middle East—which have been both positive and negative—are nonetheless important aspect of cultural relations between China and Middle Eastern countries.[86] For example, thousands of Chinese Muslims continue to make the plgrimage to Saudi Arabia every year.[87]

To sum up, these cultural propaganda tactics have not created a flourishing cultural atmosphere between Middle Eastern countries and China. Political and economic instability certainly negatively affected the process, but China's excessive and CCP oriented cultural propaganda also did not create a free environment for the exchange of cultural values.

§ 3.3 Assessment of China's Middle East Policy

In the international relations literature, China's rise has been generally discussed by taking China's rapid economic development under consideration. This dissertation, however, proposes that China's rise should also be analyzed by giving special attention to political and strategical assessment of Chinese foreign policy behaviors. In this part of the chapter, three important strategic factors—namely domestic, regional, and global factors—are anlayzed to show the strategical importance of the region for Chinese foreign policy.

One prominent intellectual figure in the field of Middle East studies in China, Wang Bo, defines the Middle East as one of the most complicated regions in the world. For him, the Middle East is geographically important, intersecting three continents and five seas. In addition, the Middle East has a diverse social and cultural historical background with religious, ethnic, and ideological differences. In modern times, as an energy-rich region, the Middle East become the playground of great powers.[88] These three factors bring risks, threats, and opportunities for Middle Eastern countries and great powers, a like. Therefore, China has started to become involved in the Middle East as a crucial actor of the post-Cold War period.

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86 Raphael Israeli, *Çin'deki Müslümanlar: Bir Kültürel Çatışma Araştırması* (İstanbul: Gelenek Yayınları, 2003), 83.

87 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,* 30.

88 Bo Wang, *Zhongdong yu Daguo Guanxi [The relations between Middle East and the big powers]* (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2012), 2.

3.3.1 *Domestic Factors*

Changing domestic political factors forced China to become more involved in the Middle East. One main reason for this involvement was the changing foreign policy perspectives of China's political and military elite after the opening-up reforms of 1978. Deng Xiaoping as the leader of the opening-up reforms, smoothly adjusted China's political and economic policies to the post-Cold War political environment. China's immediate response to the post-Cold War political environment was to accelerate the reform process in the economic sphere, which prevented their sharing the same fate as the Soviets in the beginning of 1990s. Although there were several reasons to explain CCP's power dynamics of the time, the CCP's opening-up reforms were the main reason for China stayed calm during post-Cold War global uncertainties.

As another domestic factor, China's main concern since 1993 was to secure energy for newly emerging industries. China's economic development and social stability directly depended on a sustainable energy flow from outside such as the Middle East. Gulf countries became the most important sources of energy for China. China's dependence Gulf crude oil, however, caused a great trade deficit that affected balance of payments of China. China's trade in goods and services were not enough to close this trade deficit. In addition to this obstacle, China's cheap labor and investment in infrastructure projects in the Gulf countries weakened, especially in the 2000s.[89] Therefore China was seriously concerned about its energy dependence and the effects of that dependence on economic development at home.

Rising, non-traditional security problems, such as terrorism and illegal migration are other crucial domestic factors that explain China's increasing influence in the Middle East. According to Wang Bo, there are four reasons terrorism is a vital national security threat for China. First, locations in which terrorist activities have occurred are in close proximity to China geographically. China's western frontiers are threatened by various terrorist organizations. Although one of the most important goals of the Shanghai Cooperation

89 Li She, Zhongguo yu Haihehui Guojia de Jingmao Guanxi [Research on Economic and Trade Relations between China and the GCC Countries], *Alabo Shijie Yanjiu* 1(2013): 52.

Organization (SCO) is to secure the geography along China's western frontiers, the new, global networks of terrorist organizations have urged China to fight with terrorism outside this geography, as well. For example, since 2001 terrorism has become the most sensitive issue in bilateral relations with Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Second, terrorist activities have threatened China's energy supply both in Central Asia and in the Middle East. Third, the Uyghur question has been affected by current terrorist activities around the Middle East. Muslim countries with Uyghur migrants have had diplomatic and political crises such as cases of illegal migration to Turkey and Iran. Last, under China's current economic development strategies (opening-up reforms) that aim cooperation and integration with the world, China has no choice but to become more involved in the Middle East.[90]

3.3.2 *Regional Factors*

The Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, the Iraq-Iran war 1980-1988, the Gulf War in 1991, and China's urgent need for energy beginning in 1993 have urged China to establish closer, strategic relations in the Middle East. In addition, China's bilateral relations in the Middle East have affected the current balance of power in the region. For example, Iran and Saudi Arabia, which are the main providers of crude oil and gas to China, are competitors in the region. Therefore, Iran-Saudi Arabia relations always have the potential to affect China's overall strategy in the Middle East. To mitigate possible tensions between the two countries, China has tried to implement neutral diplomacy throughout the post-Cold War era.[91] Until 2011, this balancing strategy worked and created no significant problems for trilateral relations. Beyond energy-rich countries, Turkey and Israel, which are more stable countries in the Middle East, have also affected China's Middle East policies. China is suspicious about establishing strategic bilateral relations with Turkey, as NATO

90 Bo Wang, *Zhongdong yu Daguo Guanxi,* 441.

91 Jon B. Alterman and John W. Garver, *The Vital Triangle: China, the United States and the Middle East* (Washington D.C: The CSIS Press, 2008), 20.

member, and Israel, an important ally of the United States.[92] For example, the US factor in Sino-Israeli relations is a cause of great concern for Chinese in cases such as arms transfers and acquisitions.[93]

According to China's new assessments of Middle East politics, three dynamics had a crucial impact on current relations in the Middle East after the 1980s: economic cooperation between global and regional powers, the ascendancy of ethnic and religious sources of political identity, and the uniploartiy-multipolarity discussion with respect to the international order. These three dynamics have also urged China to establish closer and strategic relations in the Middle East.

Geographically, the Middle East is near Central Asia, Africa, and Europe. Among these regions, China has paid special attention to Central Asia and Europe for different reasons. Central Asia is the closest region to China's western provinces such as Xinjiang and Tibet where China is concerned about potential unrest. To mitigate these problems China established close relations with Central Asian countries.[94] As a geographical link from Central Asia to the Middle East, Iran is an important Middle Eastern country with which developed strategic relations.

Europe, as the potential market for Chinese goods and services, become China's primary focus, and Turkey and Greece are its regional hub. China has invested much in infrastructure projects and the financial sectors in Turkey during the 2000s.[95] In addition, under the New Silk Road initiative,[96] both Greece and Turkey's ports are strategically important distribution centers for

92 Mehmet Ogutcu, "Sino-Turkish Relations: Preparing for the Next Century," in *China and The Middle East: The Quest for Influence* ed. P. R. Kumaraswamy (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999), 69.

93 Yitzhak Shichor, "China's Upsurge: Implications for the Middle East," *Israel Affairs* 12 (2006): 670.

94 Barry Rubin, "China's Middle East Strategy," in *China and The Middle East: The Quest for Influence* ed. P. R. Kumaraswamy (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999), 114.

95 Altay Atlı and Sadık Ünay, *Küreselleşme Sürecinde Çin-Türkiye Ekonomik İlişkileri* (İstanbul: SETA Yayınları, 2014), 21.

96 The New Silk Road project has been officially called as "Belt and Road Initiative" by Chinese authorities. Its official webpage started to operate in the beginning of 2017. For a detailed information: accessed June 5, 2017, https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/

China. Although Sino-Turkey relations improved much at the time, the Cyprus question, as an international crisis, emerged as a potential problem between China and Turkey, especially after EU membership was granted to Cyprus in 2004. As broadly discussed in the related chapter, China maintains pro-Greek Cypriot policies in the Cyprus question, but it also tried not to behave differently from other permanent UNSC members throughout the negotiation processes in order to mitigate negative effects on Sino-Turkish relations. Besides Iran and Turkey, Israel is another important regional actor that forces China to face the United States in the Middle East. In all aspects of its bilateral relations with Israel, China considers the US position.

These three Non-Arab countries in the region have urged China to create new relations with great powers in the Middle East. The challenge for China during the period 2001-2011 was to overcome US dominance by adjusting its Middle Eastern policies.

3.3.3 *Global Factors*

Traditional great power politics in the Middle East is another crucial factor that affects China's Middle East policies. There are three strategically important global actors in the Middle East: the United States, the European Union, and Russia. Each of these great powers has different interests and strategies in the region. Throughout China's active pragmatist policies in the period 2001-2011, its foreign policy objectives and national interests in the Middle East have overlapped with these great powers.[97] China, as a latecomer to the region, implemented various strategies to overcome overlapped interests with the great powers. One of these was to establish closer relations with Non-Arab countries in the Middle East, each of which has serious relations with a specific great power. While Russia has significant national interest in Iran, Israel is an important strategic ally of the United States. Turkey is the only country wanting to be a member of the European Union in the Middle East.

Sino-Iranian relations are the main example of Chinese-Russian cooperation and competition in the region. Although China and Russia's short-term national interests in both Central Asia and the Middle East are similar such as

97 Alterman and Garver, *The Vital Triangle,* 17.

their stance on Iran nuclear issue and Syrian crisis, in the long run China's influence over Central Asian countries and Iran has the potential to threaten Russia's traditional geopolitical interests in the region.[98]

The EU is another influential global actor in terms of its economic and political interests in the Middle East. Both Sino-Turkish relations and Sino-Greek relations have the potential to affect China and EU relations in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean contexts. China's rising economic and diplomatic activities in both countries open the EU's southern frontiers to China's sphere of influence. For example, after Greek Cyprus joined the European Union, China increased its diplomatic and economic activities with Turkey and Greece. Greece is another example revealing China's influence along the southern frontiers of the European Union, especially after the 2008 global financial crisis. For example, one of China's important state-owned shipping companies, COSCO, agreed to operate Piers 2 and 3 at the port of Piraeus in Greece.[99] However, Sino-Turkey relations are more complicated than either Sino-Greek or Sino-Cyprus relations since Turkey's new foreign policy orientation have made it one of the most crucial actors in the Middle East politics. Sino-Turkish relations are also dynamic and include energy security issues in Iraq, Iran's nuclear issue, and Syrian crisis.

Last, Arabian Peninsula and the Levant also reveal global competition between the United States and China in the Middle Eastern context. For example, Sino-Israel relations have the potential to affect primary Chinese and US political and economic interests in the region. With respect to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China and the United States have different views on how to solve the conflict. As is broadly discussed in the next chapter, military relations and arms sales were the main concern of the United States in Sino-Israeli relations. In some cases, the United States compelled Israel to cancel agreements already signed with China.[100] Until now, this competition has been managed

98 Stephan Blank, Toward a New Chinese Order in Asia: Russia's Failure (Washington: NBR, 2011), 3.

99 "COSCO Pacific Commenced 35-Year Concession in Relation to Piers 2 and 3 of Piraeus Port," accessed December 16, 2016, http://en.chinacosco.com/art/2009/10/9/art_1076_35540.html;

100 Alimcan Ablet, *Çin-İsrail İlişkileri* (İstanbul: İyidüşün Yayınları, 2016), 149.

by the two countries, but if not managed well, it creates a siginificant conflict between the United States and China in the Middle East.[101]

Among these three crucial global actors, Sino-US cooperation and competition in the Middle East will probably determine the fate of the region. China and the United States were confronted in the Gulf War in 1991. China was dissatisfied with the US intervention in Kuwait at the time. However, even though China and the United States have different strategies and priorities in the Middle East, they implemented a closer, cooperative relationship during the 2000s. After the Arab Spring, Sino-US relations tightened once again. In response, China established vital strategic relations with Iran and Syria.[102]

101 Leverett and Bader, "Managing China-U.S. energy competition," 187.

102 Bingbing Wu, Cong Zhongguo yu Haiwan Ba Guo Guanxi de Fazhan Kan: Zhong A Hezuo Luntan [Reflections on China-Arab Cooperation Forum: Based on China Gulf Relations] *Alabo Shijie Yanjiu* 1(2011):14.

Table 3.9 China and Middle East Trade Relations, 2001-2011 (Total Volume, million dollars, North Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Cyprus)

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Afghanistan	17	19	27	57	52	100	171	154	214	178	234,4
Bahrain	129	109	135	212	255	348	487	786	686	1051	1205
Cyprus	117	225	219	186	290	353	705	1135	1219	1365	1149
Iran	3311	3739	5622	7045	10083	14447	20589	27757	21219	29391	45103
Iraq	467	517	563	469	823	1144	1453	2652	5147	9864	14268
Israel	1315	1417	1831	2484	3027	3875	5309	6049	5178	7644	9778
Jordan	274	358	524	710	910	1030	1181	1949	2070	2053	2769
Kuwait	642	727	1188	1248	1648	2785	3629	6790	5043	8556	11303
Lebanon	238	280	370	493	476	508	717	1096	1065	1346	1484
Oman	1676	1506	2067	4389	4329	6469	7270	12421	6158	10723	15874
Pakistan	1396	1799	2429	3060	4260	5246	6893	7057	6788	8668	10558
Palestine	494	448	693	992	2383	2807	3765	4103	2432	2637	4886
Qatar	408	223	354	437	676	998	1208	2385	2253	3311	5893
Saudi Arabia	4070	5106	7319	10298	16070	20140	25366	41846	32548	43195	64317
Syria	223	371	506	720	906	1406	1876	2303	2220	2483	2446
Turkey	904	1377	2597	3412	4875	8069	11768	12569	10094	15110	18737
United Arab Emirates	2824	3896	5810	8145	10775	14201	20035	28256	21226	25686	35119
Arab Republic of Yemen	661	731	1899	1916	3214	3034	2708	4394	2405	4002	4239
Algeria	292	433	745	1239	1768	2090	3866	4601	5127	5177	6432
Egypt	953	944	1089	1576	2145	3192	4672	6303	5845	6958	8801
Libya	95	112	215	671	1302	2398	2410	4229	5178	6576	2783
Tunisia	109	182	200	279	339	408	512	787	818	1119	1332

SOURCE China Statistical Yearbooks, 2012; accessed June 3, 2017 http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2012/indexeh.htm;

Table 3.10 China's Outward FDI Flows in the Middle East, 2005-2011 (including North Africa and Cyprus, millions dollars)

Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Bahrain	0,07	1,92	---	0,12	---	---	---	2,11
Cyprus	---	---	0,30	---	---	---	89,54	89,84
Iran	11,60	65,78	11,42	-34,53	124,83	511,00	615,56	1305,66
Iraq	---	0,35	0,36	-1,66	1,79	48,14	122,44	171,42
Israel	6,00	1,00	2,22	-1,00	---	10,50	2,01	20,73
Jordan	1,01	-6,18	0,60	-1,63	0,11	0,07	0,18	-5.84
Kuwait	---	4,06	-6,25	2,44	2,92	22,86	42,00	68,03
Lebanon	---	---	---	---	---	0,42	---	0,42
Oman	5,22	26,68	2,59	-22,95	-6,24	11,03	9,51	25,84
Palestine	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Qatar	---	3,52	9,81	10,00	-3,74	11,14	38,59	69,32
Saudi Arabia	21,45	117,20	117,96	88,39	90,23	36,48	122,56	594,27
Syria	0,20	0,13	-11,26	-1,17	3,43	8,12	-2,08	-2,63
Turkey	0,24	1,15	1,61	9,10	293,26	7,82	13,50	326,68
United Arab Emirates	26,05	28,12	49,15	127,38	88,90	348,83	314,58	983,01
Republic of Yemen	35,16	7,61	43,47	18,81	1,64	31,49	-9,12	129,06
Algeria	84,87	98,93	145,92	42,25	228,76	186,00	114,34	901,07
Egypt	13,31	8,85	24,98	14,57	133,86	51,65	66,45	313,67
Libya	0,25	-8,51	42,26	10,54	-38,55	-10,50	47,88	43,37
Morocco	0,85	1,78	2,64	6,88	16,42	1,75	9,11	39,43
Tunisia	---	1,73	-0,34	---	-1,30	-0,29	3,76	3,56
Total	206,28	354,12	437,44	267,54	936,32	1276,51	1600,81	5084,86

SOURCE Yu, Jingxiong; "2011 Nian du Zhongguo dui wai zhi jie tou zi tong ji gong bao [2011, China's FDI statistics], Zhongguo Tongji Chuban She, Beijing, 2012.

4

China and Iran's Nuclear Crisis

Understanding the basic parameters of Iran's nuclear crisis is necessary for a full-fledged evaluation of China's diplomatic position towards both Iran and the nuclear talks held between 2003 and 2011. After the Arab Spring, actors involved in Iran's nuclear crisis were obliged to focus on the ethnic and sectarian crisis that threatened to spread across the region. Thus, alongside other critical issues in the Middle East, Iran's nuclear crisis gained a renewed momentum at the beginning of 2011. This chapter focuses on China's position towards Iran's nuclear crisis in the decade prior to that, from 2001 to 2011.

Throughout the chapter, Iran's nuclear crisis, Sino-Iranian relations, and China's reaction to Iran's nuclear crisis are analyzed. After introducing a brief historical background of Iran's nuclear issue, the first part of the chapter focuses on the period 2001-2011, dividing it into two sub-periods. The period 2001-2006, during which the first concrete allegations of Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons were made, was also the beginning of the first negotiations between the European Union (EU) and Iran. The period 2006-2011 were years of sanctions against Iran and the establishment of new diplomatic mechanisms such as P5+1 to solve Iran's nuclear crisis. This part of the chapter ends in 2011 when a new negotiation process commenced following the heavy UN sanctions against Iran.

In the last part of the chapter, a strategic assessment of China's foreign policy with respect to Iran's nuclear crisis evaluates China's strategic objectives and the basic determinants of its policy behaviors.

§ 4.1 Iran's Nuclear Crisis

Iran's nuclear crisis raised security fears for both regional and global actors concerning Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapon. The EU3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom), the United States, Russia, and China were the most influential actors involved in the crisis and had the capability to affect all dimensions related to it. Apart from these actors, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, and Brazil were secondary actors that tried to influence the crisis during the period 2001–2011. In addition to states with serious anxieties about Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also played a crucial role, changing the direction of the conflict between the disputing sides throughout the negotiation process.

4.1.1 *Historical Background of Iran's Nuclear Crisis*

One of the significant discussions pertaining to Iran's nuclear crisis concerns arms-control regimes that have developed over the course of the twentieth century. The rise of military spending across the world was a primary motivation for regulating but not stopping the arms race between nation states.[1] The basic treaty, regulating all nuclear-related issues is the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970.[2] According to Article II of the NPT:

1 Jozef Goldblat, "The conference on disarmament at the crossroads: To revitalize or dissolve?," *The Nonproliferation Review* 7 (2000): 105.

2 "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)," accessed January 9, 2017, https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/

> The NPT prohibits the transfer by nuclear-weapon states to any recipient whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over them.[3]

The main dilemma, however, that arises from the NPT, concerns Article IV, which allows the exchange of nuclear-related materials for peaceful use for nuclear energy.[4] This is the basis upon which Iran claimed it had the inalienable right to develop peaceful nuclear energy. The NPT, thus, has established a safeguards system under the responsibility of the IAEA.[5]

Nuclear technology has a long history of transforming the global political structure, beginning with the use of atomic bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan during the Second World War.[6] During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the United States reached a level of mutually assured destruction with respect to the nuclear weapons they had at their disposal. When the two superpowers of the bipolar international system reached this level, the expansion of nuclear technology immediately commenced. The first country to join the "nuclear club" was France in 1960. China followed, testing its first nuclear weapon in 1964. After the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, the Soviet Union and United States agreed to arms-control agreements to prevent the expansion of nuclear technology.[7] The NPT is the most universal of such agreements. 190 countries have joined the NPT including Iran in 1968, India in 1974, and Pakistan in 1993. Though it criticizes Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons, Israel is not part of the NPT.[8]

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3 "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)," accessed January 9, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html

4 Ece Aksop, "The Iranian Nuclear Program: The NPT, the West, Iran and Turkey," *Insight Turkey* 8 (2006):67.

5 David Fischer, *History of the International Atomic Energy Agency: The First Forty Years* (Vienna: The Agency, 1997), 1.

6 Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 203.

7 Joseph Goldblat, "Review of Arms-control Agreements," in *Armaments, Arms Control, and Disarmament: A UNESCO Reader for Disarmament Education* ed. Marek Thee (Paris: UNESCO Press, 1981), 160.

8 Arzu Celalifer Ekinci, *İran Nükleer Krizi* (Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2009), 16.

Under US strategic thinking during the Cold War, Iran was a strategic partner in the Middle East against the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union. Iran's nuclear proliferation began in 1957 with US help. The United States also established nuclear research centers in Turkey and Pakistan in 1967.[9] During the Cold War, Iran under the shah developed nuclear technology with the assistance not only of the United States, but from European countries such as Germany, France, and Belgium. These countries supported Iran's nuclear technology at the time, arguing that Iran needed alternative energy resources. Ironically, just after the Islamic revolution these same countries opposed Iran's development of nuclear technology by arguing that Iran had sufficient energy resources and did not need to develop alternative energy technologies.[10]

After the shah fled and the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) was established in 1979, the United States canceled its shipments of enriched uranium to Iran. At the time the shah left Iran, 90 percent of the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in the city of Bushehr was finished and 60 percent of its nuclear materials had been secured. Moreover, 50 percent of Bushehr 2 had also been finished before western companies left in 1979, though almost all the facilities were damaged during the Iraq-Iran War (1980–1988). In the midst of the Iraq-Iran War in 1984, Iran built a new nuclear research center with the assistance of France. Three years later, Iran had a yellow cake[11] plant in Yazd.[12] After the Iraq-Iran War, Iran intensified its nuclear research, collaborating with various countries possessing nuclear technology such as Russia, Argentina, Belgium, and China.[13] For example, Russia and Iran signed an agreement to construct two

9 Ibid., 31.

10 Mohammad Sahimi, "Iran's Nuclear Program Part I: Its History," *Payvand News* February 10, 2003 accessed January 9, 2017, http://www.payvand.com/news/03/oct/1015.html

11 Yellowcake is a material that can be used to fuel nuclear power plants and is prduced in uranium recovery facilities. Its intense production signifies an improvement in the ability to develop nuclear technologies.

12 Namira Negm, *Transfer of Nuclear Technology under International Law* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009), 190.

13 Ibid., 191.

reactors in Bushehr in 1993.[14] The basic controversies between the IAEA and Iran also first arose in these years, since Iran did not inform the IAEA about these nuclear research programs.

Iran continued developing nuclear technology in the 1990s with the help of both China and Russia. In 1991, Iran received 1,600 kilograms of uranium from China to develop uranium enrichment.[15] On January 8, 1995, Iran and Russia signed 800-million-dollar contract for the Bushehr nuclear power plant, which opened in 2010. During the 1990s, not only Russian but also Chinese involvement aided Iran's nuclear research and the development of its own nuclear technology. In 1996, however, China withdrew almost all technological support to Iran, after which point Russia became Iran's central strategic partner for nuclear cooperation.[16]

During the first decade of the twenty first century, Israel was another crucial actor that affected the direction of the crisis. Although Israel is not a signatory to the NPT, and is thus immune from IAEA inspection, it opposed Iran's increasing nuclear energy capabilities and feared that the country would develop weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The main intention of Israel was its safety and regional security. In addition, during the long negotiation process with respect to Iran's nuclear crisis, Israel consistently emphasized its position on Iran even though it was not part of the negotiation team. In 2003, for example, Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz threatened to destroy Iran's nuclear capabilities by force, notwithstanding the fact that Iran had signed the Additional Protocol to the NPT.[17]

14 Willem van Kemenade, *Iran's Relations with China and the West: Cooperation and Confrontation in Asia* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2009), 70.

15 Ibid., 70.

16 Ekinci, *İran Nükleer Krizi,* 39.

17 Guoliang Gu, "No Threats, No WMDs," *Beijing Review* 2 (2004): 42.

4.1.2 *First Allegations and Negotiations, 2001–2006*

Iran's secret nuclear facilities and research program first came to light in a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report in 2000.[18] The extent of the program became apparent two years later in a statement released by Alireza Jafarzade, a representative of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, which is the parliament in exile. In that statement, he revealed that Iran had nuclear sites in Natanz and Arak.[19] This development was a turning point in disputes on Iran's nuclear crisis, opening the way to the long negotiation process. The main problem did not concern Iran's development of peaceful nuclear energy, but its failure to give information about its new nuclear sites and activities in Natanz and Arak to the IAEA in a timely fashion.

After these allegations, Iran's vice-president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Reza Aghazadeh, made a statement at the 46th General Conference of the IAEA in Vienna in 2002. In that statement Aghazadeh clearly emphasized that "Iran has maintained its strong and active ties with the IAEA and has submitted all its nuclear activities including the Bushehr Power Plant Project to the supervision of the Agency."[20] On December 13, 2002, IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei stated that he would arrange a meeting between IAEA technical experts and Iran's president in February 2003 to discuss Iran's nuclear program.[21] After the first investigation by the IAEA team in Natanz and Arak, the IAEA declared its initial assessment. According to the IAEA report,

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18 James Risen and Judith Miller, "C.I.A. Tells Clinton An Iranian A-Bomb Can't Be Ruled Out," New York Times, January 17, 2000, accessed January 9, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/17/world/cia-tells-clinton-an-iranian-a-bomb-can-t-be-ruled-out.html?pagewanted=all

19 Alireza Jafarzadeh, *The Iran Threat: President Ahmadinejad and The Coming Nuclear Crisis* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 126.

20 "Statement by H.E. Reza Aghazadeh at the 46th General Conference of the IAEA, Vienna, September 16, 2002, accessed January 9, 2017, https://www.iaea.org/About/Policy/GC/GC46/Statements/iran.pdf

21 "IAEA Chief Addresses Iraq, North Korea and Iran Issues," accessed January 9, 2017, https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/iaea-chief-addresses-iraq-north-korea-and-iran-issues

> Iran has failed to meet its obligations under its Safeguards Agreement with respect to the reporting of nuclear material, the subsequent processing and use of that material and the declaration of facilities where the material was stored and processed in June 2003.[22]

Before the IAEA report, Iran had proposed a roadmap known as the Spring 2003 Proposal as a comprehensive agreement on the nuclear issue,[23] addressing issues ranging from the transfer of nuclear technology to Iran to the Iraq War and to the Middle East peace process.[24] This proposal indicated that Iran's nuclear crisis was not related to just nuclear technology, but to Iran's ambitious foreign policy agenda in the Middle East. After the IAEA director met with Iranian officials in June 2003, the IAEA's Board of Governors called on Iran to suspend uranium enrichment in September 2003.[25] The IAEA, however, did not refer the issue to the UNSC, as the United States had wished.

Before deciding to join negotiations in May 2006, the United States used 'hard diplomacy' to coerce Iran to stop its nuclear research program.[26] Although the United States became part of the P5+1, which established in 2006, it did not fully participate in the negotiations. Until 2006, the United States not only did not join the effort to persuade Iran but rejected any official contact with Iranian officials with respect to Iran's proposal to solve the nuclear

22 "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report by IAEA Director General," accessed January 10, 2017 https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov2003-40.pdf

23 "History of Official Proposals on the Iranian Nuclear Issue," accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran_Nuclear_Proposals

24 "An Arms Control Association Briefing Book: Solving the Iranian Nuclear Puzzle," 33. accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.armscontrol.org/system/files/ACA_Iran_Briefing_Book_Update_September_2013_0.pdf

25 "Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report by IAEA Director General," accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov2003-69.pdf

26 Ed Henry and Elise Labott, "U.S. Offers Direct Talks with Iran, with Condition," *CNN*, May 31, 2006, accessed January 17, 2017, http://edition.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/05/31/us.iran/index.html?_s=PM:WORLD

crisis. One important reason for the hard stance of the US against Iran was its relatively easy military victory in Iraq.[27]

The European Union approached the Iranian nuclear crisis on the basis of controversies among its members over the Iraq War. A Number of EU countries were against the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Thus, the EU3 tried to find a common ground to negotiate Iran's nuclear issue in order to prevent US intervention in Iran.[28] The EU implemented a "carrot diplomacy" offering peaceful solutions to Iran's nuclear crisis. The European Union offered a variety of incentives to stop Iran's nuclear research program.[29] Iran accepted the IAEA's demands and suspended all nuclear activities in line with a deal it made with the EU-3 in October 2003 (Tehran Decleration). The main aim of the United States and the EU-3 was to convince Iran to sign the additional protocol.[30] In this declaration, the EU-3 offered Iran economic incentives and cooperation in return for Iran's cancellation of all plans to develop its own nuclear technology.[31] Two-months later, Iran signed the additional protocol, paving the way for the inspection of Iran's nuclear facilities by the IAEA.[32]

From September 2003 until the November 2004 Paris Agreement, the EU3 and Iran discussed a broad range of issues related to Iran's nuclear program. During the negotiation process, several difficulties caused a problem of confidence between the EU3 and Iran. For example, IAEA reports in June 2004 accused Iran of not cooperating with agency inspectors. Then, in August 2004,

27 John W. Limbert, *Negotiating with the Islamic Republic of Iran: Raising the Chances for Success—Fifteen points to Remember* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 2.

28 François Heisbourg, "Iran the Moment of Truth: A European Perspective," *Insight Turkey* 8 (2016): 94.

29 Paul Hughes, "Iran Near Deal with EU on Nuclear Program," Reuters, November 8, 2004, accessed January 14, 2017, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/iran-near-deal-with-eu-on-nuclear-program/article1006729/

30 Signatory countries of the additional protocol also allow IAEA inspectors to access all parts of their nuclear activities such as uranium mines and nuclear waste.

31 Anthony John Wanis-St., "Nuclear Negotiations: Iran, the EU (and the United States)," in *Unfinished Business: Why International Negotiations Fail*, ed. Guy Olivier Faure et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 62.

32 Gu, "No Threats, No WMDs," 42.

Iran criticized the IAEA and reopened the Bushehr nuclear facilities that had been closed by the IAEA.

The Paris Agreement provided the basis for a separate agreement regarding Iran's nuclear program, since Iran could not suspend all its activities for technical reasons. All sides witnessed Iran's positive attitude during this process, and for this reason the IAEA Board of Governors did not bring matter to the UNSC in November 2004.[33]

In January 2005, Iran proposed an agreement with the EU3, committing to not pursue WMDs as well as to cooperate with the EU3 on strategic trade controls. In addition, in March 2005 Iran proposed objective guarantees to the EU3 including fully adopting the additional protocol and limiting the expansion of its uranium enrichment program. Despite all diplomatic efforts to find common ground on the issue of uranium enrichment, Iran and the EU3 did not reach an agreement.[34]

In addition to diplomatic negotiations, Iranian domestic political changes influenced Iranian policy makers at the time. On June 24, 2005, the conservative politician Mahmood Ahmadinejad was elected president of Iran. After Iran announced his election, it began producing uranium hexafluoride, whereupon the EU-3 halted negotiations on August 8, 2005. Three days before Iran's decision to restart its nuclear activities, the EU3 had proposed a long-term agreement package.[35]

In September 2005, Ahmadinejad delivered a historic speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). He declared, "Without possession of [the] nuclear fuel cycle, nuclear power plants can indeed lead to total dependence of countries and peoples."[36] Ahmadinejad clearly revealed Iran's hard stance on the nuclear crisis, declaring its full independence in the production

33 "Information Circular/637," accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/infcircs/2004/infcirc637.pdf

34 Wanis-St., "Nuclear Negotiations," 74.

35 "An Arms Control Association Briefing Book: Solving the Iranian Nuclear Puzzle," 40.

36 "Address by H.E. Dr. Mahmood Ahmadinejad President of the Islamic Republic of Iran before the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly," accessed January 10, 2017, http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/60/statements/iran050917eng.pdf

of all nuclear technology. The IAEA referred Iran to the UNSC for the first time in a special meeting in February 2006.[37]

4.1.3 *Emergence of the P5+1 and UNSC Sanctions, 2006-2011*

Before the emergence of the P5+1, the EU3 was the only diplomatic mechanism to solve Iran's nuclear issue in a peaceful, diplomatic way. The P5+1 was established in June 2006 to enhance the legitimacy and seriousness of the nuclear negotiation process with Iran. Essentially, Russia, China, and the United States were joining the EU3 under this new initiative. The reason for establishing such a powerful diplomatic mechanism was the announcement of Iran's first uranium enrichment of 3.5 percent in Natanz in 2006. After Ahmadinejad's speech about Iran's joining the "nuclear club" in April 2006, Iran rejected all previous proposals.[38] However, in June 2006, another proposal offered by the P5+1 changed the nature of the negotiation process in that the United States was convinced to hold direct talks with Iran on the nuclear issue. According to the proposal, "Iran was to suspend all enrichment related and reprocessing activities, accept the establishment of a mechanism to review this moratorium; resumption of additional protocol."[39] Suspension of uranium enrichment was the only condition for the United States to join official negotiations with Iran.

As a result of these developments, on July 31, 2006, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1696. Only Qatar voted against it.[40] In the resolution, "the council calls on Tehran to suspend its enrichment program and verify its compliance

37 "An Arms Control Association Briefing Book: Solving the Iranian Nuclear Puzzle," 34.

38 Robert Tait and Ewen NacAskill, "Iran Declares: We are in the Nuclear Club," *The Guardian*, April 12, 2006, accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/apr/12/iran.topstories3

39 "An Arms Control Association Briefing Book: Solving the Iranian Nuclear Puzzle," 40.

40 In the UNSC's 5500th meeting report, Qatar representative Mr. Al-Nasser explained Qatar's official positions. According to his statement, Qatar respects all efforts to maintain political and diplomatic negotiations to provide peaceful solutions to Iran's nuclear issue. But "we do not agree with the submission of this draft resolution at a time when our region is inflamed."

with IAEA Board of Governor's requirements."[41] This was the first UNSC resolution declaring that each member state of the UN should

> exercise vigilance and prevent the transfer of any items, materials, good and technology that could contribute to Iran's enrichment related and reprocessing activities and ballistic missile programmes.[42]

Iran, however, rejected the P5+1 proposal which required the suspension of all enrichment activities, but it opened the door for further negotiations in August 2006.[43] All in all, this political stance of Iran was a legitimate argument for the United States to support sanctions against Iran.

In December 2006, the UNSC declared the first round of sanctions relating to the Iranian nuclear issue in Resolution 1737. According to the resolution,

> All member of the UN states should exercise vigilance regarding the entry into their territory of individuals engaged in Iran's nuclear or ballistic missile activities; must freeze the funds, financial assets, and economic resources of designated individuals who are involved with Iran's nuclear programs; [and] prevent the "specialized teaching or training of Iranian nationals" of subjects that would enhance Iran's nuclear goals.[44]

The resolution also emphasized that the IAEA should send a report on Iran's related activities within two months. In February 2006, ElBaradei, the Director General of the IAEA, issued a report criticizing Iran for not suspending its uranium enrichment procedures and other related activities.[45] Following this

41 "UN Security Council Resolution 1696," S/RES/1696 (2006), available from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1696%282006%29

42 Ibid.

43 "Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran," accessed January 16, 2017, https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheet/Timeline-of-Nuclear-Diplomacy-With-Iran#2010

44 "UN Security Council Resolution 1737," S/RES/1737 (2006), available from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1737%282006%29

45 "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and Relevant Provisions of Security Council Resolution 1737 (2006) in the Islamic Republic of Iran by the Director General," accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov2007-08.pdf

report, the use of force and more sophisticated sanctions against Iran started to be discussed.[46]

The IAEA's report triggered another UNSC resolution that expanded the existing sanctions.

> The UNSC adopted Resolution 1747 unanimously under Article 41 of the UN Charter[47] in March 2007. This resolution has added the names of 28 more individuals and entities to [the] previous list, which includes 10 organizations and 15 individuals involved in Iran's nuclear activities.[48]

The importance of this resolution was that it offered a new agreement between the UNSC and Iran. In that offer, all UNSC sanctions and related restrictions could be lifted if Iran agreed to fully suspend its uranium enrichment. Iran agreed with the IAEA to formulate a work plan to answer allegations about its nuclear activities in August 2007.[49]

A critical development changed the political nature of Iran's nuclear crisis in December 2007. A US intelligence assessment – the National Intelligent Estimate (NIE) report – claimed that there was not enough evidence to prove that Iran had developed a nuclear weapon. It is noteworthy that despite heavy pressure and threats on the use of force from the Bush government, the NIE

46 Seymour Hersh, "Is the Administration's New Policy Benefitting Our Enemies in the War on Terrorism?," *The New Yorker,* February 25, 2007, accessed January 10, 2017, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/03/05/the-redirection

47 Article 41 of the UN Charter gives authority to the UNSC to implement necessary measures to coerce any country thretening international peace. These measures could include "complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations." But these measurements could not include the use of force according to the Article 41. It was the main argument of countries that were against heavy sanctions on Iran such as China and Russia. For a detailed explanation see: http://www.un.org/en/sc/about/faq.shtml#threat

48 "UN Security Council Resolution 1747," S/RES/1747 (2007), available from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1747%282007%29

49 Wanis-St., "Nuclear Negotiations," 83.

report claimed that Iran had shelved its nuclear weapons program over the previous four years.[50]

However, despite the NIE report, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1803 on March 3, 2008, with fourteen of the council's fifteen members voting in favor. Indonesia abstained.[51] Resolution 1803 added more individuals to the list of people that states must report to the "1737 Committee" if they enter their territory.[52] For the first time, the resolution required states to "prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of designated individuals involved in pursuing Iran's nuclear ambitions."[53]

In 2008, several resolutions were passed by the UNSC, but none included additional sanctions on Iran. All urged Iran to cooperate with the P5+1 to solve the problem, and the June 2008 resolutions added incentives to bring Iran to the negotiation table.[54]

In April 2009, the United States, for the first time, entered into regular talks with Iran. Hillary Clinton declared that the United States would be part of the P5+1 meetings.[55] It was an important change in US diplomacy with respect to Iran's nuclear crisis. Obama administration paved the way for full participation of the United States in the negotiations.

A uranium enrichment facility in city of Qom in Iran was revealed in 2009. It once again created suspicion about Iran's nuclear ambitions.[56] Iranian

50 "National Intelligence Estimate: Iran - Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities," accessed January 17, 2017, http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/international/20071203_release.pdf

51 "UN Security Council Resolution 1803," S/RES/1803 (2008), available from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1803%282008%29

52 A committee established by UNSC Resolution 1737. According to Article 18 of the resolution 1737, the committee decided that all members of the UNSC should observe sanctions related issues and report to the UNSC. The committee's tasks are broadly specified in the same resolution.

53 "UN Security Council Resolution 1803," S/RES/1803 (2008), avaliable from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1803%282008%29

54 "An Arms Control Association Briefing Book: Solving the Iranian Nuclear Puzzle," 40.

55 Mark Lander and Nazila Fathi, "U.S. to Join Iran Talks Over Nuclear Program," *The New York Times*, April 8, 2009, accessed January 10, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/09/world/middleeast/09iran.html

56 Wanis-St., "Nuclear Negotiations," 84.

President Mahmood Ahmadinejad was re-elected in June 2009. That same month, Iran proposed a new fuel swap agreement to the P5+1. According to the agreement, Iran would exchange its low-enriched uranium (LEU) for fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor (TRR).[57] Although all sides agreed to implement the deal in October 2009, it was not implemented for political reasons. Both sides blamed the other for the failure.[58]

It is important to note that the TRR deal provided a new opportunity for negotiating actors. It was an alternative to previous proposals. In May 2010, Brazil and Turkey followed up with a TRR proposal of their own. They proposed that

> Iran would transfer 1.200 kg of LEU to be held in escrow in Turkey within one month. In return, the IAEA, France, Russia, and the United States would agree to provide 120 kg of 20 percent enriched uranium fuel to Iran within one year.

If the terms were not fulfilled, Turkey would transfer the LEU back to Iran.[59] Iran, Brazil, and Turkey signed the Tehran Agreement under these conditions in May 2010, but France, Russia, and the United States rejected the proposal because "it did not address Iran's production of 20 percent enriched uranium and Iran's accumulation of a larger amount of LEU."[60]

On June 9, 2010, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1929, with twelve countries voting in favor, Brazil and Turkey voting against, and Lebanon abstaining. The resolution reiterated the UNSC's demands in previous resolutions that Iran halt all enrichment activity and other activities related to nuclear weapons development. Furthermore, this resolution imposed a sixth round of sanctions against Iran. It banned Iran from investing in nuclear and

57 "History of Official Proposals on the Iranian Nuclear Issue," accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran_Nuclear_Proposals

58 Wanis-St., "Nuclear Negotiations," 85.

59 Mark Fitzpatrick, "Containing the Iranian Nuclear Crisis: The Useful Precedent of a Fuel Swap," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* 16 (2011):28.

60 "Text: Powers Dismiss Iran Fuel Offer Before U.N. Vote," *Reuters*, June 9, 2010, accessed January 11, 2017, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-nuclear-iran-response-text-idUSTRE6582W120100609

missile technology abroad, including investment in uranium mining. It established a complete arms embargo on Iran, banning the sale of sophisticated weapons to Iran. Iran was also prohibited from undertaking any activities related to ballistic missiles, and the resolution required other states to take the necessary measures to prevent technology relevant to ballistic missiles from reaching Iran. It also updated the list of items banned for transfer to and from Iran. This resolution also included financial sanctions targeting Iran's ability to finance proliferation activities. Three companies related to the Islamic Republic of Iran were subject to an asset freeze, and states were requested to report any attempt by Iran to circumvent sanctions.[61]

One important part of UNSC Resolution 1929 concerned the establishment of a new Panel of Experts in to consult with the "1737 Committee" to carry out specific tasks.[62] In June 2011, UNSC Resolution 1984 extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts, and the IAEA seriously warned Iran for the first time about relations between its nuclear activities and its military.[63] In a long report dated November 2010, the director general of the IAEA detailed the possible military dimensions of Iran's of nuclear activities. This signaled a new stage in Iran's nuclear crisis, since the United States under an Obama administration that was more inclined toward political and diplomatic processes than the previous administration started to reconsider UNSC sanctions. As the Arab Spring began to spread across the Middle East, Iran's nuclear activities, uranium enrichment projects, and other regional developments became increasingly crucial for both global and regional powers.

All in all, throughout the period 2002-2011, two crucial developments changed the dynamics of Iranian nuclear crisis. While the first concrete allegations triggered a long, difficult negotiation process, the first UNSC sanctions in 2006 urged Iran to cooperate with international actors. However, as an

61 "UN Security Council Resolution 1929," S/RES/1835 (2010), available from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1929%282010%29

62 Ibid., Article 29.

63 "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Report by Director General" IAEA Board of Governors, November 8, 2011, accessed January 11, 2017, https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov2011-65.pdf

unintended consequence, Russia and China gradually became the most significant actors with the ability to change the behaviors of traditional actors in Iran's nuclear crisis, such as the United States and the European Union. China, as a rising power in the global economy and in global politics, started to implement an active diplomacy in the Iranian nuclear crisis. In the next part of this chapter, both Sino-Iranian relations and China's reaction to Iran's nuclear crisis are analyzed to understand China's policy behaviors, objectives, and intentions in an international crisis.

§ 4.2 Sino-Iranian Relations

Sino-Iranian relations date back to political, social, and economic relations between the Han Dynasty and Parthia (anxi-安息) in approximately 126 BC.[64] Throughout history, from the Tang Dynasty to the Sassanid Empire, the Chinese and Iranian people have continued to develop these relations. Therefore, even today, Chinese and Iranian officials generally emphasize the historical roots of Sino-Iranian relations. In addition to the historical roots of bilateral relations, imperialism is another common historical experience of both countries. Although China and Iran have experienced the political, social, and economic repercussions of nineteenth-century western imperialism differently, humiliation has long characterized the relations of both with western countries.[65] Along with this shared discourse and experience, an anti-hegemonic struggle was another common foreign policy discourse for China and Iran, especially after the establishment of the IRI in 1979. Although they had different socio-political structures, revolutionary politics prevailed in both countries.[66]

64 Jun Liu and Lei Wu, "Key Issues in China-Iran Relations," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* 4 (2010): 41.

65 John W. Garver, *China and Iran: Ancient Partners in a Post-imperial World* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 4.

66 For a detailed discussion, see Şermin Tekin, "Deviations in Foreign Policies of Revolutionary States: A Comparative Case Study of Iran and China," (MA Thesis, Koç University, 2010).

4.2.1 *Political and Diplomatic Relations*

It is possible to divide Sino-Iranian relations after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 into two historical periods. The first is the shah period that lasted until 1979, and the second is the post-shah period, from 1979 until today. Cold War conditions shaped Sino-Iranian relations during the shah period; while China was implementing a revolutionary foreign policy, Iran at the time was leaning toward the United States and the Western Pact. For example, when Iran became part of the Western-leaning Baghdad Pact in 1955, the Chinese newspaper *Renmin Ribao* criticized Iran's move as dangerous and regrettable. As another example, China opposed the security alliance between the United States and Iran in 1959.[67] While the differing relations of Iran and China to the United States affected their bilateral relations, Soviet expansion into the Middle East and Central Asia created a common threat for both, especially after the Sino-Soviet split of the early 1960s. For instance, China was, together with the Soviet Union, one of the main supporters of certain national liberation organizations in Oman and South Yemen. But after the Sino-Soviet split, China changed its policy towards these organizations.[68] The Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan was also viewed by both China and Iran as threatening Soviet expansion.[69]

Sino-Iranian relations deepened after China became a permanent member of the UNSC in 1971. Iran's Queen Farah visited China for the first time in September 1972. In June 1973, China's Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei visited Iran to discuss the future relationship between the countries in the first visit of a high-ranking Chinese official.[70] According to Garver, there are four crucial reasons that explain the Sino-Iranian rapprochement in the 1970s. The first was related to the power vacuum in the Persian Gulf after Great Britain's influence in the region began to decline. The United States and the Soviet Union started a new power struggle to dominate the Persian Gulf, which was

67 Garver, *China and Iran,* 36.

68 Yitzhak Shichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy, 1949-1977* (New York: Camridge University Press, 1979), 151.

69 Lillian Craig Harris, *China Considers the Middle East* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993), 182.

70 Muhamad Olimat, *China and the Middle East: From Silk Road to Arab Spring* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 151.

opposed to China's independent foreign policy at the time. The second reason was the Sino-Soviet split, which caused a great divergence between the foreign policy priorities of the Chinese and the Soviets in Iran. The third reason was the common threat of India for China and Iran. For example, both countries supported Pakistan against India's alliance with the Soviet Union in the 1970s. The last reason was Sino-US rapprochement, which started with "ping-pong" diplomacy at the beginning of the 1970s and matured with the US-PRC commercial agreement granting China most favored nation status in early 1980.[71] As a consequence, Chinese President Hua Guofeng made an official visit to Iran for the first time from August 29 to September 1, 1978. Iran became the first non-communist country to be visited by a Chinese president.[72]

However, Hua Guofeng's visit was a miscalculation by Chinese foreign policy decision makers; the shah fled into exile just four months later in January 1979. Street demonstrations and revolts in Iran triggered the Islamic Revolution, and Khomeini, who would become supreme leader of the revolution, set up the Council of the Islamic Revolution that same month.[73] In April 1979, the IRI was formally established. As cited by Fan, "The visit left a very strong negative feeling about China among Iranians."[74] However, Iranian foreign policy became more revolutionary after the establishment of the new Republic. "Neither West Nor East" was a political motto that explained Iran's view on its relationship to either superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union. Indeed, China was another eastern power defined under this motto of the new Iranian regime.

As soon as a new Islamic regime was established in Tehran, China was the first of several countries to apologize for its behavior during the shah period. Chinese President Hua Guofeng apologized for his previous contacts with the

71 Ibid., 65.

72 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 156.

73 Ervand Abrahamian, *Modern İran Tarihi,* trans. Dilek Şendil (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), 213.

74 Hongda Fan, "China's Policy Options towards Iran," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* 5 (2011): 49.

shah regime through indirect communication channels via Pakistan.[75] In February 1980, the Chinese Islamic Association and Vice President Zhang Jie visited Iran. In response to these visits, a high-level delegation from Iran visited China for the first time in July 1982.[76]

The year 1978 marked a rupture in modern Chinese foreign and security policies. A number of factors led it to implement a more balanced strategy in the Middle East. These included China's transition from revolutionary to independent foreign policy during the opening-up reforms and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States in 1979. On one hand, China was trying to be a responsible permanent member of the UNSC; on the other, it was readjusting its national interests and foreign policy priorities in the Middle East. The first crisis between the United States and Iran was Iran's seizure of the US embassy in Tehran in November 1979. Although China tried to remain neutral, it strongly criticized the United States for using military power to rescue hostages in April 1980.[77] In addition, China did not participate in the UNSC vote to impose sanctions on Iran for holding American diplomats hostage in January 1980.[78] The next crisis between the United States and Iran was not a hostage crisis, but a war between Iraq and Iran that started in 1980. At the beginning of the Iraq-Iran war, China attempted to remain neutral in order to maintain relations with both Sunni Arab countries as well as the newly established Shiite revolutionary regime in Iran.

During the eight-year war, Iran was dependent on other powers for its supply of weapons, but its "Neither West Nor East" policy prevented procurement of arms from other powers such as China. However, after US President Ronald Reagan's supplied arms to Taiwan in 1982, China signaled a change in its neutral stance on the Iran-Iraq War. Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang announced three principles. With respect to the new Chinese new foreign policy stance on the Iran-Iraq War,

75 Garver, *China and Iran,* 64.

76 Ibid., 67.

77 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 157.

78 Ibid., 220.

> Iran and Iraq belong to the third world and both are friendly countries of China. We are very much concerned about the recent armed conflicts between them. We hope that they will settle their disputes peacefully through negotiations, guard against superpower interference, and prevent the situation from worsening. This is not only in the interests of the people of Iran and Iraq but also conducive to peace and stability in the Gulf areas.[79]

Political and diplomatic relations were improved by bilateral visits between China and Iran during the 1980s. The first Iranian ambassador to Beijing was appointed in May 1982. China's first high-level envoy, He Ying, visited Tehran just afterward in January 1983. During He Ying's visit, future meetings between the foreign ministers of both countries were scheduled. Ali Akbar Velayeti, the first Iranian foreign minister, visited Beijing in September 1983, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian visited Iran in October 1984.[80] The most important visit was that of Rafsanjani, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, to Beijing in June 1985. During his five-day visit, several agreements between China and Iran were signed, including a nuclear cooperation agreement.[81] As the following part of the chapter shows, Sino-Iranian nuclear cooperation has since then remained a crucial controversy among China, Iran, and the United States.

As a matter of fact, a combination of factors such as the Iran-Iraq War, the sanctions imposed by Western countries, and the nuclear crisis forced Iran to approach China in the 1980s. Although China was trying to remain neutral at that time, its pro-Iranian stance became apparent in its arms sales to Iran. According to Garver, China supplied Silkworm anti-ship missiles to Iran in 1987.[82] This was the main reason for Iran to establish close relations with China. On the other hand, Harris claims that China remained neutral by supplying arms to both sides and sought reconciliation between Iraq and Iran

79 Zhao Ziyang, "Premier Zhao on Iran-Iraq Disputes," *Beijing Review*, September 29, 1980, p. 4.

80 Garver, *China and Iran*, 76.

81 Ibid., 78.

82 Ibid., 84.

during the war.[83] According to statistics, China sold 11-12-billion-dollars' worth of arms during the war.[84] However, in UNSC Resolution 598, passed in July 1987, five permanent members of the Security Council first made the decision to end the Iraq-Iran war.[85]

After the end of the Iran-Iraq War in August 1988, Iranian President Khamenei visited China in May 1989, and he emphasized expanding good relations between the two countries. Just one month later, in June 1989, large demonstrations took place in Beijing and the Chinese government harshly suppressed protest. The Tiananmen Square protests negatively affected Sino-US relations. Right after this, the United States started to implement sanctions against China. With respect to US sanctions against China "the East Asian section of the Iranian foreign ministry told a *Tehran Times* reporter that outsider[s] had no right to interfere in China's internal affairs."[86] Once again, the perception of a shared threat helped the two countries form a common ground to improve bilateral Sino-Iranian relations. A decade previously, was a result of the fear of Soviet expansionism; now, it was the problematic nature of Sino-US relations.

Understanding Sino-Iranian relations in the 1990s is critical for any evaluation of current Sino-Iranian political and diplomatic relations, since all contemporary examples of cooperation and controversy between them became apparent at that time. Increasing Chinese dependence on outside energy resources and Iran's need for sophisticated nuclear technology were the issues that directly affected other controversial issues such as Sino-US relations and China's integration into the international system.

The Gulf War of 1991 created new political circumstances that eased China's involvement in the Middle East. Sino-Iranian relations deepened during the Gulf War. The post-Soviet environment in the Middle East and Central Asia created a political vacuum that could easily be filled by other powers such

83 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 187.

84 Ibid., 188.

85 "UN Security Council Resolution 598," S/RES/598 (2006), available from https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/524/70/IMG/NR052470.pdf?OpenElement

86 Garver, *China and Iran,* 102.

as the United States or Turkey, neither of which was in favor of China or Iran. Russia was no longer stable after the break down of the Soviet republic.[87]

China became a net oil importer country for the first time in 1993. This triggered the first Sino-Iranian cooperation in energy market.[88] In the 1990s, the United States was the only super power that could easily shape political and economic issues in the Middle East. H. W. Bush declared an act against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in September 1990.[89] After the Gulf War of 1991, the main US objective was clearly to give a message to Iran by restraining Iran's unclear intent to improve its nuclear technology. For this reason, the US Congress passed the Iran-Iraq Non-Proliferation Act in October 1992. In 1993, the Clinton administration promulgated a dual-containment policy for Iraq and Iran. Two years later, the US government barred US companies from engaging in oil-related business with Iran.[90] This was the most serious US trade embargo on Iran since 1979. Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen criticized the unilateral US economic pressure on Iran and, in March 1995, offered to improve cooperation with Iran during a visit of Iranian politicians to Beijing.[91] In spite of China's concerns about US pressure on Iran, China terminated all nuclear cooperation with Iran in 1997. Sino-US relations prevailed over Sino-Iranian relations, and China disengaged from the Iranian nuclear issue that same year. However, Sino-Iranian diplomatic relations later improved with numerous official visits between the two countries.[92]

As a matter of fact, relations between Iran and China became so close that they shared common foreign policy objectives and threats in the period 2001-2011. For example, the first China-Iran Chamber of Commerce was established in 2000. Two years later the first political consultation mechanism was created

87 Garver, *China and Iran,* 109.

88 Ibid., 196.

89 George Bush, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the Persian Gulf Crisis and the Federal Budget Deficit," accessed January 11, 2017, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=18820#axzz2isMrKmcd

90 Garver, *China and Iran,* 112.

91 Ibid., 114.

92 John Calabrese, *China and Iran: Mismatched Partners* (The Jamestown Foundation, August 2006), 6.

under China's special envoy to the Middle East, and Bank Tejarat became the first Iranian Bank in Beijing.[93]

Another crucial development between Iran and China became apparent in the China Model discussion. Conservative Iranian politicians started to discuss the Chinese way of understanding the international political stance against the United States and European countries. At the same time, they insisted on implementing Chinese economic development methods for sustainable social and economic development in Iran. According to Rozsa, it was not suitable for Iran to implement the China Model because of the different social and economic structures in the two countries.[94]

4.2.2 *Economic and Energy Relations*

Sino-Iranian economic relations were affected by two crucial developments at the end of the 1970s. As discussed above, the 1979 Islamic revolution created a new political and economic situation in Iran. A similar development took place in China after its implementation of opening-up reforms in 1978. It is important to note that these developments coincided with changing dynamics in the global political economy marked by the Washington Consensus, which is known as the beginning of the neo-liberal economic development model.

After the Islamic revolution in 1979, the trade relations of the United States and Great Britain with Iran gradually declined according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). China filled this vacuum by diversifying its economic relations with Iran. For example, US exports to Iran accounted for 21 percent of that country's imports in 1978, but this declined to 3 percent by 1991 and to 0 percent by 2003. Similarly, "Iran's imports from Great Britain [which] accounted for 8 percent in 1978, [fell] to 2 percent by 1991 and [rose] to 8 percent by 2003. On the other hand, China's total export to Iran increased from 1 percent in 1978 to 2 percent by 1991 and to 8 percent by 2003."[95]

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93 Erzsebet N. Rozsa, "Iran and China: Looking for an Alliance and Regional Power Status," *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs* 2 (2011):126.

94 Ibid., 120.

95 Garver, *China and Iran,* 237.

Sino-Iranian economic cooperation started to develop in 1982, and China became the major actor investing in water conservation, dam design, and the construction and fishing sectors in Iran.[96] In July 1982, the first economic delegation visited China from Iran.[97] The Iraq-Iran War, however, forced Iran to cooperate with China during that time. In 1985, the first Joint Committee for Trade, Science, and Technology Cooperation was institutionalized between China and Iran. This institution and its three subcommittees catalyzed Sino-Iranian trade in the 1980s.[98] The end of the Iraq-Iran War, the collapse of Soviet Union, and Iraq's loss in the Gulf War of 1991 created new atmosphere to improve economic development in Iran. The Iranian economy had suffered during the war. Afterward, Iran sought to reconstruct the country, invest in infrastructure, and secure economic partners.

In terms of Sino-Iranian economic relations, both countries agreed to launch new projects, including three fish-canning factories in Iran.[99] 1993 was a critical year for China since it became, for the first time, an oil importer country. In addition to merchandise trade and investment projects, energy cooperation started to affect overall political and economic relations between China and Iran. As an indication of China's attractive economic policies in Iran, the Bank of China provided the country credit of 50 million dollars in 1993, the first formal loan from China to Iran. After the China International Trust and Investment Company secured a contract for the Tehran metro, this loan was extended by ten months. According to Garver, the "1993 deal" between China and Iran also included the construction of one nuclear power plant in Iran, but China cancelled it after the US implemented serious sanctions on Iran in 1997.[100]

Although there were several problems between the Iranian regime and western countries, Sino-Iranian economic cooperation continued to improve during the early 2000s. The volume of trade between the two countries

96 Kemenade, *Iran's Relations with China and the West,* 106.

97 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 221.

98 Garver, *China and Iran,* 242.

99 Ibid., 243.

100 Ibid., 245.

increased from 370 million dollars in 1994 to 45 billion dollars in 2011. Trade in oil was the main catalyzer of Sino-Iranian economic relations at the time. In addition to energy-related economic activities, infrastructure and the service sector also developed during the period 2001-2011.[101] According to Farago, "in 2009, China replaced the EU as Tehran's largest trading partner, with a volume of more than 36.5 billion dollar (1 billion dollars more than the trade volume between Europe and Iran in that year)."[102] In addition, by 2010, China was financing some projects in Iran including the extension of the Tehran metro.[103]

Table 4.1 China's Trade Volume with Iran, 2001-2011 (in millions of dollars)[104]

Year	Exports	Imports	Total Trade
2001	888	2423	3311
2002	1393	2346	3739
2003	2315	3307	5622
2004	2554	4490	7045
2005	3296	6786	10083
2006	4488	9958	11447
2007	7284	13305	20589
2008	8163	19594	27757
2009	7919	13299	21219
2010	11091	18299	29391
2011	14762	30341	45103

The most controversial issue in Sino-Iranian economic relations concerned the field of energy. Energy supply and security was a main concern for both

101 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,*160.

102 Niv Farago, "Don't Turn Iran into North Korea!: Re-examining Neoconservative Strategy," *Middle East Policy* 21 (2014): 110.

103 Douglas E. Schoen and Melik Kaylan, *The China-Russia Axis: The New Cold War and America's Crisis of Leadership* (New York: Encounter Books, 2014), 51.

104 "China Statistical Yearbook 2012," accessed January 16, 2017, http://www.stats.gov.cn/ENGLISH/Statisticaldata/AnnualData/

countries. In 2011, China became the largest importer of Iranian crude oil, importing 543,000 barrels per day.[105] In spite of China's efforts to diversify its energy supply by boosting imports from African and Central Asian countries, China continued to be dependent on Iranian oil, and Iran became the third-largest oil supplier in China behind Angola and Saudi Arabia in 2013.[106] In 2009, China surpassed Japan to become Iran's number one oil customer.[107] On the other hand, China started exporting gasoline to Iran in 2008, and by 2010 around one-third of Iranian gasoline came from China.[108]

According to Sahriatinia, three factors provided the momentum to improve Sino-Iranian energy cooperation. The first factor is related to Iran's rich energy resources. For instance, Iran is the second country in terms of gas reserves behind Russia, and it is the fourth one in terms of proven oil reserves in the world. Second factor is related to Iran's independent foreign policy in comparison to Saudi Arabia. Although Saudi Arabia is another significant oil provider for China, the close Saudi-US relations prevented for comprehensive relations between China and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. Last, the ongoing sanctions and embargoes placed by the United States on western companies dealing with Iran provided an opportunity for China to enter the Iranian market.[109]

Moreover, China and Iran have developed their energy cooperation through rehabilitating Iran's oil and gas fields. For example, China has invested mostly in Iran's oil and gas sectors. The amount of China's foreign direct investment increased from 7.8 million dollars to 615 million dollars between 2003 and 2011.[110] As an early example of these investment relations a subsidiary of Sinopec, the Shengli Oil Company, transferred a set of Chinese-made oil equipment to Iran in 1998. In addition, by 2002 China was helping

105 Schoen and Kaylan, *The China-Russia Axis,* 51.

106 Zhao Hong, "China's Dilemma on Iran: Between Energy Security and A Responsible Rising Power," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23 (2013): 409.

107 Peter Mackenzie, *A Closer Look at China-Iran Relations* (The CNA China Studies, 2010), 5.

108 Farago, "Don't Turn Iran into North Korea!," 109.

109 Mohsen Sahriatinia, "Iran-China Relations: An Overview of Critical Factors," *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs* 1 (2011): 67.

110 Hong, "China's Dilemma on Iran," 414.

Iran in the research and development of oil fields, sending China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) crews to Iran.[111]

In 1999, the Azadegan oil field was discovered, with an estimated 26-billion-barrel reserve. Japan and Iran signed a deal to construct the Azadegan oil field right after Iran signed the Additional Protocol of the NPT with the IAEA in 2003. After this agreement, Iran signed an agreement with Chinese company CNPC granting an 85-million-dollar contract to drill nineteen wells in natural gas fields in southern Iran.[112]

Although China and Iran increased their energy relations during the early 2000s, Swaine argues that these relations have been affected by US pressure on China during the Iranian nuclear crisis between 2002 and 2011. For example, China constantly delayed operations in the Yadavaran oil field during that period.[113]

4.2.3 *Military and Security Relations*

Before the establishment of IRI in 1979, China's security concerns with respect to the Middle East and Iran were shaped by Cold War enmities and strategic interests. During the 1980s, China conducted a relatively independent foreign policy. In this way, China prioritized improving economic relations with Iran. The main obstacle to improving these relations was ongoing geopolitical rivalries at the regional and global level in the Middle East during the 1980s. The Iran-Iraq War and US economic and military sanctions on Iran affected Sino-Iranian relations, as well. In spite of China's limited capacity to help Iran in either the economic or military spheres, increasing US influence in the Middle East triggered a transformation of China's security policy with respect to Iran-related issues. Especially given the changing political and military dynamics after the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, China increased its security and military relations with Iran. In 2011, China also became Iran's largest partner behind Russia in terms of total arms exports.[114]

111 Kemenade, *Iran's Relations with China and the West,* 109.

112 Ibid., 110.

113 Swaine, "Beijing's Tightrope Walk on Iran," 5.

114 Ibid., 6.

Iran's nuclear issue became a turning point in Sino-Iranian relations after documents were leaked about Iran's covert uranium enrichment experiments in 2002. Therefore, 2002 can be considered as the beginning of a completely different set of relations – including military and security relations – between China and Iran. China started to focus on energy security and the market for Chinese goods and arms in Iran.[115]

Actually, the opening-up reforms of China that began in 1978 contributed to arms sales to Iran. In the early 1980s, China's defense industry was the only technologically advanced industry suitable for producing exports. China's arms sales to Iran during the Iraq-Iran War also contributed to China's positive image in Iran.

China's arms sales to Iran began in the 1980s. Even though China repeatedly denied direct arms sales to Iran during the Iraq-Iran War, there are indications of indirect sales of arms to both Iran and Iraq.[116] During the war, US intelligence reports claimed that China provided sophisticated missiles to Iran.[117] According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China supplied 3.8 billion dollars in conventional arms to the country between 1982 and 2004.[118] According to Garver, China's largest export to Iran was arms up until the late 1990s.[119]

The first Chinese Silkworm anti-ship cruise missiles were delivered to Iran in 1986. Even though China rejected the sale of this sophisticated ballistic missiles, an Arab League delegation visited China to prevent transfer of another sophisticated weapon in 1987.[120] In 1987, just after the sales, the United States imposed the first sanctions on China since the normalization of their relations in 1979.[121] Between 1987 and 2004 the United States imposed twelve sets of

115 Anthony H. Cordesman, *U.S. and Iranian Strategic Competition: The Impact of China and Russia* (CSIS, February 2012), 7.

116 Garver, *China and Iran,* 167.

117 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 222.

118 "SIPRI Arms Transfers Database," accessed January 16, 2017, https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers/background

119 Garver, *China and Iran,* 178.

120 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 221.

121 Kemenade, *Iran's Relations with China and the West,* 44.

sanctions on Chinese firms for providing military equipment and technologic information to Iran.[122]

China's arms sales to the Middle East declined in the 1990s. However, China still ranked as Iran's third largest military supplier in the 1990s, behind Russia and North Korea.[123] In January 1990, China and Iran signed a ten-year agreement regarding the exchange of military technology. According to SIPRI, though China's arm sales to the Middle East declined, the conventional arms supply to Iran diversified in the 1990s. For example, in the middle of the 1990s China agreed to sell C-801 and C-802 anti-ship missiles. Because of US pressure, just 75 of 150 ordered C-802 anti-ship missiles were delivered to Iran in 1997.[124]

Table 4.2 Iranian Arms Imports from China (in millions of dollars, 1987-2011).[125]

Year	Value	Year	Value
1987	612	2001	82
1988	225	2002	83
1989	68	2003	86
1990	94	2004	89
1991	103	2005	52
1992	98	2006	71
1993	304	2007	64
1994	274	2008	64
1995	58	2009	64
1996	320	2010	79
1997	54	2011	79
1998	70		
1999	63		
2000	71		

122 Swaine, "Beijing's Tightrope Walk on Iran," 6.

123 Garver, *China and Iran,* 170.

124 Ibid., 183.

125 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,* 155.

§ 4.3 China's Diplomatic Position in Iran's Nuclear Crisis

China's diplomatic and political position on Iran's nuclear issue can be separated into three parts. First, Sino-Iranian relations and the historical baggage associated with them played a significant role in determining the Chinese position. Second, China's relations with other global actors affected the deadlock of nuclear talks on Iran. According to some analysts, China's global responsibility came to the fore in Iran's nuclear issue.[126] Third, China generally tended to engage Iran's nuclear issue in light of its regional and domestic problems, such as Xinjiang and the North Korean nuclear issue.[127] These three basic features of China's position on the nuclear issue had the potential to affect the negotiation process.

4.3.1 *Historical background of China's Involvement in Iran's Nuclear Crisis*

China started to provide low-level technologic equipment to Iran before China's opening-up reforms in 1978.[128] Thereafter, it started to search for new markets around the world. Iran, as one important market for Chinese production, was counted as a geopolitical asset by China at that time.[129] Sino-Iranian political and economic relations improved quickly, as well. On the other hand, China's official position on the non-proliferation regime was unclear before it joined the IAEA in 1984. In that year, for the first time, China agreed to be observed and inspected by IAEA inspectors. By signing the NPT in 1992, China became part of the non-proliferation regime along with other global powers.

126 Dingli Shen, "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions Test China's Wisdom," *The Washington Quarterly* 29 (2006): 56.

127 Christina Y. Lin, "China, Iran and North Korea: A Triangular Strategic Alliance," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 14 (2010): 58.

128 John Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East* (New York: Pinter Publishing, 1991), 87.

129 Kenneth Daines, "Sino-Iranian Relations: History and Nuclear Proliferation Implications," *Sigma: Journal of Political and International Studies* 30 (2013): 58.

As discussed, the growth of Sino-Iranian diplomatic and economic relations continued with sophisticated agreements in the field of technology and arms sales. For example, in 1985, one year after Iran's nuclear program restarted, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani visited Beijing. China and Iran signed the Agreement of Nuclear Cooperation during his visit.[130] According to Garver, China and Iran agreed that same year to cooperate on the building of the Esfahan Nuclear Research Center.[131]

These relations found a new basis in the strategic partnership between both countries. For example, the Chinese Commission for Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense signed an agreement with the Iranian Ministry of Defense in 1990. According to Garver, this was the first agreement in which China openly declared its intention to cooperate with Iran on the nuclear issue.[132] In 1991, China's president Yang Shangkun visited Tehran and the China International Trust Investment Corporation secured commitments from Iran for several kinds of infrastructure projects. According to Kemanade, in that year China also provided 1,600 kg of uranium products to Iran.[133] In addition, Iran signed an agreement with China in 1992 for the construction of two 950 megawatt (MW) reactors in Darkhovih. After that, China provided Iran with an HT-6B Tokamak fusion reactor in 1993. The fact that China became a net oil importer that same year helped strengthen the growing ties between the two countries.

The close Sino-Iranian relationship was affected by US political and economic pressure on China. As mentioned above, 1997 was remarkable for each side on the nuclear issue since China agreed with the US administration to terminate previous agreements with Iran. Therefore, China gradually disengaged from Iran's nuclear activities, suspended previous agreements, and

130 Garver, *China and Iran,* 78.

131 Ibid., 143.

132 Ibid.,143.

133 Kemenade, *Iran's Relations with China and the West,* 70.

stopped cooperating on nuclear technologies and nuclear power stations.[134] After that, Russia adopted a new position on the nuclear issue and provided major nuclear technology and raw materials to Tehran.[135] In addition, "China started to discuss canceling some agreements with Iran relating to cruise missiles (C-801 and C-802) and the supply of uranium hexafluoride (UF6) which is a gaseous form of uranium containing both U238 and U235 isotopes and constituting the input for centrifuge enrichment during that time."[136]

The truth is that from 1993 until 2002 China did not want to be part of the nuclear disagreement between the United States and Iran. However, due the developments in global politics with respect to Iran's nuclear issue, China started taking a new position on the nuclear crisis at the beginning of 2002.[137]

4.3.2 *The IAEA and China's Vacillating Policy, 2002–2006*

After mid-2002, the central problem regarding Iran's nuclear issue was not related to China's provision of nuclear equipment to Iran but related to its political support for Iran's ability to produce its own nuclear technology. After the document leaks and the first allegations concerning Iran's nuclear activities, Chinese officials emphasized that cooperation between Iran and China was for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.[138] China continuously warned Iran regarding the transparency of its nuclear program and supported negotiations through dialogue and consultations. Before the first UNSC sanctions, Chinese foreign policy makers expressed support for the prior proposals of the EU3 and Russia. At the time, China consistently emphasized the role of the IAEA,

134 Jun Yu, "Back in the Spotlight: Peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue is possible and China's role should not be misread," Beijing Review April 27, 2006, accessed January 12, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/06-17-e/w-1.htm

135 Kemenade, *Iran's Relations with China and the West,* 4.

136 Ibid., 56.

137 This was partially the result of the disclosure of some secret documents on Iranian nuclear facilities by Alireza Jafarzadeh, the US representative for the exiled Iranian opposition group in 2002.

138 "Hu Jintao Meets Iranian Foreign Minister," *People's China*, August 26, 2003, accessed January 12, 2017, http://en.people.cn/200308/25/eng20030825_123046.shtml

but not the UNSC, for resolving Iran's nuclear crisis.[139] China made a clear distinction between nuclear weapons, which are strongly prohibited by the NPT, and nuclear energy for peaceful means, which is permissible so long as it is reported to the IAEA.

The United States pressured China several times with respect to its cooperation with Iran on nuclear technologies. For example, from the end of 2001 to July 2002, the US government imposed four economic sanctions on Chinese companies. In addition to that, the US State Department implemented sanctions on specific companies – such as the China North Industries Corporation (Norinco), which produces missile technologies – in September 2003. Two sanctions followed in 2004 and 2005 in accordance with the US Iran Sanctions Act.[140] China believed that the Bush administrations' hypocritical stance on other countries with nuclear weapons made the situation more complex than the stance of previous administrations. Pakistan and India were the primary examples given by Chinese authorities to which to make a comparison with Iran's nuclear issue. In this sense, China did not support US policies that imposed sanctions on other countries.

China's overall strategy on Iran's nuclear crisis in the first period (2002–2006) was to support Iran. For example, China formally supported the IAEA's role in efforts to monitor its compliance with the NPT and opposed referral of the issue to the UNSC. China had serious concerns about a potential US military intervention in Iran following the Iraq War.[141] For that reason, China's officials stated that "we will not allow any draft resolution referring Iran to the UNSC in 2004."[142] However, China's primary concern was clearly the US intention to classify some states as rogue and evil including Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. According to the Chinese, branding countries with pejoratives would

139 "Iran Issue at IAEA Concerns China," *United Press International*, November 25, 2005, accessed January 12, 2017, http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Security-Industry/2005/11/25/Iran-issue-at-IAEA-concerns-China/UPI-59341132927173/

140 Jin Wang and Honggang Wang, "The Iran Nuclear Issue in Sino-US Relations," *Contemporary International Relations* 17 (2007): 30.

141 Swaine, "Beijing's Tightrope Walk on Iran," 6.

142 Wang Meng, "İran Krizi'nin Çin İçin Anlamı," trans. Hale Eroğlu *Anlayış Dergisi* 37 (2006): 12.

not help prevent WMDs. Such discourses would only provoke these countries to develop WMDs and would impede peaceful negotiations with them. Instead, China felt that the international community should pave the way for cooperation, strengthen inspection mechanisms, and reach a consensus on these international security issues.[143]

At a time of negotiations with the EU3, Iran's imminent election and the strategy of the US with respect to Iraq in 2004 were important dimensions of Iran's nuclear crisis. According to Chinese scholar Zhu Feng,

> the most preferred way for the United States at present was continuing to take advantage of checks by the IAEA to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. By doing so, Washington will be able to convince other powers to jointly press Iran to abandon its nuclear plan and sign related treaties.[144]

Another Chinese expert emphasized the role of Shiism in Iraqi politics and Iran's new role in the chaotic environment of Iraqi politics. According to Gao Zugui, the United States had serious concerns about Iran's nuclear capabilities and its relationships to terrorist networks. Therefore, it was inevitable for the US to consider Iran's role in post war Iraq. In addition, according to Gao, the United States would probably enhance its relations with Iran by discussing other Middle Eastern issues with her.[145] Compared to Iraq, Iran's military capabilities as well as its economic, political, and religious influence over the Middle East were stronger.[146]

The Chinese ambassador to the UN explained China's official view in September 2004. According to the ambassador, "China hopes that Iran will continue to fully cooperate with the IAEA, fulfill its obligations, clear up unresolved issues and ratify the NPT protocol at an early date."[147] Officially, China

143 Gu, "No Threats, No WMDs," 43.

144 Ying Ding, "Strained Ties," *Beijing Review*, August 5, 2004, accessed January 12, 2017, http://beijingreview.sinoperi.com/en200431/692981.jhtml

145 Ying Ding, "The Big Ultimatum," *Beijing Review*, October 21, 2004, accessed January 12, 2017, http://beijingreview.sinoperi.com/en200442/693233.jhtml

146 Ibid.

147 Ibid.

clearly opposed referring Iran to the UNSC before the negotiation process was finished.

However, the changing dynamics of Iran's domestic politics also affected Iran's nuclear crisis. According to a comment by Chinese Middle East expert Zhang Xiaodong in 2005, Iran's future foreign policy was going to differ from Khatami's moderate policy since Ahmedinejad was extremely conservative. Thus, Iran's diplomatic position would become stronger on the nuclear issue. In addition, for Zhang, "it is impossible for the United States and the EU to reach consensus with Iran on this issue since their contradictions in this regard are irreconcilable." Additionally, China and Russia would object to any attempt to report the case to the UNSC.[148]

Before the EU3 recalled Iran to the negotiating table in November 2005, Hu Xiaodi, Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs of China, once again advocated the peaceful resolution of Iran's nuclear crisis through dialogue. In addition, Hu Xiaodi indirectly criticized the September 2005 report by the IAEA Board of Governors which resulted in Iran's referral to the UNSC in February 2006. This was China's last official statement to recall all sides to the negotiating table before irreversible decisions were taken.[149] As a matter of fact, the IAEA reported Iran to the UNSC on February 4, 2006. However, two permanent members of the UNSC, Russia and China, accepted this referral only on the condition that no action be taken before March 2006.[150] This was a clear indication of China's vacillating policy during the first period between 2002 and 2006.

4.3.3 *UNSC Sanctions and China's Accommodation Policy, 2006–2011*

In the second period, 2006–2011, China started to change its earlier, vacillating policies. By the beginning of 2006, China started to implement policies accommodating international institutions such as the IAEA and the UNSC. The

148 Yanshuo Ni, "Iran Plays Hard Ball," *Beijing Review*, October 6, 2005, accessed January 12, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/En-2005/05-40-e/w-3.htm

149 Ying Ding, "Tehran's Crossroads," *Beijing Review*, December 8, 2005, accessed January 12, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/En-2005/05-49-e/w-2.htm

150 "UN Security Council Resolution 1696," S/RES/1696 (2006), available from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1696%282006%29

truth is that China was constrained by other UNSC members who supported Iran's referral to the UNSC.

Before the first sanctions in March 2006, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson declared, "China hopes Iran will cooperate in a comprehensive way with the IAEA and clarify the open questions in its nuclear program, to create condition for properly resolving the nuclear issue through negotiations."[151] Although China did not support attempts to refer the case to the UNSC, once it was the referral was made, China behaved in line with the common decisions taken by other UNSC members. Even though China criticized UNSC Resolution 1696 describing it as counterproductive, it agreed to a UNSC statement emphasizing serious concern and setting a deadline for further action, opening the way for the first UNSC sanctions in July 2006.[152]

In the meeting report regarding UNSC resolution 1696, China's representative Liu Zhenmin explained the reason for China's support. First, Liu Zhenmin emphasized the role of the IAEA in Iran's nuclear crisis. Since Iran had not answered the IAEA report or the declaration of the Board of Governors in March, the case was referred to the UNSC. In first resolution, the UNSC did not implement sanctions but just called on Iran to return to the negotiations and to stop uranium enrichment. Therefore, if Iran had collaborated with the UNSC and the IAEA, the resolution would have been null in terms of sanctions. According to Liu Zhenmin, the basic problem was a lack of trust among the actors negotiating Iran's nuclear crisis. Therefore, Iran as well as other actors needed to support diplomatic and political mechanisms to resolve the Iranian nuclear crisis.[153] As described by Liu Zhenmin, China tried to remain neutral with respect to the first UNSC resolution by warning Iran and the United States with indirect messages. In addition, this statement was

151 "Iran nuclear issue," *Xinhua*, March 2, 2006, accessed January 12, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-03/02/content_4249068.htm

152 "Military, economic measures on Iran counterproductive: China," *The State Council of the People's Republic of China*, April 12, 2006, accessed January 12,2017, http://www.gov.cn/misc/2006-04/12/content_251521.htm

153 "UN Security Council, 61st year: 5500th meeting," available from: http://repository.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/19081/S_PV.5500-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

the first indication of China's policies of accommodation in the period 2006-2011.

In December 2006, the second UNSC resolution was adopted and the first sanctions were imposed on the economic and financial assets of some Iranian companies. According to Wang Guangya, who was China's representative at the UNSC meeting,

> sanctions were not the end, but a means to urge Iran to return to negotiations. The sanctions adopted in the UNSC Resolution 1737 were limited and reversible, and targeted at proliferation sensitive nuclear activities and development of nuclear weapon delivery systems. There were also explicit provisions indicating that, if Iran suspended its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and complied with the relevant UNSC texts and IAEA requirements, the UNSC would suspend and even terminate the sanctions. Today's text had welcomed the commitment of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States to a negotiated solution, and had encouraged Iran to engage with them, leading to the development of relations and cooperation with Iran based on mutual respect and establishment of international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.[154]

Despite China's official statements, Sino-Iranian cooperation on sensitive technological equipment and materials continued. For example, the China National Oil Company and National Iranian Oil Company signed a memorandum of understanding on the North Pars gas field project – which amounted to 16 billion dollars – in December 2006. According to the companies' official statements, the natural gas reserves there were estimated at 80 trillion cubic feet. Afterward, the United States criticized China's new agreement with Iran citing the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act which prohibited

154 "Security Council Imposes Sanctions on Iran for Failure to Halt Uranium Enrichment, Unanimously Adopting Resolution, 1737 (2006)" *United Nations Press Release*, December 23, 2006, accessed January 12, 2017, http://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sc8928.doc.htm

foreign firms from investing in Iran outside of very particular conditions.[155] This was a crucial indication of the difference between the United States and China on Iran's nuclear crisis.

Iran's failure to cooperate with the UNSC and IAEA led the latter to adopt a third resolution in which it added new firms, people, and institutions to the sanctions list. The resolution also forced other countries not to sell arms to Iranian companies and froze the assets of Iranian individuals. After UNSC Resolution 1747, Chinese Ambassador Wang Guangya again used neutral language, describing situation not as punishing Iran but as urging it to return to the negotiations and diplomacy. According to him, "the Council's actions should be appropriate, incremental and proportionate, and not to aggravate conflict or lead to confrontation."[156]

China did not vote against the resolution but did explain its dissatisfaction with the handling of Iran's nuclear crisis by the UNSC. For example, in the same statement, Wang Guangya for the first time explained China's stance on sanctions, citing six principles,

> First, in handling the Iran nuclear issue, safeguarding international non-proliferation mechanisms and maintaining international and regional peace and stability remain the premise and ultimate objective. Secondly, it is essential to keep the process on the path of dialogue and negotiation and to insist on seeking a peaceful solution through political and diplomatic efforts. It is therefore particularly important to reinforce diplomatic efforts outside the Security Council. Thirdly, the IAEA remains the main framework for solving the Iran nuclear issue. Its authority and role should therefore be safeguarded and strengthened. Fourthly, the international community should recognize Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Iran also has the obligation to accept effective supervision by the IAEA and to resolve outstanding

155 Xinyu Mei, "A Powerful Force," Beijing Review, January 25, 2007, accessed January 13, 2017, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/print/txt/2007-01/23/content_53486.htm

156 "Security Council Toughens Sanctions Against Iran, Adds Arm Embargo, with Unanimous Adoption of Resolution 1747 (2007)" *United Nations Press Release*, March 24, 2007, accessed January 13, 2017, http://www.un.org/press/en/2007/sc8980.doc.htm

> issues through cooperation with the IAEA, so as to prove the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme and establish international confidence in that regard. Fifthly, all the parties concerned should act on the basis of equality and mutual respect, strengthen dialogue and communication, increase trust, reduce doubts and remove each other's concerns, so as to create the necessary atmosphere and conditions for the settlement of this issue. Sixthly, the current urgent task for all the parties is to show full flexibility and creatively seek to resume negotiations.[157]

China for the first time offered a full-fledged, concrete proposal for resolving Iran's nuclear crisis. After the resolution, China openly declared its opposition to further sanctions in the P5+1 meeting in Germany. In October 2007, China rejected Israel's call for sanctions against Iran.[158]

However, UNSC Resolution 1803 was adopted along with new sanctions including thirteen people and twelve entities involved in Iran's nuclear activities. China's representative to the UN, Ambassador Wang Guangya, indicated that sanctions should neither target the Iranian people nor normal trade relations with other countries.[159] China's dissatisfaction continued even though China voted in favor of the resolution.

China also voted in favor of UNSC Resolution 1835 in September 2008. It again stated that the resoulution should not lead to additional sanctions. However, the United States and European countries had accused China of actions contrary to resolutions that implemented more sanctions on Iran. China was also accused of selling dual-use metals that Iran could use for advanced

157 "UN Security Council, 62nd year: 5500th meeting," available from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.5647

158 "China against sanctions on Iran nuclear issue," *Xinhua*, October 31, 2007, accessed January 13, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/31/content_6982205.htm

159 "UN Security Council, 63nd year: 5848th meeting," available from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.5848

weaponry and long-range nuclear missiles.[160] Due to China's diplomatic efforts and intermediary role during diplomatic negotiations, these resolutions did not include additional sanctions on Iran.[161]

After the first sanction, China did not hesitate to continue oil-related cooperation with Iran. Although they were not implemented, China gained the rights to the Yadavararan oil field in December 2007 and the Azadegan oil field in January 2009.[162] At the time, the United States expressed dissatisfaction with the ongoing Sino-Iranian cooperation on sensitive technological materials.[163]

After the last sanctions in September 2008, the Iranian nuclear crisis entered a long, new period in which negotiations and bargaining were carried out among the actors. The UNSC did not adopt a new resolution until June 2010. In this period, China maintained its anti-sanctions position in the negotiation process. Delegates from the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, and Germany held a conference in Frankfurt, Germany on September 2, 2009, to coordinate their standpoints on the Iranian nuclear issue. However, China continued to support a peaceful resolution to Iran's nuclear crisis. It encouraged Iran and the international community by supporting a IAEA resolution that offered cooperation with Iran in November 2009. Meanwhile, China's high-level representatives in the UN, Zhang Yesui, expressed China's official views. He stated that, "China always advocates resolution of the Iran nuclear issue through diplomatic negotiations, and we believe sanctions are not the way to solve the root issues."[164]

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160 Glenn R. Simpson and Jay Solomon, " Fresh Clues of Iranian Nuclear Intrigue," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 16, 2009, accessed January 13, 2017, http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB123206759616688285

161 "Pressing Iran on nuclear issue not solution: China," *Tehran Times*, September 10, 2006, accessed January 13, 2017, http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/119278/Pressing-Iran-on-nuclear-issue-not-solution-China

162 "The Iran Nuclear Issue: The View from Beijing," *Crisis Group Update Briefing,* February 17, 2010, accessed January 13, 2017, https://d2071andvipowj.cloudfront.net/b100-the-iran-nuclear-issue-the-view-from-beijing.pdf

163 Wang and Wang, "The Iran Nuclear Issue in Sino-US Relations," 31.

164 Liu and Wu, "Key Issues in China-Iran Relations," 49.

Nevertheless, anti-sanction supporters including China could not create new negotiation process before UNSC Resolution 1929 was adopted in June 2010. Although Iran agreed to Turkey and Brazil's Tehran Research Reactor (TRR) fuel-swap initiative in May 2010, France, Russia, and the United States rejected it, claiming that Iran had inadequtely complied with previous conditions.[165] However, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu stated that China welcomed Brazil and Turkey's initiative.[166] Resolution 1929 was the last and most serious during the negotiations on Iran's nuclear crisis. China also voted for the resolution, which adopted additional sanctions targeting Iran's military and financial sectors.

§ 4.4 Assessment of China's Role in Iran's Nuclear Crisis

China's overall strategy on Iran's nuclear crisis obviously prioritizes economic relations over political and military interests during the period 2001-2011. At all times, Chinese foreign policy and diplomatic position with respect to the nuclear issue can be characterized as reluctant cooperation with the United States and the EU3. Although China shifted its diplomatic position to policies that accommodate international institutions and other powers in the period 2006-2011, it emphasized concerns about unilateral US actions and unlimited sanctions against Iran. China continuously said neutral messages to all sides even though it approved all sanctions-related resolutions of the UNSC. This is the most significant indication of the three legs of China's foreign policy orientation during the period 2001-2011.

The first leg of China's foreign policy orientation is that it has been concerned more with internal economic development and its heavy need for energy from energy-rich countries such as Iran. Apart from energy security, China's main concern was to guarantee a stable regional order in the Gulf region as the second leg of foreign policy orientation. However, Iran's close geographical proximity to China's western borders – including Xinjiang and

165 "Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran," accessed January 16, 2017, https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheet/Timeline-of-Nuclear-Diplomacy-With-Iran#2010

166 "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Jiang Yu's Regular Press Conference on May 25, 2010," accessed January 16, 2017, http://www.china-un.org/eng/fyrth/t697072.htm

Tibet, which are potentially unstable autonomous regions – urged China to become involved in Iran's nuclear crisis. Unilateral use of force and any military intervention in Iran could destabilize Xinjiang and Tibet. China could not afford another conflict in addition to Iraq's instability in its close proximity. On the other hand, according to Lin, "China needs Iran not only to keep open the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf, but also as a node in the new energy Silk Road connecting Persian Gulf, Caspian Sea, Central Asia to China."[167] Although this is an ambitious analyse, it is really difficult for China to achieve full-fledged energy security without alternative energy sources connecting the Persian Gulf to the Malacca Strait and Pakistan with pipelines.

The third leg of China's foreign policy orientation on Iran's nuclear crisis concerns global powers and international institutions. Not only the United States but also the European Union and Russian influence in the Iranian nuclear crisis urged China to resolve the crisis within the framework of current international institutions and diplomatic mechanisms.

As defined by Swaine, China was faced with a great dilemma with respect to Iran's nuclear crisis. While China did not want to undermine economic relations with Iran, it also did not want to antagonize the United States and other great powers.[168] In terms of the regional order in the Middle East, Iran is China's most important strategic asset. But in terms of the global order, China needed the support of the United States on several issues ranging from global trade to conflicts in regions nearby to China such as the South China Sea conflict and the North Korea and Taiwan issues. Thus, China's dilemma created a balancing strategy in Iran's nuclear crisis.

On the other hand, China used Iran as an asset to become involved in the great power competition in the Middle East. According to Liu and Wu,

> Iran is the main target of such a strategy. Iran is emerging as a new regional power and it is playing a crucial role in the Middle East's diplomatic balance. Iran won observer status to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2005. Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr

167 Lin, "China, Iran and North Korea," 4.

168 Swaine, "Beijing's Tightrope Walk on Iran," 4.

> Mottaki officially announced Iran's bid to join the SCO in March 2008. Iran views the SCO as a potential guarantor of future security and a major new alliance that is emerging between Iran and China that threatens to undermine US ability to pressure Iran.[169]

China did not ignore the political and economic role of the US while entering the Middle East competition. China became an important intermediary between the United States and Iran during the negotiation process, since China had influence over Iran in terms of their political and economic relations.[170] During the negotiation process, this role worked well especially after the harsh UNSC sanctions on Iran. As mentioned, China continuously used neutral diplomatic language in official statements on UNSC Resolutions.

In addition to these three determinants of China's foreign policy behavior during the Iranian nuclear crisis, other factors played a crucial role. For example, although China opposed the use of force and military intervention in Iran, it also did not want to upset the existing balance of power in the Middle East by directly supporting Iran. Israel's criticism and threats during the negotiation process were taken under consideration by China, as well. Another important aspect of Iran's nuclear crisis was related to the fact that as a nuclear power itself, China did not want a nuclear Iran in its close geographical proximity. China's global image was another important aspect affecting China's foreign policy behavior. China did not want to diminish its global image by directly supporting a country ambitiously wanting to be a nuclear power.

169 Liu and Wu, "Key Issues in China-Iran Relations," 53.

170 Anne Wu, "U.S. Counts on China as Mediator with Iran," *San Francisco Chronicle,* June 5, 2006, accessed January 17, 2017, http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/U-S-counts-on-China-as-mediator-with-Iran-2495609.php

5

China and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is one of the crucial international crises that affects both regional and global politics. In terms of regional politics, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, and Turkey are among the major powers that have the capability to change the direction of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Thus, any proposal offering a complete solution to the conflict should not underestimate the role of these countries in the region. However, the United States, the European Union, and Russia are the key global powers that have been involved in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict throughout its history. Apart from that, China, a rising global power, became the significant side of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as soon as the People's Republic of China established in 1949. From its original revolutionary foreign policy objectives to its pragmatism since the 1990s, China's foreign policy has evolved on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

In this chapter, China's political and diplomatic stance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be analyzed to show its changing foreign policy during the period 2001-2011. Thus, the chapter is divided into three parts: the historical background of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Sino-Israeli relations, and China's diplomatic position toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

§ 5.1 The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

The official declaration of Lord Arthur James Balfour was an initial sign of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in 1917. The creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, as declared by the Balfour Declaration, was welcomed by Great Britain, which had political interests in the region at the time. The declaration made inevitable the conflict between Arabs and Jews that unfolded over the better part of the twentieth century. Today, at the turn of the twenty-first century, the conflict shows no sign of resolution. This part of the chapter begins by defining the conflict briefly discussing the historical background and important milestones before moving on to contemporary developments between 2001 and 2011.

5.1.1 *Historical Background of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the consequent appearance of the first Palestinian refugees forced to leave their homeland is the beginning of the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict. After the establishment of the State of Israel, Israeli politicians claimed that Israel was a legitimate nation state according to the United Nations (UN) and international law. According to them, all necessary legal forms of a nation state such as land, people and constitution, existed in contemporaneous post-World War II atmosphere. Actually, in the context of post-World War II political conditions, both the Palestinian and Jewish people struggled to survive and acquire their legitimate rights to the land of Palestine. Great Britain, then the mandatory state in control of the territory, held all political and economic rights over Palestine at the time. By 1946, there were some 1,269 thousand Arabs and 608 thousand Jews living inside the borders of the British Mandate of Palestine.[1]

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a plan to partition Palestine between Jews and Arabs on November 29, 1947.[2] The main

1 Dorothy Bauhoff, Claude Faure and Melissa Hill, *Dictionary of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Culture, History, and Politics* (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005), 347.

2 "UNGA Resolution 181 (II) Adopted on the Report of Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question," accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/181(II)

problem with the plan was that some Jewish settlements and many Arab settlements fell within the other state. Although the two-state solution of the UN remains the most legitimate, reasonable plan for resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it exacerbated the situation, igniting the first Arab and Jewish reactions at the beginning of the conflict. After tense conflicts between Arabs and Jews, Great Britain evacuated Palestine.[3] On May 14, 1948, Zionist leaders, who were more organized and equipped than Arabs, declared the State of Israel in line with the UN partition plan.[4]

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent resistance of neighboring Arab countries—including Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq—not only changed the nature of the conflict but also transformed Cold War politics in the Middle East. A territorial problem that was acknowledged by the UN partition plan in 1947 transformed into a new problem after Arab countries lost the Arab-Israeli wars. There were three features of this new problem: First, the Arab-Israeli wars caused enormous demographic changes in the region. Thousands of Palestinian refugees migrated to neighboring countries such as Jordan and Syria. Second, the Arab-Israeli wars created the new political condition of Israel's military superiority over Arab states. Hence, it triggered Arab nationalist political movements such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which was established just three years before the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. The last feature of this new problem concerned the increasing role of secondary actors such as other Arab countries in the region, the UN, the United States, and the Soviet Union. These features are still affecting in current day efforts to find a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

At the beginning of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the role and power of Great Britain in the Middle East declined. The United States, as a new global power, took concrete steps to prove its capability to change the dynamics of regional conflicts in the Middle East. As one of the important actors, the UN became dysfunctional under the conditions of the Cold War, and the Soviets became the new challenger in both regional and global politics. The Suez War

3 Gregory Harms and Todd M. Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 94.

4 Ibid., 95.

in 1956 was an indication that the Cold War political environment could provoke Israel to wage opportunist war to expand its territory.[5] The nationalization of the Suez Canal by the president of Egypt in July 1956 was actually a response to an ongoing conflict between France, Great Britain, and the United States over Egypt. The Soviet Union supported President Nasser's attempt to establish Egypt's sovereign rights over its own territory. After fierce debate in the Israeli parliament, Israel decided to join the war alongside France and Great Britain.[6]

The result of the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 was critical for determining contemporary controversies between Palestinians and Israelis. Israel decimated the armed forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in 1967 and extended the territory under its control by threefold.[7] During the war, Israel seized territories beyond its borders, including the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria. It also caused a breakthrough in the Palestinian movement since the establishment of the PLO gained momentum and it became the only legitimate organization struggling against the Israeli occupation.

After the war, the UNSC adopted the historically important Resolution 242, which demanded the

> withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict; termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.[8]

Egypt and Jordan immediately accepted the UN resolution and considered the withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories as a precondition for negotiation. Israel also accepted the resolution but it insisted that the question of

5 Ian J. Bickerton, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), 88.

6 Ibid., 101.

7 Ibid., 109.

8 United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (1967), accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/242(1967)

withdrawal and refugee problems could be settled only in direct negotiations.[9] The PLO, for its part, strongly criticized the resolution since it did not address such central problems as the political rights of Palestinians.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict reached a new level with the establishment of the PLO in 1964. Before the PLO's establishment, Israel consistently claimed that there was no Palestinian entity that could be a legitimate actor in negotiation processes. For Israeli politicians, the State of Israel had the capacity and power to settle the problem as a domestic issue of a single nation state, thus refusing to discuss the initial part of the conflict, such as the first partition plan of the UN and Israel's other illegal actions between 1948 and 1967. In this way, Israel brought a new agenda and conditions to the conflict, bypassing UN resolutions and Palestinian political demands.

The various social, economic, and political dimensions of the conflict gradually became apparent between 1967 and 1987. From the Six Day War in 1967 to the First Intifada in 1987, the harshness of the conflict extended beyond Palestine to Beirut, Damascus, Amman, and Baghdad. This period was also characterized by the first open fragmentation of Palestinian politics among new actors such as Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and Fatah. In 1984, for example, the founding father of the PLO, Yaser Arafat, criticized the various fractions by emphasizing the unity among Palestinians. In the same statement, Arafat expressed his positive view of the two-state solution and indirect negotiations with Israel.[10]

Furthermore, a new negotiation process known as the Sadat Initiative started between Egypt and Israel in 1978 upon the encouragement of Egypt's president, Anwar Sadat.[11] At the end of these negotiations, both sides agreed upon the two accords of the Camp David Agreement, which was signed in

9 Bickerton, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict,* 126.

10 Judith Miller, "Battle within the PLO Threatens A Formal Split," *New York Times*, November 18, 1984, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1984/11/18/world/battle-within-the-plo-threatens-a-formal-split.html?pagewanted=all

11 Fred J. Khouri, *The Arab-Israeli Dilemma* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 400.

September 1978.[12] The first accord was "A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel" and the second was "A Framework for Peace in the Middle East."[13] Egypt tried to satisfy both its own national interests and Arab public opinion, preventing negative intervention into the agreement in the two different accords. Six months after Camp David, with the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty of March 1979, Egypt became the first Arab country to recognize the State of Israel in return for an Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula.[14]

However, this was a disappointment for Palestinians. Sadat had made a separate peace agreement with Israel that excluded Palestinians and the Palestinian cause. The only achievement of the Sadat Initiative was the withdrawal of Israel from the Sinai Peninsula and the re-establishment of Egypt-Israeli diplomatic relations. As soon as both sides signed the agreement, the Arab Summit convened in Baghdad on behalf of Palestinians and other Arab countries and strongly criticized Egypt for its unilateral action. Aside from the establishment of Egypt-Israeli diplomatic relations, the Camp David Agreement was unable to bring about a complete solution to Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

After the Camp David Agreement, new plans were proposed by various actors. All these were indicators of the internationalization of and the intervention of other actors in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For example, US pres. Ronald Reagan proposed a plan named the Vienna Declaration in 1980. This plan was unsuccessful because it did not recognize the PLO as a legitimate actor and only moderate Arabs were taken into consideration. In 1981, King Fahd proposed an eight-point plan recognizing "the right of all states in the region to live in peace." King Fahd's proposal was interpreted as implying the recognition of Israel, too.[15] In spite of King Fahd's positive attitude towards Israel, the final declaration of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, which

12 It is also known as Camp David I. In 2000, however, US President Bill Clinton started new peace talks between the Palestinians and Israelis, known as Camp David II.

13 Mehmet Yılmaz, "Radikal Sağın İsrail Dış Politikasına Etkisi," in *Filistin: Çıkmazdan Çözüme*, ed. Ahmet Davutoğlu et al. (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2003), 244.

14 Khouri, *The Arab-Israeli Dilemma,* 411.

15 Ibid., 425.

was adopted at Fez in 1982, delayed the recognition of Israel but proposed that the leadership of the PLO be recognized. Brezhnev, then the pres. of the Soviet Union, also proposed a peace plan in 1982. He emphasized different aspects of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict such as an independent state of Palestine; the PLO as a representative of all Palestine, the implementation of UNSC Resolution 242, the illegality of Israel's control of Gaza and the West Bank, and the recognition of the State of Israel.[16]

Despite these peace proposals for a final agreement between Palestinians and Israelis, the conflict reached a new level as a result of Israel's aggression in the Sabra and Shatila massacre. The occupation of Beirut in 1982 was the latest indication of Israel's unilateral intentions beyond its borders. As a result of its aggression, Palestinians started the First Intifada in 1987, which was the first all-out struggle of Palestinian groups against illegal occupation by Israel. The First Intifada and its immediate effects openly indicated that Palestinians would not accept the Israeli occupation and Israel's ongoing strategy vis-à-vis Palestine lands.

While Palestinian domestic politics was fragmented and polarized during these years, Israeli domestic politics was also polarized. New political parties and organizations openly criticized Israel's aggression in the region, especially its occupation of Beirut in 1982. For example, a large demonstration criticizing the violent actions of Israel's security forces was organized by the Peace Now movement in Tel Aviv following the Sabra and Shatila massacre.[17]

On the side of Palestinian domestic politics, Hamas was founded as a resistance organization against the Israeli occupation in Gaza and the West Bank in December 1988, a few days after the start of the First Intifada.[18] Hamas openly questioned Arafat and his leadership in the PLO at the time. At that same year, the Palestinian National Council declared the independence of the State of Palestine, citing UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. In this declaration, made in Algeria in November 1988, Palestinian leaders supported a two-state solution and implicitly recognized the State of Israel. The following month, on

16 Bülent Aras, *Filistin-İsrail Barış Süreci ve Türkiye* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1997), 91.

17 Bickerton, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict,* 155.

18 Bauhoff, Faure and Hill, *Dictionary of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,* 153.

December 13, 1988, Arafat addressed the UNGA and announced the decisions taken in Algeria by the Palestinian National Council.[19]

5.1.2 *The Madrid Conference, Oslo Accords, and Camp David II, 1991-2001*

After the harsh conflicts and long negotiation processes, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict entered a new period with the end of the Cold War. In this period, both Palestinians and Israelis started to discuss details such as autonomy, statehood, settlement projects, and the division of the West Bank and Gaza. However, the status of Palestinian delegations participating in the negotiations and the lack of trust between Palestinians and Israelis remained persistent problems during the 1990s. In an effort to solve these problems, several new plans and agreements were proposed, such as the Madrid Conference in 1991, the Oslo Accords in 1993 and 1995, and Camp David II in 2000.

The post-Cold War conditions encouraged all actors, including the Palestinians, to participate in the 1991 Madrid Conference in order to reach a solution on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The Madrid Conference was actually an initiative of George H. W. Bush, then president of the United States, who was aiming to achieve a final agreement before the end of his presidency in 1993. Nevertheless, the initiative failed for several reasons. One of the reasons concerned unacceptable demands on both sides. The concept of "land for peace" was the basic common point for each side, but its content was not clear. While Palestinians insisted on full-fledged statehood, the Israeli side was not willing to concede even limited autonomy for Palestinians. Another reason was related to domestic political changes in the United States and Israel. Yitzhak Rabin was elected as Israeli prime minister in 1992, whilw Bill Clinton won the race for the US presidency over Bush in 1992.[20] As is usual, each new cabinet has its own strategies with respect to serious issues such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

19 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 148.

20 Ibid., 150.

Although the Madrid Conference did not solve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it led to the further communication between Palestine and Israel in Oslo in 1993. The first Oslo talks began in January 1993 upon the invitation of the Norwegian government.[21] In September 1993, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat agreed upon mutual recognition and a declaration of peace. Although both leaders criticized by respective opposition groups Arafat, Rabin, and Shimon Peres received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 due to the historic mission they undertook during negotiation process.[22]

The second agreement between Palestinians and Israelis, Oslo II, came onto the table in September 1995. This agreement forced Israel to withdraw from occupied Palestinian territories and to recognize the Palestinian Authority's (PA) rights to govern 30 percent of the West Bank.[23] The most important part of the agreement was about the establishment of zones of control in the West Bank.[24] However, Oslo II was criticized harshly by opposition groups in both Israel and Palestine. After the agreement, some opposition groups, including Hamas, criticized Arafat. Israel also defined the claims of these opposition groups as illegitimate and marginal. All efforts to bring peace to the conflict collapsed under severe, reciprocal attacks. Yitzhak Rabin identified the "murderous terrorism of the radical Islamic terrorist organizations, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which are joined by the rejectionist organizations" as the primary obstacle to the implementation of the peace process.[25] One month

21 Ibid., 153.

22 "The Nobel Peace Prize 1994," *Nobel Media AB*, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1994/

23 Formally, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is a governing body of the emerging Palestinian autonomous regions of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

24 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 155.

25 "Address to the Knesset by Prime Minister Rabin on the Israel-Palestinian Interim Agreement, 5 October 1995," accessed January 18, 2017 http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook10/pages/address%20to%20the%20knesset%20by%20prime%20minister%20rabin%20on.aspx

after Oslo II, in November 1995, a young Israeli student assassinated Yitzhak Rabin.[26]

Israeli aggression continued during the peace process between 1993 and 1995. For example, a Jewish-American settler killed twenty-nine Muslims at the al-Halil mosque in Februrary 1994. According to Bayraktar, who is a specialist on the Oslo peace agreement and the Palestine-Israeli conflict, reciprocal enmities undermined the Oslo Accords. The Oslo Accords did not even mention refugees, a future Palestinian state, the status of Jerusalem, or the fate of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.[27]

In 1996, Israel determined its new position by declaring that "the government of Israel would negotiate with the PA but would oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state."[28] Despite the deadlock with respect to the Oslo Accords, international actors urged both sides to continue peace talks. To this end, from 1996 until Camp David II, there were two other agreements between Palestinians and Israelis, namely the Hebron Agreement in 1997 and the Wye River Accord in 1998. These were actually parcel to the Oslo Accords, since both concerned matters that both sides had negotiated in Oslo II, such as the division of the West Bank into zones.[29]

Camp David II was encouraged by US President Bill Clinton in 2000. Similar to the Madrid Conference in 1991, Camp David II was the last attempt to reach a final agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis before the end of Clinton's presidency in 2001. In May 2000, Israel offered a new map proposing the borders of the West Bank. In this map, between 66 and 77 percent of the West Bank would belong to the PA. The West Bank was further broken into

26 "Rabin's alleged killer appears in court," *CNN*, November 7, 1995, accessed January 18, 2017, http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9511/rabin/amir/11-06/index.html

27 Bora Bayraktar, *Oslo Barış Süreci: İsrail-Filistin Barış Görüşmeleri 1991-2000* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2013), 144.

28 "Address in the Knesset by Prime Minister-elect Netanyahu presenting his government to the Knesset, 18 June 1996," accessed January 18, 2017, http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Yearbook11/Pages/4%20Address%20in%20the%20Knesset%20by%20Prime%20Minister-elect%20N.aspx

29 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 162.

four enclaves with no physical connection.[30] Beyond division of the West Bank and Gaza, the status of Jerusalem and the return of refugees were other problems that were not solved during the negotiations. At the end of Camp David II, both sides returned without any resolution. After the failure of the negotiations, Ariel Sharon made a historic visit to Haram al-Sharif with more than one thousand police officers, which ignited the Second Intifada in 2000. After the Second Intifada, the UNSC declared "that a just and lasting solution to the Arab and Israeli conflict must be based on its resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, through an active negotiating process."[31]

5.1.3 *The Second Intifada and New Factions, 2001-2005*

From 2001 until 2005, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was shaped by three key factors that had a direct influence over the conflicting sides. One of these was the increasing violent actions of Palestinians and Israelis. On one hand, the Second Intifada represented the start of new violence committed by armed groups inside Palestinian resistance movements. On the other, Israeli security forces committed violent acts against Palestinian civilians and armed groups during the period 2001-2005. The second factor that influenced both sides of the conflict was the domestic politics of both Palestine and Israel. While Arafat's declining power created a new political struggle inside the PLO, Hamas' increasing power in both Gaza and the West Bank affected the negotiation process during this period.

As a last factor, the role of international actors increased with the new Road map plan. In addition to new peace proposals, global political changes such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001 and the Iraq War in 2003 directly affected the behavior of international actors during the period 2001-2005.

Israeli politics entered a complicated period after Ehud Barak lost the February 2001 elections, which were considered a referendum on Camp David II

30 Ibid., 168.

31 "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1322 (2000)," accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1322(2000)

in Israel. Ariel Sharon became the Israeli prime minister after the elections in February 2001. Actually, Israel had a clear dilemma given the different approaches to the ongoing conflict and to the negotiation process with respect to the Palestinian issue. In the midst of a political transition in Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon publicly stated that the Oslo Accords between the PA and Israel in 1993 and 1995 and the agreement reached at Camp David II in 2000 were no longer valid from the Israeli point of view. It was a symbolic statement showing that Israel's hardline politics would prevail over more moderate political tendencies in the days to come.[32]

Furthermore, with the Second Intifada, Palestinian resistance movements increasingly began to use armed struggle against Israeli security forces and, in some cases, against civilians. Shopping malls, restaurants, and public buses became targets of suicide bombings carried out by both religious and secular Palestinian groups. On the other hand, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) responded with targeted killings and assassinations of leaders and members of Palestinian resistance movements.[33] In spring 2002, for example, the IDF occupied most of Zones A and B in the West Bank, areas that had been officially created in the Oslo agreement in 1995. Israel also occupied major cities in the West Bank like Nablus and Ramallah, which housed the headquarters of Arafat. From that time until his death, Arafat was forced by Israeli authorities to live under house arrest. Consequently, on September 24, 2002, the UNSC adopted a resolution condemning all terrorist attacks including those of both Palestinians and the IDF.[34]

On the Palestinian side, many problems stemmed from previous agreements signed by Arafat. Additionally, disagreements between the PA and Hamas reached a new level during the Second Intifada. In March 2002, Mahmud Abbas was appointed as prime minister in order to mitigate the behavior of the US and other international actors towards Palestine and to provide a new roadmap for negotiations. At the same time, the Palestinian opposition groups Hamas and the Islamic Jihad announced their refusal to take part in any new

32 Bickerton, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict,* 189.

33 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 174.

34 "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1435 (2002)," accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1435(2002)

Palestinian government. Factions and perpetual controversies in Palestinian politics created a problem of confidence among Palestinians during negotiations between 2001 and 2005.

Fatah began to exert political and security pressures on opposition groups, especially Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, during this period.[35] From that time forward, the power struggle among Palestinian groups started to overshadow all other issues, including violence between Palestinians and Israelis. However, Fatah's loss to Hamas in Palestinian university student elections demonstrated that the Hamas' power could not be ignored in Palestinian politics.

The death of Arafat in November 2004 changed the positions of Palestinian groups. Hamas leaders announced that they would accept a long-term ceasefire with Israel in return for Israeli recognition of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.[36] On the other hand, in response to Hamas, Mahmud Abbas declared that the Second Intifada was a mistake and that violent actions on all sides should stop.[37]

International actors involved in the Palestinian conflict started new initiatives to reach a final agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis. The previous, unsuccessful initiatives urged the president of the United States, George W. Bush, to initiate a new one to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For that reason, the Mitchell Committee was charged with investigating the Second Intifada in 2001. At the end of the investigation, the Mitchell Report proposed that new peace talks were possible, emphasizing an immediate ceasefire between the conflicting sides. After the positive outcome of the Mitchell Report, the US government appointed Anthony Zinni as a new, special Middle East envoy in December 2001. In addition, the Quartet was

35 Fatah is one of the political parties in the broad coalition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. It is also the largest political group among other Palestinian political groups. It was founded by the leadership of Yasser Arafat in 1950s.

36 "Chronology October 16, 2004 - January 15, 2005," *Middle East Journal* 59 (2005): 288. Accessed June 20, 2014, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4330129

37 Ibid., 288.

established in 2002 as a new diplomatic mechanism, encouraging the participation of other actors such as the European Union, Russia, and the UN.[38]

The Arab Peace Initiative, which was promulgated in March 2002 at the Arab League Summit in Beirut, was an important initiative for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For the first time, Arab countries offered Israel complete peace in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from territories it had occupied during the 1967 war. In addition, the initiative paved the way for a future Palestinian state and supported the idea of two states.[39] The UNSC welcomed and encouraged all actors to bring about a comprehensive peace in the Middle East in March 2002.[40]

George W. Bush wrote a letter in September 2002 to Ariel Sharon to end the siege of Arafat's compound in Ramallah. In December 2002, the United States leaked a new Road map initiative, but it was delayed due to the impending elections in Israel. After the elections, the Road map was announced by George W. Bush. He called for negotiations that would lead to a Palestinian state. George Bush's decision was accepted by the Quartet, becoming an international initiative. It came to the table in April 2003.[41]

The Road map established a three phase, "performance-based" plan for a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The initial phase, which would extend through the first half of 2003, entailed the PA meeting performance-based criteria for comprehensive security reform, putting an end to the violence and rebuilding Palestinian institutions.[42] The second phase was

38 "Remarks by Foreign Minister of Spain Josep Piqué; United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan; Foreign Minister of Russia Igor Ivanov; European Union Senior Official Javier Solana and Secretary Colin L. Powell," accessed January 18, 2017, https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/4808D2E68A33B35385256B970062DEAF

39 Bauhoff, Faure and Hill, *Dictionary of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,* 279.

40 "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1397 (2002), accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1397(2002)

41 Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *The Palestinian Issue: Historical Background and Contemporary Developments* (Beirut: Al-Zeytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations, 2012), 184.

42 "The Israeli–Palestinian Conflict: Utopianism vs Realism," *Strategic Survey*, 2003, accessed November 18, 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/04597230312331339883

a transition period for comprehensive negotiations between the two sides. In the third phase, the Permanent Status Agreement would be signed.[43]

The Israeli and Palestinian sides started to discuss the Road map in 2003. While Palestinians opposed Israel's ongoing occupation in the West Bank and Gaza, Israel disagreed about the return of Palestinian refugees to the prospective Palestinian state. Israel declared fourteen reservations about the Road map, as well.[44] Diplomatic efforts were again interrupted by a conflict after the Sharon-Abbas talk on May 18, 2003.[45] However, Sharon agreed to endorse the Road map and series of steps to be taken by all sides. The Israeli cabinet also backed the Road map initiative, signaling Israel's first endorsement of a Palestinian state. In June, George W. Bush, Abbas, and Sharon met in Aqaba, Jordan, to support an end to the violence and the creation of a Palestinian state.[46] During the meeting, the Palestinian prime minister commented that the armed intifada must end.

In addition to the Road map initiative, another symbolic peace agreement was negotiated and publicly released in October 2003 by a group of Israeli and Palestinian politicians working outside of official channels.[47] They openly suggested a two-state solution, but Israeli politicians viewed it as manipulative and unnecessary. On the other hand, at the beginning of 2004, Sharon declared a disengagement plan that envisaged a complete withdrawal from Gaza. In return for such a concession, Israel constructed new settlements in the West Bank. The disengagement plan – that is, the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza – was completed in September 2005.[48]

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43 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 185.

44 Yanshuo Ni, "What a Mess: Middle East Calls for Revived Roadmap Peace Plan to Tackle the Current Standoff," *Beijing Review*, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/200421/World-200421(C).htm

45 "Chronology April 16, 2003 - July 15, 2003," *Middle East Journal* 57 (2003): 647. Accessed June 20, 2014, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4329944

46 Bauhoff, Faure and Hill, *Dictionary of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 7.*

47 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 182.

48 Ali Balcı, "Filistin 2005," in Ortadoğu Yıllığı 2005 ed. Ali Balcı et al. (İstanbul: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, 2006), 124.

5.1.4 *The Death of Arafat and the Changing Nature of the Conflict, 2005-2011*

After the death of Arafat in November 2004, both Palestinian domestic politics and the conflict with Israel entered a new period heavily determined by internal and external developments in the region. In this second period between 2005 and 2011, three main factors shaped the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The first was the increasing disagreement between Hamas and Fatah over Palestinian politics which reached a new level with Hamas' election victories between 2005 and 2006. The second factor was about the ongoing conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. Rising conflicts between Israeli security forces and Palestinian armed groups continued under the pressure of the Iraq War, which started in 2003. The last factor that shaped the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during this period was that international actors continued to work together to achieve a final agreement between Palestinian and Israelis by means of new peace initiatives such as the Annapolis Conference in 2007.

After the death of Arafat, Palestinian politics entered a period of open disagreements about the Hamas and other armed groups fighting against Israeli security forces. Municipal and legislative elections held in Palestine increased disagreement among these groups. Elections were held in four phases between December 2004 and December 2005.[49] In January 2005, Mahmud Abbas was elected president with 62 percent of the vote. However, Hamas won approximately two-thirds of local council seats in ten Gaza districts.[50] These changes in Palestinian politics alarmed the United States and the European Union since they saw Hamas as an organization that supported violent action. For this reason, they started to support Mahmud Abbas during this period.

However, none of the direct support of Abbas by the United States and the European Union changed the political inclination of Palestinians the Hamas, which won a victory in the West Bank municipal elections in December 2005,

49 Mohsen M. Saleh and Basheer N. Nafi, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2005* (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations, 2007), 35.

50 Ibid., 36.

taking Fatah's traditional strongholds including Nablus.[51] These political achievements continued in ensuing elections, which were the first parliamentary elections in ten years. Hamas won the elections and 76 of 136 seats in January 2006.[52] Hamas political success brought about new pressure from the Quartet which stated clearly that aid to Palestinians would be jeopardized if Hamas refused to renounce violent attacks against Israeli security forces and to recognize the State of Israel.[53] On the other hand, the governments of Russia, China, Iran, and Qatar celebrated Hamas' victory and pledged aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian government.

Throughout 2006, Hamas and Fatah could not reach an agreement on a national unity government.[54] A new dialog started in Mecca in January 2007 mediated by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. After the Mecca Agreement, Mahmud Abbas and Hamas leader, Khalid Mesh'al, agreed to form a national unity government. The Mecca Agreement ended the bloody conflict among rival armed Palestinian groups since 2006.[55] The peace reached in Mecca ended in June 2007 with Abbas' decree banning militias and paramilitary organizations irrespective of their affiliation, including those of Fatah and Hamas. According to Abbas, armed groups were illegally fighting against Israel and there was no common Palestinian strategy behind the attacks. This move was also related to the Road map plan that had proposed to prevent all violent attacks.[56]

The basic problems and difficulties faced by the Palestinians were mitigated in a statement by Hamas' political chief Khalid Mesh'al recognizing the pre-1967 borders of the State of Israel.[57] This statement was an enormous

51 Ibid., 37.

52 Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2006* (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations, 2007), 27.

53 "Chronology January 16, 2006 - April 15, 2006," *Middle East Journal* 60 (2006): 537. Accessed June 20, 2014, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4330285

54 Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2006,* 34.

55 Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2007* (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations, 2008), 33.

56 Ibid., 62.

57 Conal Urquhart, "Hamas leader acknowledges 'reality' of Israel," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2007, accessed January 18, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jan/10/israel1

impetus for talks between Hamas and Fatah. Even though the last national unity government was set up in 2011, Palestinian political forces agreed to struggle for international recognition of a Palestinian state and the pre-1967 borders for Israel as the basis for a two-state solution.

Another factor that influenced Israeli-Palestinian relations in the period between 2005 and 2011 was rising conflicts between armed Palestinian groups and Israeli security forces. The disengagement plan adopted by Sharon in 2004 and the separation wall were two crucial developments that caused violence between Palestinians and Israelis. As mentioned before, the disengagement plan was the de facto, unilateral declaration of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. Although Israel was to withdraw from Gaza, "it [would] supervise and guard the external envelope on land, [would] maintain exclusive control in the air space of Gaza, and [would] continue to conduct military activities in the sea space of the Gaza Strip."[58] Moreover, Israel launched two offensives against Hamas in Gaza in June and November 2006. These operations caused the death of hundreds of innocent people.[59] At the same time, Israel launched a war against Hezbollah in Lebanon in July 2006, and the UNSC adopted a resolution in response to this aggression which established a new UN peacekeeping force: the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).[60]

At the end of December 2008, in response to the renewal of rocket fire on southern Israel from Gaza, Israel launched another operation called Operation Cast Lead to prevent rocket fire coming from Palestine. It was the largest, heaviest operation since the end of the Second Intifada. As a consequence, the UN and international humanitarian organizations criticized and condemned the operations because of humanitarian disasters in Gaza which resulted in over one thousand deaths, one third of which were of women and children.[61]

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58 Harms and Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict,* 184.

59 Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2006,* 89.

60 "United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1701 (2006)," accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1701(2006); "UNIFIL Mandate," The United Nations, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unifil/mandate.shtml

61 Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2008* (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations, 2009), 113.

After the operation, the UN urged an international investigation into Israel's latest actions in Gaza and prepared the Goldstone Report in September 2009 condemning Palestinian rocket attacks and Israel's treatment of Gaza's civilian population. The Goldstone Report was immediately rejected by Israeli President Shimon Peres.[62]

In addition to ongoing conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis, the conflict reached a new level after the IDF attacked an aid ship in international waters. In May 2010, the Israeli Navy intercepted and boarded the Freedom Flotilla (Mavi Marmara) carrying aid intended for Gaza and led by pro-Palestinian NGOs from around the world. During the raid, nine Turkish citizens were killed by Israeli security forces, causing an ongoing diplomatic dispute between Turkey and Israel.[63]

The last factor that shaped the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during this period concerned international actors. As described in the section on the previous period, 2001-2005, the Road map initiative was deadlocked after implementation of its first phase, which proposed to end all violent actions, failed. In March 2007, Arab leaders restarted the 2002 Arab Initiatives at the Arab League Summit in return for a complete peace agreement. In this initiative, twenty-two Arab countries decided to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, in return for Israeli recognition of a Palestinian state within the borders before the 1967 war. Israeli prime minister Olmert and Palestinian president Abbas met in Jerusalem to discuss further details of the peace agreements. These initiatives were interrupted by another conflict in June 2007. In November, it was decided at the Annapolis Conference that a joint Israeli-Palestinian committee would be set up to discuss a two-state solution. The basic formula

62 Rory McCarthy, "UN Gaza report accuses Israel and Hamas of war crimes," The Guardian, September 15, 2009, accessed January 18, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/sep/15/un-gaza-war-israel-hamas

63 "What Happened on the Mavi Marmara?," The New York Times, June 11, 2010, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/12/opinion/12sat3.html?_r=0

was to promote gradual change on both sides. In December 2008, a UNSC resolution expressed warm support for further negotiations.[64]

The Middle East peace initiatives also entered a new period after 2009 as a result of US political tendencies and the differing perspectives of presidents George Bush and Barack Obama. The Road map did not provide a resolution to the conflict but did provide a new basis for further talks. In January 2009, President Obama appointed George Mitchell as special envoy to the Middle East charged with starting new proximity talks between Palestine and Israel.[65] On the other hand, the new Israeli government and its foreign minister Liberman, openly dismissed the Annapolis Conference and stated that it had no validity for Israel. In contrast to Liberman, PM Netanyahu promised to negotiate with the PA on final status issues. At the end of 2010, the first face-to-face peace negotiations started between the two sides with the support of the Obama administration. The US hoped that territorial issues and the problem of refugees could be resolved within a twelve-month period. During the negotiations, President Abbas declared that Palestinians would be willing to renounce all historical claims to Israel in return for discussing and resolving contemporary problems.[66] From 2010 until the UNGA granted Palestine observer status in 2012, discussions turned around the process of state building in Palestine. Although there were severe criticisms within Palestinian groups, Palestine gained observer status in November 2012.[67]

64 "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1850 (2008)," accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1850(2008)

65 Ed Henry and Elise Labott , "George Mitchell named special envoy for the Middle East," CNN, January 22, 2009, accessed January 18, 2017, http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/01/22/obama.mitchell/

66 Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, *The Palestinian Strategic Report 2010/11* (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre For Studies & Consultations, 2012), 107.

67 "General Assembly grants Palestine non-member observer State status at UN," accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43640#.Vv4xuiusU74

§ 5.2 Sino-Israeli Relations

The Balfour Declaration, which was originally a letter written in 1917 by the United Kingdom's foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour, to Walter Rothschild about establishment of Palestine as a national home for Jewish people, is generally accepted as the first official document marking the beginning of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Activists and Zionist organizations started to promote this declaration around the world, including in China. For instance, Chen Lu, the vice-minister of foreign affairs of the Kuomintang (KMT) government in Nanjing, endorsed the Balfour Declaration in 1918. The Jewish community in China welcomed it. Thus, it can be considered the first indication of Sino-Israeli relations, even though official recognition of the State of Israel was only realized in 1992.[68]

5.2.1 *Political and Diplomatic Relations*

Relations between China and Israel date to the catastrophe that befell the Jews in World War II. As a crucial city that accepted Jewish migrants, Shanghai still plays an important role in the economic, diplomatic, social, and cultural relations between both countries. During World War II, China was one of the countries that accepted Jewish refugees, and it provided them a peaceful environment in Shanghai. Shanghai is still home to a considerable Jewish community and numerous religious buildings that belong to it.[69] These stable relations between China and Israel were transformed and rendered unstable by the global political conditions of the Cold War. Three important problems affected Sino-Israeli relations throughout the Cold War: the recognition of the State of Israel by China, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the role of the US in bilateral relations between China and Israel.

The recognition of Israel by the People's Republic of China (PRC) was the only one of these problems solved by 2011. Although Israel was the first Middle

68 Binyamin Tjong-Alvares, "The Geography of Sino-Israeli Relations," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 24 (2012): 96.

69 Yossi Katz, "The Jews of China and their Contribution to the Establishment of the Jewish National Home in Palestine in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," *Middle Eastern Studies* 46 (2010): 544.

Eastern country to recognize the PRC, in January 1950, it took almost a half-century for China to recognize the State of Israel. Actually, just after World War II and the first conflicts between Jews and Palestinians in Jerusalem, Ben Gurion, the founder of the state of Israel, insisted on establishing a department of Chinese at Hebrew University.[70] This was an indication of Israel's goodwill toward China following recognition of the PRC.

However, there are several reasons for the belated recognition of Israel by the PRC. Actually, not China but the United States was to blame. David Hacohen, an Israeli politician, met with Chinese ambassador Yao Chuming in December 1953. Yao Chuming affirmed China's interest in diplomatic and trade relations at this meeting, but because of US pressure, the Israeli government did not accept his offer.[71] Given US Cold War strategies, Israel could not make an independent decision on issues related to China.[72] Thus, given the harsh ideological and political competition of the Cold War, China and Israel could not find a common ground to start diplomatic relations. The role of Israel in the Korean War (1950-1953) is an important example of Israel's dilemma with respect to relations with China. While Israel supported UN Resolution 84 that authorized the unified command under the United States against North Korea, the Israeli cabinet did not allow its government to send troops.[73] On the other hand, Israel provided medical aid and food for civilians to the UN forces. As China was one contender supporting North Korea in the Korean War, Israel's close relations with the United States negatively affected future relations between China and Israel.[74]

The second aspect which affected Sino-Israeli relations was about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and China's reaction to it. Actually, until the Suez War (1956), China made no negative official statements on Israel. Right after the

70 Tjong-Alvares, "The Geography of Sino-Israeli Relations," 97.

71 Ibid., 99.

72 Yitzhak Shichor, "The U.S. Role in Delaying Sino-Israeli Relations: Two's Company, Three's A Crowd," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 22 (2010): 7.

73 Alimcan Ablet, *Çin-İsrail İlişkileri* (İstanbul: İyidüşün Yayınları, 2016), 19.

74 Aron Shai, "Sino-Israeli Relations: Current Reality and Future Prospects," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 5 (2011): 22.

invasion of Sinai, China openly denounced Israel as an ally of Western imperialism for the first time. According to Berton, despite China's negative stance on the issue some Israeli communist party members visited China in September 1956 to improve relations between the two countries. Undermining the purpose of this visit, the Chinese had already decided to establish ties with the Arab world.[75] In response to such diplomatic maneuvers, Mao Zedong publicly rejected Israel's request to be recognized by the PRC. As cited by Behbehani, Mao said, "all the Arab world was against Israel … and we, on our part, cannot recognize Israel because it is a base for American, French, and West German imperialisms."[76]

China's negative view of Israel gradually increased after the Suez invasion. China openly supported the establishment of the PLO at the Arab League Summit in Cairo in January 1964.[77] In some cases, China's ambassador in Cairo even got in touch with Palestinian figures such as Ahmed Shuqairy, the first chairperson of the PLO – from 1964 to 1967 – as well as Yasser Arafat and Khalil al-Wazir, two highly political figures and the founders of Fatah.[78] The Arab-Israeli War in 1967 was another critical event that had enormous political resonance in Beijing. China denounced Israel's act of aggression against its Arab neighbors.[79]

The third aspect of Sino-Israeli relations was the US role in bilateral relations. Although the Sino-American rapprochement in the 1970s provided a basis for the normalization of Sino-Israeli relations, it also limited the possibility of independent Israeli foreign policy toward China. The differing political positions of China and the United States on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict became apparent for the first time during Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

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75 Peter Berton, "The Evolution of Sino-Israeli Relations," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 4 (2010): 69.

76 Hashim Behbehani, *China's Foreign Policy in the Arab World 1955-75: Three Case Studies* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1981), 146.

77 Yitzhak Shichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 117.

78 John Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East* (New York: Pinter Publishing, 1991), 33.

79 Ablet, *Çin-İsrail İlişkileri,* 33.

The Chinese foreign minister condemned Israel's unilateral military intervention as a "genocidal invasion" in July 1982.[80] This was the first public statement that revealed Sino-US disagreement with respect to the Middle East and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.[81] The United States and China's reciprocal accusations continued, and one Chinese diplomat openly criticized the United States for obstructing UNSC Resolutions that condemned Israel.[82]

For both Israel and China, the end of the Cold War was a turning point in bilateral diplomatic and political relations. Both countries accelerated the diplomatic process by which the State of Israel would be recognized by the PRC. Actually, after the Sino-American rapproachement in the 1970s, Israel and China had already started to establish informal relations with the help of some business initiatives. For example, Israeli business tycoon Saul Eisenberg provided the common ground between the Israeli defense industry and Chinese defense leaders for an arms deal at the beginning of the 1970s.[83] In 1985, Israel reopened its Hong Kong consulate, which had closed in 1975 as a result of budget cuts and the absence of contact with China.[84] The reopening of Israel's Hong Kong consulate was a covert request to be recognized by the PRC.[85] However, "in the past, virtually all Israeli academics or businessmen who wanted to visit China had to hold dual citizenship, so they could travel on the passport of a country with which China had diplomatic ties, such as the

80 "China's Stand on the Crisis in Lebanon," *Beijing Review*, July 26, 1982, accessed January 19, 2017, https://www.marxists.org/subject/china/peking-review/1982/PR1982-30.pdf

81 Christopher S. Wren, "China offers P.L.O. Aid of $1 Million," *New York Times,* June 20, 1982, accessed January 19, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1982/06/20/world/china-offers-plo-aid-of-1-million.html

82 Bernard D. Nossiter, "U.N. Council Calls on Israel to Pull Out of West Beirut," *New York Times*, Auguts 5, 1982, http://www.nytimes.com/1982/08/05/world/un-council-calls-on-israel-to-pull-out-of-west-beirut.html

83 Yarom Evron, "Sino-Israel Relations: Opportunities and Challenges," *INNS Strategic Assesment* 10 (2007): 61.

84 Simon Shen, "Hong Kong–Middle East Relations: Chinese Diplomacy and Urban Development," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* (2015): 3.

85 Gerald Segal, "China and Israel: Pragmatic Politics," *SAIS Review* 7 (1987): 195.

United States."[86] After the 1970s, China and Israel accelerated procedures for establishing official bilateral relations. To that end, the director general of the Israeli foreign ministry met with China's permanent representative to the UN in March 1987.[87] Before the official recognition of Israel, both sides met several times on various occasions, such as at the Wu Xuequan-Shimon Peres talks in 1987, which was the first foreign minister-level meeting. In addition, in 1989, right after the Qian Qichen-Peres talks, leaders stated that Israel could establish an office of the Israel Academy of Sciences in Beijing and that the PRC, in turn, could set up an office of the China International Travel Service in Tel Aviv.[88] On the other hand, the procedure to come together and discuss the prospect of official recognition was not easy given China's hardline stance on the PLO and Palestinian cause. Moshe Arens, the Israeli minister of defense, made a secret visit to China to discuss serious military and political issues such as continuing military cooperation between two countries and Israel's concerns about possible Chinese arms sales to Arab countries.[89] Nevertheless, China never allowed the issue of Palestine to drop off the negotiating table and supported the Palestinian cause during the diplomatic process of recognition.[90]

86 Thomas L. Friedman, "Israel and China Quietly Form Trade Bonds," *The New York Times*, July 22, 1985, accessed January 19, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1985/07/22/world/israel-and-china-quietly-form-trade-bonds.html

87 "Beijing Reports Its Aide Met an Israeli at U.N.," *The New York Times*, March 29, 1987, accessed January 19, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1987/03/29/world/beijing-reports-its-aide-met-an-israeli-at-un.html

88 Ilan Maor, "Sino–Israel Relations at the Start of the Second Decade: A View from Shanghai and Jerusalem," in *The Jewish-Chinese Nexus: A Meeting of Civilizations* ed. M. Avrum Ehrlich (New York: Routledge, 2008), 241.

89 Jackson Diehl, "Secret Israeli Trip to China Reported," *The Washington Post*, November 20, 1991, accessed January 19, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1991/11/20/secret-israeli-trip-to-china-reported/d0ab9eb3-e1fc-49a3-8196-ed30476a9cd2/?utm_term=.077efa8a32ee

90 Nicholas D. Kristof, "China Expects Eventual Ties With Israel," *The New York Times*, November 29, 1991, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1991/11/29/world/china-expects-eventual-ties-with-israel.html

Ultimately, not Israel's demands but rather its concessions and compromises – such as direct talks with Palestinians at the Madrid Peace Conference – that convinced China to recognize Israel in 1991. Only one year after the Madrid Peace Conference, China officially recognized the State of Israel.

The recognition of Israel by the PRC in 1992 not only provided a legitimate basis for the State of Israel in Middle East politics, but also created a new diplomatic space for the PRC at a time when it was internationally isolated.[91] Just three years before this recognition, China was shaken by the effects of Tiananmen massacre and deep internal political chaos. In the wake of the Cold War, China was confronted by a heavy US embargo because of the Tiananmen massacre. The recognition also provided a legitimate reason for both countries to improve political, economic, and military relations. After the recognition of Israel, the two countries signed several agreements promoting mutual relations, such as a tourism cooperation agreement signed in June 1994.

Social and cultural relations between the two countries were promoted throughout the 2000s in twin-city agreements such as those signed between Shanghai and Haifa as well as Beijing and Tel Aviv.[92] However, after President Jiang Zemin's visit to Israel in 2000, escalating conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis negatively affected bilateral political and diplomatic relations between China and Israel. Since Jiang Zemin's historic one-week visit to Israel, no other sitting Chinese president has visited Israel.[93]

5.2.2 *Economic Relations*

Beginning in 1978, China's opening-up reforms changed its economic policies by establishing a new development model more inclined to an open market economy and integration with the global economy. Actually, Sino-Israeli

91 Hui Liu and Hua Cao, "Zhongguo yu Yiselie Youhao Guanxi Lun [On the Friendly Relations between China and Israel]," *Chongqing Daxue Xuebao [Journal of Chongqing University]* 12 (2016): 62.

92 Guang Pan, "Zhongguo-Yiselie Guanxi de Lishi Yanjin he Xianzhuang Fenxi [Historical Evolution of Sino-Israeli Relations and Analysis of Existing State of Affairs]," *Shehui Kexue [Journal of Social Sciences]* 12 (2009): 161.

93 Ablet, *Çin-İsrail İlişkileri,* 45.

economic relations began long before China's official recognition of Israel in 1992. The Bandung Conference in 1955 was the earliest among Sino-Israeli trade talks. Yet they did not improve diplomatic relations and the attempts came to nothing.[94] Amos Yudan, the director of Koor Trade, which is one of the largest conglomerates in Israel, was the first Israeli to initiate trade with China in the 1980s.[95] Before the recognition of Israel by the PRC, Hong Kong was the locus of unofficial Sino-Israeli economic relations. It is difficult to obtain precise numbers with respect to Sino-Israeli trade relations since there were secret arms deals and indirect trade passing through Hong Kong.[96] The unofficial volume of exports to Israel, however, had already reached significant level by the 1970s. For example, "Israel's Foreign Trade General Summary in 1974 lists Hong Kong as recipient of 6.5 percent of total Israeli exports for 1974." Israel imported more than a million-dollars-worth of goods that same year.[97]

The economic interdependence of China and Israel made for an easy transition after the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. For example, as soon as diplomatic relations were established, both countries immediately started to institutionalize prior, unofficial connections. To this end, during the first visit of a Israeli prime minister to Beijing in 1993, Yitzhak Rabin signed a technological and scientific partnership agreement with China. One year later, the two countries agreed on the standardization of products and shipping. In addition, several agreements were signed in 1995 to promote financial cooperation and encourage investment. Two years later, during Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to Beijing, four working groups were established to increase

94 Muhamad Olimat, *China and the Middle East: From Silk Road to Arab Spring* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 121.

95 "Amos Yudan, the pioneer who paved the road For Chinese-Israeli fruitful relation," accessed January 20, 2017, http://www.comodan.co.il/management/yudan.htm#amos

96 Jonathan Goldstein, "Economic and Cultural Relations Between China and Israel Since the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations in 1992," in *The Jewish-Chinese Nexus: A Meeting of Civilizations* ed. M. Avrum Ehrlich (New York: Routledge, 2008), 257.

97 Lillian Craig Harris, *China Considers the Middle East* (New York: I.B Tauris, 1993), 170.

investments between China and Israel in the agricultural, electronics, health, and communications sectors.[98]

From the beginning of 2000 until 2011, the Chinese market was the fourth largest export destination for Israeli businessmen.[99] According to Olimat, Sino-Israeli economic relations mainly depend on information technology cooperation, new business infrastructures, arms sales, and high-tech energy. China places great importance on alternative economic models and their sustainability. Therefore, new IT cooperation with Israel, which is one of the most technologically developed countries, could provide new opportunities for the Chinese economy.[100] In this regard, bilateral trade continues to improve in the high-tech fields of information technology, telecommunications, electronics, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, solar energy, life sciences, and environmental protection.

One of Israel's environmental companies invested 5-million-dollar water purification project in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.[101] Israel also made large investments in China with the help of MASHAV, which is the Israeli foreign ministry's Center for International Development. Besides exchanges of hundreds of scientists, MASHAV set up an agricultural research farm and gave agricultural training courses in China.[102]

On the side of Chinese investments, Huawei, which is an important global networking and telecommunication services company, set up a research and development center in Israel.[103] The China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation was awarded the contract for the Carmel Tunnel in Haifa and a line of Tel Aviv's light rail project in 2008. In addition, a Chinese company with experience with cranes and metal equipment secured the tender for seven

98 Maor, "Sino–Israel Relations at the Start of the Second Decade," 257.

99 Niv Horesh, "Israel's Geo-Politics in the Early 'Chinese Century'," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 4 (2011): 299.

100 Olimat, *China and the Middle East,"* 117.

101 Shai, "Sino-Israeli Relations," 26.

102 Maor, "Sino–Israel Relations at the Start of the Second Decade," 257.

103 Aurora Carlson, "A Window of Opportunity for Israel: Attracting Chinese Overseas Foreign Direct Investment," Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs 7 (2008): 64.

bridge cranes in the Haifa port same year.[104] Furthermore, the investment of another Chinese company, Sanhua, in the Israeli solar company Heliofocus in 2010 marked the first foreign direct investment in Israel by a private Chinese company.[105] In 2011, ChemChina bought Makhteshim Agan, an Israeli company.[106]

Table 5.1 China's Total Trade Amounts with Palestine (2001-2011), in millions of dollars[107]

Year	Export	Import	Total Trade
2001	489	5	494
2002	439	9	448
2003	670	23	693
2004	984	7	992
2005	2360	23	2383
2006	2786	21	2807
2007	3750	15	3765
2008	4078	25	4103
2009	2357	75	2432
2010	2601	36	2637
2011	4782	104	4886

According to Chinese statistics, the total bilateral trade volume between the two countries was about 1.3 million dollars in 2001 and reached over 9 billion dollars in 2011. Except for 2009, the year of the global financial crisis, China's total trade volume with Israel has consistently increased. Just one year after the crisis, it quickly recovered with a growth of about 50 percent and reached to 7.6 billion dollars. Although bilateral trade relations have developed between the countries, Israel had an almost 50 percent trade deficit vis-à-vis China in 2011. On the other hand, the growth of China's total trade volume with Palestine increased roughly tenfolds between 2001 and 2011. While total

104 "Israel's International Relations: Israel-China Relations," accessed January 20, 2017, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/ChinaIsraelRelations.html

105 Carlson, "A Window of Opportunity for Israel," 64.

106 Horesh, "Israel's Geo-Politics in the Early 'Chinese Century'," 299.

107 "China Statistical Yearbooks," accessed December 20, 2016, http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/

trade volume was about 494 million dollars in 2001, it had reached to 4.8 billion dollars by 2011. In 2001, China's total trade volume with Palestine was about 26 percent of that with Israel, but it was about 50 percent in 2011. For both Israel and Palestine, a trade deficit vis-à-vis China is the most important problem for bilateral trade relations.

Table 5.2 China's Total Trade Amounts with Israel (2001-2011), in millions of dollars[108]

Year	Export	Import	Total Trade
2001	832	483	1315
2002	899	517	1417
2003	1,141	690	1831
2004	1541	942	2484
2005	1954	1073	3027
2006	2561	1314	3875
2007	3656	1653	5307
2008	4257	1792	6049
2009	3652	1525	5178
2010	5037	2607	7644
2011	6741	3037	9778

5.2.3 *Military and Security Relations*

Apart from conventional economic activities, arms trade and new security concerns have the potential to determine the future of relations between China and Israel. As crucial tools for arriving at foreign policy objectives, arms sales and mutual security concerns have been decisive between the two countries since the Cold War.[109] China, as an alternative source of arms and as a trade partner for regional actors, has a direct interest in the Middle East. Although China was a late entrant into international arms trade, it has carefully focused on the Middle East as its principal target. Apart from the economic

108 Ibid.

109 R. Kutay Karaca, *Dünyadaki Yeni Güç Çin: Tek Kutuptan Çift Kutuba* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2003), 149.

benefits of arms sales to the Middle East, China's orientation in the arms market has deep political objectives which generally run parallel to its Middle Eastern strategy. After the Sino-Soviet rift, China was inactive in the arms market for a time, during which it started to modernize its old, Soviet-style arms using new Israeli technology.[110] On the other hand, Israel has been one of the most significant providers of sophisticated conventional and non-conventional arms in the global arms market. Israel's security concerns in the Middle East, however, outweigh the economic benefits it derives from the arms trade; for Israel, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a matter of survival. Thus, its main source of anxiety is the proliferation of non-conventional Chinese arms in the Middle East.[111]

Sino-Israeli military and security relations began to develop in the middle of the 1970s. Shaul Eisenberg, an influential Israeli businessmen and tycoon, played a great role in establishing the first defense and security relations between the two countries in 1979. This paved the way for several large arms deals.[112] These deals were not backed by officials but promoted and mediated by businessmen like Eisenberg, since China did not want to create problems with Arab countries.[113] Israel's secret arms deals with China were often criticized by the United States. In 1992, for example, the George H. W. Bush administration accused Israel of illegally transferring the Patriot anti-missile system, which the Pentagon had deployed in Israel during the Kuwait crisis, to China.[114]

The Phalcon controversy was one dispute between Israel and the US over the Sino-Israeli arms trade. Actually, China and Israel started to negotiate an

110 Nazir Kamal, "China's Arms Export Policy and Response to Multilateral Restraints," Contemporary Southeast Asia 14 (1992): 124.

111 P. R. Kumaraswamy, "The Military Dimension of Israel China Relations," *China Report* 31 (1995): 243.

112 Evron, "Sino-Israel Relations," 61.

113 John F. Burns, "China Calls Reports of Arms Deals with Israel 'Entirely Groundless'," *The New York Times,* August 3, 1985, accessed January 20, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1985/08/03/world/china-calls-reports-of-arms-deals-with-israel-entirely-groundless.html

114 P. R. Kumaraswamy, "At What Cost Israel-China Ties?," *Middle East Quarterly* (2006): 40.

arms deal in 1994. Two years later, they signed a deal on the sale of the Phalcon Airborne Early Warning System and Control Platform. The Phalcon system was to be installed on Russian-made aircraft in China.[115] After fierce discussions on the issue, Israel canceled the deal because the US vetoed it in 2000. There were several reasons for the United States to veto this military deal: instabilities in Sino-US relations, China's hard stance on Taiwan, and China's spying on American nuclear-weapons laboratories as claimed in the Cox Report.[116] Israel was obliged to pay a large compensation to China because payments had already been made in advance of the Phalcon deal, which itself was valued at up to 1 billion dollars. Israel paid the Chinese 319 million dollars, partly as a refund for the deposit, and partly as compensation for the cancellation of the deal.[117]

On the part of the Israelis, the Phalcon sale to China was not an extraordinary situation, China and other Middle Eastern countries also had deep military relations. Saudi Arabia, for instance, had acquired the Chinese Dongfeng and CSS-2 intermediate-range ballistic missiles. For that reason, from the Israeli perspective, Israeli engineers were simply being sent to a Chinese company to modernize and upgrade existing technology. Despite Israel's desire to develop military relations with China, existing military agreements between the United States and Israel prevented it from sharing high-tech weapons and military equipment with China without permission from the United States.[118] In 2005, the Harpy deal was another indication of the seriousness of the US on the issue.[119] All Israeli Harpies destined for China were confiscated by the United States.[120] After the Harpy deal, the United States forced Israel to regulate its defense export procedures and to ban military trade with China.[121]

115 Sameer Suryakant Patil, "Understanding the Phalcon Controversy," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 2 (2008): 93.

116 Ibid., 94.

117 Shai, "Sino-Israeli Relations," 28.

118 Kumaraswamy, "The Military Dimension of Israel China Relations," 240.

119 The IAI Harpy is unmanned aerial vehicle produced by Israel Aerospace Industries.

120 Carlson, "A Window of Opportunity for Israel," 64.

121 Evron, "Sino-Israel Relations," 62.

The political motivations of the United States, Israel, and China have directly determined the military relations between China and Israel. For the US, China's motivations and intentions in Sino-Israeli military relations are suspicious. The post-Cold War geopolitical instability and the US arms embargo on China implemented after the Tiananmen massacre in 1989 forced China to diversify its high-tech arms market. For the United States, Israel, as a US ally in the Middle East, should not be part of these political motivations of China. For Israelis, these contacts and relations did not necessarily make Israel an ally of China, but rather contributed to improving diplomatic and economic relations. Israel was also providing arms and high-tech weapons to Taiwan, even though China has denounced any country providing arms to Taiwan.

Another motivation for the improvement of the Sino-Israeli arms trade and military relations, for Israelis, was to prevent the spread of Chinese weapons to Israel's enemies in the Middle East. This had led to an incident in 2006 in which an Israeli warship was damaged and four IDF soldiers were killed by a missile fired by Hezbollah. According to one account, a Chinese-made C-802 missile sold to Iran had been fired with the help of Iranian troops.[122]

§ 5.3 China's Diplomatic Position in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

Historical relations between China and Arab countries have shaped China's main diplomatic position towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Beyond this history, it is clear that China's active diplomacy in the Middle East is strategic and corresponds to its capacity and national interests. For instance, China has supported the various initiatives to reach a final agreement in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process over the years, including the 1991 Madrid Conference, the 1993 Oslo Accords, the 2002 Road map Initiative, and the 2007 Annapolis Conference.

The recognition of the State of Israel by China notwithstanding, two significant problems remained unchanged at 2001: China's position on Palestinian-Israeli conflict and US intervention in bilateral relations between China

122 Shai, "Sino-Israeli Relations," 30.

and Israel. Actually, the recognition of the State of Israel was consistent with China's new active diplomacy that emphasizes economic relations in the Middle East especially in the period 2001-2011. In addition, China has tried to increase its foreign policy activism with respect to Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In this part of the chapter, China's increasing role in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and its strategic objectives are evaluated to show China's evolving foreign policy behavior in an international crisis.

5.3.1 *Historical Background of China's Involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*

China's involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has a broad historical background. Because of this, conceptualizing and periodizing some historical events is necessary to classify Chinese involvement. Chinese foreign policy towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been shaped in three periods. In the first, between 1949 and 1971, ideological foreign policy behaviors shaped Chinese involvement in the conflict. Second, due to its permanent membership in the UNSC beginning in 1971, China started to implement rational approaches to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by alternating its foreign policy priorities and tools until 1992.[123] In that year, China officially recognized the State of Israel and pursued normal relations with it. From 1992 until 2011, China has become involved in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by making concrete political offers and proposing new foreign policy mechanisms, such as the Chinese Middle East envoy, first appointed in 2001.

In the first period, between 1949 and 1971, both the PRC and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict took their basic forms. China first took a diplomatic position supporting the return of refugees to Palestine in the 1955 Bandung Conference, which took place almost seven years after the first Arab-Israeli War. Haj Amin al-Husseini, a former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, had been invited to the Bandung Conference to show sincerity of participant countries with

123 Zhongmin Liu, "China's Diplomacy on the Hot Issues of Middle East: History, Ideas, Experiences and Impact," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 5 (2011): 75.

Palestinians.[124] Mao Zedong's concerns and statements on Israel were also harsh at the time. As cited by Calabrese, Mao Zedong stated in 1965 that "Imperialism fears China and the Arabs. Israel and Taiwan are bases of operation for Imperialism in Asia. They created Israel for the Arabs and Taiwan for us. They both have the same objective."[125]

In the second period, between 1971 and 1992, China's diplomatic support continued and it started to use alternative foreign policy discourses and tools to affect the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. There were three main factors influencing China's rational approach toward the conflict in that period. First, all parties to the conflict started to recognize that China, as a UNSC permanent member, had veto power in all international initiatives.[126] Second, in this way China had rised its international status to a power that it could change the direction of an international crisis not only in the Asia-Pacific region, but also in the Middle East.[127] The last factor was that China started to make analogies and comparisons between its own territorial problems and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For example, it compared the Taiwan issue to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. After the PRC replaced the ROC (Taiwan) in the UNSC in 1971, China hoped to isolate Taiwan from all international relations. As the United States provided a security umbrella for Taiwan, China pursued a counter-strategy by supporting Palestinian arguments in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Since Israel is still the most important strategic ally of the United States in the Middle East, US influence in bilateral relations continued to be a problem between China and Israel, as well.[128]

After gaining permanent membership in the UNSC, China started to behave as a more rational actor in regional and global conflicts. This does not mean that China changed its policies overnight, but it clearly focused more on the legitimacy of UNSC resolutions than in the previous period. For instance, in December 1981, for the first time since China became a permanent member

124 Tjong-Alvares, "The Geography of Sino-Israeli Relations," 99.

125 Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East,"* 20.

126 Karaca, *Dünyadaki Yeni Güç Çin,"* 151.

127 Calabrese, *China's Changing Relations with the Middle East,"* 77.

128 Shai Feldman, "China's Security: Implications for Israel," *Strategic Assessment* 2 (2000): 16.

of the UN in 1971, it supported a UN resolution calling for an "International Conference on the Question of Palestine."[129] Another crucial indication that revealed China's changing foreign policy was the role played by Chinese diplomats as mediators in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during this period. At the time of the Camp David Agreement, signed by Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin on September 17, 1978, China displayed a positive diplomatic attitude towards both sides.[130]

The most significant change in the second period was China's diplomatic involvement in international initiatives regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For instance, in December 1983 China voted in favor of a UNGA resolution calling for an international peace conference on the Middle East to be convened.[131] In addition, China supported Arafat's peace plan in 1984 and proposed it to the UN, but it was rejected due to the unwillingness of the United States.[132] Moreover, Deng Xiaoping, during the three-day visit of Arafat to Beijing, stated that China supported Arafat's leadership and a PLO strategy based on realism and moderation. In 1988, China recognized Palestine as soon as Arafat declared the independent State of Palestine.[133]

China used the term "illegal occupation of Israel" for the first time in 1989 and criticized Israel's failure to comply with various UNSC resolutions. The Chinese ambassador to the UN Li Luyue openly condemned Israel for not recognizing the PLO and not granting the Palestinian people their legitimate

129 Yitzhak Shichor, "China and the Role of the United Nations in the Middle East: Revised Policy," *Asian Survey* 31 (1991): 266.

130 Galia Golan, "The Soviet Union and the PLO since the War in Lebanon," The Middle East Journal 40 (1986): 288.

131 UNGA Resolution A/RES/38/58, The Question of Palestine, December 13, 1983, accessed January 22, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/38/58

132 Christopher S. Wren, "Reagan and Zhao Reportedly Clash on Foreign Policy," *The New York Times*, April 28, 1984, accessed January 22, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1984/04/28/world/reagan-and-zhao-reportedly-clash-on-foreign-policy.html

133 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 234.

rights, including that of self-determination.[134] After this statement, China became the first Asian country to send shipments of food and clothing to Gaza.[135] During the First Intifada, China continued to support the Palestinian people against Israeli attacks.[136]

In the third period, between 1992 and 2011, China normalized its relations with Israel. As a first indication of this policy change, China's President Yang Shangkun acknowledged that China was first in contact with Israel to start diplomatic relations in December 1989.[137] At the same event, President Yang Shangkun also stated that "we might consider establishing diplomatic ties with Israel… if it changes its hardline stand and contributes to the peace efforts."[138] Another indication of China's policy changes towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was that it started to mediate between Palestinians and Israelis to show its willingness to be a part of negotiations between the two sides. For instance, after Israel expelled 415 Palestinians in December 1992, Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng asked Israeli President Chaim Herzog to allow these people to return. Furthermore, just before the Oslo Agreement in 1993, Arafat met with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Beijing to discuss basic problems between Palestinians and Israelis. China supported and encouraged the Oslo Accords, stating that "China is ready to provide assistance in man power and technology for the rebuilding of Palestine."[139] The breakdown of the Oslo Accords was condemned by Chinese authorities, as well. In line with this, China's representative at the UN, Li Zhaoxing, condemned "the Hebron massacre which

134 "UNSC, Provisional Verbatim Record S/PV. 2849, The Situation in the Occupied Arab Territories," February, 17 1989, accessed January 22, 2017, https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/PRO/N89/603/33/PDF/N8960333.pdf?OpenElement

135 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East,* 234.

136 "China condemns Israel's use of force," *UPI Archives*, October 9, 1990, accessed January 23, 2017, http://www.upi.com/Archives/1990/10/09/China-condemns-Israels-use-of-force/6356655444800/

137 Jonathan Goldstein, *China and Israel, 1948-1998: A Fifty Year Retrospective* (Westport: Preager, 1999), 112.

138 Yitzhak Shichor, "Hide and Seek: Sino-Israeli Relations in Perspective," *Israel Affairs* 1 (1994): 202.

139 Ibid., 203.

has caused the death of innocent Palestinians and reaffirmed Chinese support for the Palestinian people" and "expressed hope that the atrocity would not hinder peace efforts in the region."[140]

During this period, China and the United States could not agree on some problems relating to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For instance, a UNSC resolution in May 1995 expressing that "Israeli confiscation of fifty-three hectares of land in East Jerusalem" was a violation of relevant UNSC resolutions was vetoed by the United States. The Chinese ambassador to the UN, Wang Xuexian, openly criticized the veto and warned Israel to stop confiscating land in East Jerusalem.[141] In this case, the United States clearly did not want to lose its influence in the conflict, while China tried to increase its diplomatic position by counseling adherence to legitimate UN resolutions.

China's harsh criticism of Hamas-led armed operations against Israel is another indication of China's new rational approach towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For example, during Chinese vice-prime minister Qi Chen's visit to Middle Eastern countries in December 1997, China promulgated its official five-point proposal for the Middle East peace process:

> under the basis of relevant UN's resolutions, China propose to 1) follow the land for peace principle and promote the Middle East peace dialogue, 2) fulfill the reached agreements, 3) oppose any forms of terrorism and violence, 4) strengthen regional economic exchanges and cooperation, establish mutual trust between Arabs and Israelis, and achieve common development and prosperity; 5) urge the international community which has a responsibility to achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and China is ready to make its own contribution to it.[142]

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140 "UNSC, Provisional Verbatim Record S/PV.3351, The Situation in the Occupied Arab Territories," March 18, 1994, accessed January 23, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.3351

141 "UNSC, Provisional Verbatim Record S/PV.3536, "The Situation in the Occupied Arab Territories," May 12, 1985, accessed January 23, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.3536

142 Liu, "China's Diplomacy on the Hot Issues of Middle East," 76.

China's dynamic diplomacy reached a new zenith with the Second Intifada and Camp David II in the 2000s. The collapse of Camp David II was a new beginning for Chinese diplomacy in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict since it marked the point that China realized that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was not only a problem between Palestinians and Israelis but concerned to the whole regional order.

Another important point was that international terrorism arising from the chaotic regional order of the Middle East began to shape the Chinese national security approach after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US. China's main disturbance was related to domestic political issues such as problems with the Uyghurs and terrorist networks infiltrating China. Islamic tendencies among new terrorist networks were perceived as a national security threat with global and regional political effects in its own region. Thus, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict contributed to China's fear of disorder both in its immediate surroundings and in the Middle East. To balance the fear of internal and external threats, China decided to implement delicate strategies on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict between 2001 and 2011.[143]

5.3.2 *The Quest for an Active Diplomacy, 2001-2005*

It became a new diplomatic objective for China to evaluate any international conflict from the perspective of international norms in this period. China generally looked legitimate decisions from international authoritative bodies such as the UN during the period 2001-2005. In the beginning of the 2000s, China was concerned about the collapse of the latest peace initiative in Camp David II. In addition, the Arab Peace Plan in 2002 and the Road map in 2003 prepared a new basis for China's active diplomacy.[144]

China's diplomatic discourse on any situation is generally voiced through official channels such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or diplomatic representatives at the UN. In this sense, it is crucial to be familiar with these

143 Shai, "Sino-Israeli Relations," 20.

144 Weihua An, "Heping zhi lu zai hefang: Ping zhongdong heping 'luxian tu', [Where is the Road to Peace? Comments on the Roadmap of the Middle East Peace] *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu* 5 (2003): 2.

diplomatic discourses to understand China's official position. Although China's official statements have tended to be balanced, they easily change according to the content of problems. For instance, in 2001, during the heavy fighting between Israel's security forces and Palestinians, China criticized both sides by emphasizing civilian casualties and violent attacks.[145] In the same year, after a request from the PA to send troops to monitor the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China was the first permanent member of the UNSC to support the deployment of international observers.[146]

As another example of China's official statements, China condemned the siege of Arafat's compound and Israel's disregard for UN Resolutions 1397 and 1402 during the Second Intifada between 2000 and 2003.[147] Despite the US and Israel's policy of excluding Arafat, China respected the Palestinian people's will by openly supporting Arafat. On the other hand, as an indication of its balanced strategy, China accused armed Palestinian groups of targeted killings of civilians in Israeli cities, but also criticized Israel for its attack on a training camp of the Palestinian armed group Islamic Jihadi in Syria in October 2003.[148] China seriously condemned the attack because it was a violation of Syria's territorial integrity.[149]

Throughout the period, China started using its special envoy for the Middle East as a new diplomatic tool. In 2002, China announced that it would send a special envoy – a first in China's Middle Eastern diplomacy – to play a more influential role in the peace process. In times of crisis and before any

145 "Statement by Ambassador Wang Yingfan," August 20, 2001, accessed January, 23, 2017, http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/regionalhotspots/mideast/by/t29447.htm

146 "China Backs Arafat on Monitors," *BBC News*, August 24, 2001, accessed January 23, 2017, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1506420.stm

147 "China Calls for Total Israeli Withdrawal from Palestinian Territories," *Xinhua*, April 4, 2002, accessed January 23, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2002-04/04/content_343672.htm

148 "China concerned about recent Israeli-Palestinian situation," *Xinhua*, December 26, 2003, accessed January 23, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-12/26/content_1249992.htm

149 "China condemns Israeli military attack on Syria," *Xinhua*, June 10, 2003, accessed January 23, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-10/06/content_1111421.htm

negotiation process, China would immediately send its special envoy to the related countries to calm both sides and urge peace talks. A suicide bombing in Jerusalem that killed two Chinese and injured two others in April 2002 accelerated this diplomatic step for China.[150]

The two conflicting sides, however, started to take advantage of Chinese involvement during times of crisis. For instance, while Arafat openly hailed China's constructive role in the conflict in May 2003, Moshe Katsav, the Israeli president, stated that China could play a bigger role in the Middle East peace process.[151]

China's perception of and emphasis on international norms and rules also shaped its foreign policy behaviors during this period. In this respect, as a response to the Road map initiative, China announced a five-point proposal on the Middle East issue in May 2003. China's special envoy to the Middle East, Wang Shijie, met with Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Palestinian National Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, and Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath. After that, China announced that

> China supports the Road Map; urges both sides to accept the Road Map; to ensure the fulfillment of "the road map" plan, a fair, authoritative and effective international supervisory mechanism should be set up as early as possible; to resume the negotiations between Israel and Syria and between Israel and Lebanon at an early date on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions; the international community should enhance input to the Middle East question. The United Nations should play a larger role.[152]

150 Weilie Zhu, "Middle East Terrorism, Global Governance and China's Anti-terror Policy," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 5 (2011): 3.

151 "China pledges to promote peace in Mideast," *Xinhua*, December 18, 2003, accessed January 23, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-12/18/content_1238514.htm

152 "China's five-point proposal on Middle East issue," *Xinhua*, May 28, 2003, accessed January 23, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-05/28/content_891356.htm

Moreover, in a statement made by China's representative to the UN in 2003, China attributed its policy of supporting "land for peace" to UN Resolutions 242, 338, and 1397. As another indication revealing China's active diplomacy, a UN Asia meeting on the question of Palestine was held in Beijing in December 2003.[153]

After the Road map, China's diplomatic position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was echoed in the Chinese media. In a *Beijing Review* article, the establishment of a Palestinian state was strongly supported. The role of the international community was also promoted in the same article. Accordingly, the author argued that Israel should end its military occupation since it is an illegal action even for Israeli politicians. On the other hand, the article accused Palestinians of using inaccured resistance tactics that harm both innocent civilians and the overall legitimacy of Palestinian liberation movements.[154]

China's contributions to international initiatives regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during this period were largely in line with Russia's diplomatic position. For instance, China and Russia's joint statement in October 2004 emphasized that

> both sides support a lasting, fair and comprehensive solution to the conflicts between the Arabic states and Israel on the basis of relevant resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council. Both sides indicate the road map plan formulated by the four-party mechanism remains the best scheme to realize the co-existence of Israel and Palestine and to ensure both of them to maintain peace and security.[155]

Although China tried to implement policies that integrate with those of international institutions with respect to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Russian

153 "United Nations Meeting for Asia and Pacific on Question of Palestine Opens in Beijing," The UN Press Release, December 16, 2003, accessed January 23, 2017, http://www.un.org/press/en/2003/gapal939.doc.htm

154 Yanshuo Ni, "What a Mess: Middle East calls for revived roadmap peace plan to tackle the current standoff," *Beijing Review*, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/200421/World-200421(C).htm

155 "China and Russia Issue a Joint Statement," accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/t165266.shtml

and Chinese concerns overlapped. Unlike the fixed US support of Israel, they tried to diversify their options by emphasizing the importance of international diplomatic mechanisms in reaching final solution to the conflict.

Arafat's death at the end of this period was taken seriously both in the Chinese media and in official declarations. Just after his death, China's president Hu Jintao stated that "Arafat was a great leader and an outstanding statesman who had dedicated his whole life to the just cause of regaining the lawful rights of the Palestinian people." Furthermore, as an indication of China's seriousness on Palestinian state building, "Vice-president Zeng Qinghong made a special trip to the Palestinian Embassy in Beijing to personally express condolences for the death of Arafat. Vice Premier of the State Council Hui Liangyu, special envoy of President Hu, attended Arafat's funeral in Cairo, Egypt on November 12."[156]

5.3.3 *Engagement as a Rational Actor, 2005-2011*

The death of Arafat and changes in Palestinian and Israeli politics caused another change in China's foreign policy behavior with respect to the conflict. China developed more sophisticated strategies than in previous periods, increasing its influence over Palestinian political groups and becoming involved militarily via UN peacekeeping operations after Israel's occupation of Lebanon in 2006. Although China's support of the Palestinian cause and Palestinian rights remained unchanged, China's diplomacy with respect to Israel was heavily influenced by several factors.

One of the most important was the changing nature of Palestinian politics, including disputes between Hamas and Fatah. For the Chinese, not reaching a consensus amongst themselves at the negotiating table was the biggest problem for the Palestinians. Another crucial factor was that Israel's economic, technological, and military power dominated the conflict. China could not remain impartial with respect to to the reality of Israel's superiority during this period. Even though Israel pursued policies of expanding the separation wall,

156 Yanshuo Ni, "Arafat and China: The late leader was the bridge between the Chinese and the Palestinians," Beijing Review, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/200447/World-200447(B).htm

building new settlements, denying refugees the right of return, and increasing its tight control of Gaza, China softened its criticisms against Israel. The last factor that shaped China's policies towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during this period was about new initiatives such as the Annapolis Conference in 2007, proposed by different actors.

The death of Arafat created a new, serious political atmosphere in Palestine. During this period, China followed Palestinian politics and new emerging groups. Six Chinese observers in the West Bank town of Ramallah observed the first Palestinian presidential elections held in January 2005. It was the largest group of Chinese observers to monitor elections in other country.[157] As an indication of China's new engagement and balanced diplomacy, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas visited China in June 2005. In this visit, Abbas's objective was to secure political and economic support from China. As Abbas stated during the visit, China renewed its diplomatic support for Palestine in terms of its contribution to international peace efforts such as the Road map. China also provided 6 million dollars in economic aid and grants for Palestine. Both sides signed five documents of cooperation concerning the rebuilding of the Palestinian state.[158]

Hamas's rising influence over Palestinian politics resonated in China during this period. Hamas's unexpected success in the Palestinian elections forced the United States and the European Union to adopt an oppositional position towards Hamas, but China recognized it as a legitimate body in Palestinian politics. China officially ignored US and Israeli opposition to Hamas and in 2006, it welcomed Mahmoud al-Zahar, a senior Hamas representative serving as the Palestinian foreign minister, at the China-Arab Cooperation Forum, which had been established in Beijing in 2004.[159] Chinese Foreign

157 "Chinese observers to Palestinian election," *Xinhua*, October 1, 2005, accessed January 24, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-01/10/content_2439357.htm

158 Li Li, "Asking for Help," *Beijing Review*, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/En-2005/05-22-e/w-4.htm

159 "Israel Protests China's Invitation to Hamas' Foreign Minister," *Haaretz*, May 18, 2006, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.haaretz.com/israel-protests-china-s-invitation-to-hamas-foreign-minister-1.188015

Minister Liu Jianchao officially stated that "the Palestinian government is legally elected by the people there and it should be respected."[160] On the other hand, Hamas's political and military position was also criticized by China. Before the aforementioned forum, China expressed its negative views on violent actions by Hamas and other Palestinian groups against civilians. China also emphasized that recognition of the State of Israel would help the fundamental interests of Palestinian people.[161]

The war in Lebanon in 2006 was a crucial turning point for China, since it marked the first time that a Chinese UN observer was killed by an Israeli bomb.[162] China strongly condemned the attack and requested an apology from Israel. China also requested that the UN investigate the incident, but this initiative was blocked by a US veto in the UNSC. After this incident, China gradually changed from a detached towards a more engaged strategy. In response, China sent special envoy Sun Bigan to mediate between the two sides. Furthermore, China provided 40 million RMBs in humanitarian assistance to Lebanon. China also proposed it would send troops in the event that it became necessary to reduce tensions.[163] After this, China sent one thousand troops – the largest Chinese peacekeeper corps ever deployed abroad – to Lebanon to serve in UNIFIL. China's ambassador to the UN, Wang Guangya, stated that China should fill the vacuum in the Middle East since other powers were withdrawing from the peacekeeping role.[164]

160 "Hamas' Zahar hails China trip as a success," *China Daily*, June 2, 2006, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2006-06/02/content_607586_2.htm

161 "China calls for Hamas to renounce violence, recognize Israel," *Xinhua*, May 30, 2006, accessed January 24, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-05/30/content_4621487.htm

162 Yanshuo Ni, "No Easy Peace: Unable to stop fighting between Hezbollah and Israel, the UN is increasingly under fire," *Beijing Review*, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/06-33-e/w-1.htm

163 Zhu, "Middle East Terrorism, Global Governance and China's Anti-terror Policy," 15.

164 Colum Lynch, "China Filling Void Left by West in U.N. Peacekeeping," *The Washington Post*, November 24, 2006, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/23/AR2006112301007.html

In 2007, China expanded its diplomatic efforts by conducting talks with Iran over the Lebanon question. These were the first signs of active Chinese participation in the conflicts in the Middle East and in the Palestinian-Israeli issue. China's special envoy Sun Bigan accelerated diplomatic visits and negotiations with influential politicians such as President Peres and Abbas in 2007.[165] In fact, all these efforts were related to China's willingness to be part of the Quartet before the Annapolis Conference at end of 2007.[166] Although China did not become part of the Quartet, it tried to remain active. FM Yang Jiechi declared another five principles, according to which,

> first, an independent Palestinian state must be set up based on the Roadmap for Peace and the Arab Peace Initiative. Second, the two parties should stop the violence and prevent the political obstruction of the peace talks, as well as stick to their promises of holding future peace talks. Third, parties concerned should create an environment to promote the peace talks, which should be held in an all-round and balanced way. Fourth, the international community should cooperate to set a broad-based, balanced and effective multilateral mechanism to support the peace talks. Lastly, the international community should boost its economic ties with and humanitarian assistance to the Middle East and help it share the benefits of peace.[167]

After the Annapolis Conference, China immediately supported a three-year development plan for the Palestinian economy with 11 million dollars in free aid.[168] However, the Annapolis Conference was a disappointment for the Chinese since the sides were unable to reach a solution to the conflict. Israel's

165 "China's special envoy meets with Israeli FM," *Xinhua*, July 19, 2007, accessed January 24, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-07/19/content_6395855.htm

166 "Israel, Palestine hope China joins Mideast Quartet," *Xinhua*, December 15, 2006, accessed January 24, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-12/15/content_5494177.htm

167 Ding Ying, "The Dawn of Peace?," *Beijing Review*, December 13, 2007, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/quotes/txt/2007-12/06/content_90039.htm

168 "Abbas highlights China's just, constructive role in Middle East," *Xinhua*, December 25, 2007, accessed January 24, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-12/25/content_7306330.htm

heavy political and military pressure on Hamas and Gaza led to new criticism from the Chinese. In 2008, China called on Israel to lift the siege of Gaza and allow passage of international humanitarian aid. This was after the Libyan ship al-Merwa was prevented from going to Gaza in 2008. Furthermore, China openly blamed Israel for the failure of the Annapolis Conference. In an interview with the *Beijing Review* in January 2008, China's former ambassador Hua Liming stated that it would be impossible to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict without Hamas's involvement.[169]

China gradually increased its diplomatic relations with Palestine, meeting directly with Palestinian officials after Obama's Cairo speech in 2009. This was an indication of the new, US foreign policy perspective on the Middle East, which respected multilateral mechanisms. For China, Obama's speech opened a new page for Chinese involvement in the Middle East, since China could easily become part of these multilateral mechanisms. In 2009, China's foreign minister Yang Jiechi, visited Middle Eastern countries and made his own speech in Cairo. In his speech, Yang Jiechi reiterated China's five principles. These diplomatic visits continued in following years.[170] For instance, during Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's meeting with China's Hu Jintao in Shanghai in 2010, China proposed to consolidate their political friendship, expand economic and trade cooperation, and strengthen personal and cultural exchanges. During the same visit, China and Palestine signed two agreements on economic and technical cooperation. These agreements clearly indicated that China would support the State of Palestine as a legitimate UN member in coming years.[171]

169 Ding Ying, "The Future of Peace," *Beijing Review*, January 31, 2008, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/print/txt/2008-01/29/content_98056.htm

170 "Israeli President Meets with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi," accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.china-un.ch/eng/xwdt/t558942.htm

171 Yuxiang Hou, "Zhongguo zai ba yi wenti shang de juese tiaozheng [China's Role Adjustments on the Palestine-Israel Issue]," *Alabo Shijie Yanjiu* (2014): 41.

In May 2010, Israel's military operation against the Mavi Marmara humanitarian flotilla was seriously condemned by China.[172] China had also expressed concern over the separation wall, the construction of new settlements, restrictions on the movements of the Palestinian people, and any act complicating the status of East Jerusalem.[173] In 2011, China voted in favor of a draft resolution prepared by the Arab states in the UN on Israeli settlement, but it was not adopted. For China, the settlement projects became a major obstacle to mutual trust and the resumption of peace talks.[174]

In 2011, China supported the Palestinian bid for UN membership. According to China's representative in the UN,

> China has all along supported the Palestinian people in their just cause to restore the lawful rights of the nation. China always maintained that establishment of an independent state is the lawful right of the Palestinian people and the basis for implementation of the "two-state solution." China supports the establishment of an independent Palestinian state that enjoys full sovereignty, with East Jerusalem as its capital and based on the border before 1967 war. China supports Palestine's membership in the United Nations. China also maintains that peace talks are the right way leading to ultimate achievement of the two-state solution.[175]

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172 "China urges 'quick' Security Council response to Israeli attack on aid convoy," Xinhua, June 1, 2010, accessed January 24, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-06/01/c_13326088.htm

173 "Statement by Ambassador Zhang Yesui at the 64th Session of the General Assembly," accessed january 24, 2017, http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/regionalhotspots/mideast/by/t630539.htm

174 "Security Council Fails to Adopt Text Demanding That Israel Halt Settlement Activity as Permanent Member Casts Negative Vote," *Meeting Coverage of the UNSC*, Feburary 18, 2011, accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10178.doc.htm

175 "Statement by Ambassador Li Baodong at the 66th Session of the General Assembly," accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/regionalhotspots/mideast/by/t883593.htm

§ 5.4 Assessment of China's Role in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

As is described in detail, China's involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is an ongoing process shaped by several factors. It is a process of ups and downs for Chinese scholars in terms of the unstable, uncertain nature of the conflict itself, which is a core problem among other Middle Eastern problems.[176] In this part of the chapter, China's perception of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is discussed in detail, taking China's strategic objectives and their consequences under consideration. Apart from China's official diplomatic postures on the conflict, Chinese scholars have analyzed several factors shaping both the conflict and China's policy behaviors. According to these scholars, China's perception of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been shaped by three factors.

The first factor concerns the definition of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It is also a key for understanding China's future capabilities and strategies in both the conflict and the Middle East. According to one Chinese Middle East experts Wang Chengyi, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a multilateral problem. The status of Jerusalem, for instance, is not only a problem for Palestinians but for Muslims around the world. In addition, it is a problem with a long historical background. Throughout its history, plenty of problematics have been negotiated by the conflicting sides. However, the cultural and social background of the problems, ranging from Jewish heritage to Muslim religious buildings, makes it difficult to negotiate. Apart from issues of Palestinian and Jewish identity, the problem has been transformed into a broader Arab identity problem by the conflicts and wars between Arabs and Israelis such as

176 "Statement by Ambassador Shen Guofang, Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the UN, at the 56th Session of the General Assembly," accessed January 24, 2017, http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/regionalhotspots/mideast/by/t29449.htm

the 1967 war. Arab nationalism in several forms still has the potential to affect the conflict.[177]

For China, internal factions in both Palestinian and Israeli politics have a direct effect on the definition of the conflict. For example, while Hamas and Fatah's competition over Palestinian politics caused a distraction with respect to Palestinian unity during the negotiations, Israel's ultra-religious groups, hardliners, and moderate political tendencies have also competed with one another. Each political faction has the potential to influence the direction of peace talks, as seen in previous peace initiatives such as the 1991 Madrid Conference, the 1993 Oslo Agreement, and the 2007 Annapolis Conference. Moreover, global powers such as the United States, the EU, and Russia compete with one another over the conflict. In some cases, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has become a secondary subject providing legitimacy for the Iraq War and the struggle against international terrorism.[178]

Another definition of the conflict analyzes US policies on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. According to Chinese Middle East expert Zhao Weiming, the main problem for the US is its pro-Israeli diplomatic position. The US government generally supports Israeli policies since it perceives Israel as its most important strategic ally in the region. This policy actually has a negative effect for the Palestinian side. The US veto power in the UNSC makes this diplomatic posture even more unbearable for Palestinians. Another problem for the United States is about the severe political competition in Israeli politics between radical religious groups and moderate ones. In each peace initiative, the Unites States has tried to be intermediator between these groups. For example, although the US opposed to new settlement projects, which is one of core obstacles to any peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, the hardline Israeli politicians consistently supported those projects. Moreover, the US exclusion of Hamas and related groups and labeling of them as terrorists was neither the correct decision for the United States nor the European Union. As

177 Changyi Wang and Mingming Wu, "Dui zhongdong heping jincheng de huigu yu sikao [The Review and Reflection of the Middle East Peace Process]," *Waijiao Xueyuan Xuebao* (2003): 7.

178 Ibid., 8.

an alternative, Zhao proposed increasing the role of the Arab Union during peace talks.[179]

The second factor shaping China's perception of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is China's unique, alternative discourse on the conflict. According to Sun Degang, China's political and diplomatic position is completely different from that of the United States. China generally does not dominate peace talks, insists on international norms and maintaining impartiality, does not seek to set the agenda, and rarely offers solutions.[180] The basic motivation for these policy behaviors, for Sun, is China's neutral approach to international conflicts. On the status of Jerusalem, for instance, Ma Lirong offers creating a dialogue mechanism and respecting the historical and religious connections of all groups in Jerusalem.[181]

As its officials have declared, China supports a two-state solution to the conflict. A one-state solution cannot be a long-term solution to the conflict because both sides have painful experiences that cause serious conflicts and even wars between them. For Wang Jinglie, though China offers a political mechanism for both sides to negotiate the issue, a two-state solution should remain the focus of any peace talks.[182]

China generally tries to compare international conflicts to its own problems. Regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, terrorism, non-traditional security threats, territorial disputes, and religious affiliations on conflicting sides, China's experiences in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Taiwan are taken as examples.[183] Thus, in terms of international terrorism networks, China's domestic political and security concerns have affected its more active foreign policies with respect to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict than previous year.

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179 Weiming Zhao, "The New Middle East Policy of the Obama Administration," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 3 (2009): 18.

180 Degang Sun, "Zhongguo zai zhongdong kaizhan woxuan waijiao de dongyin fenxi [On the Dynamics of China's Mediation Diplomacy in the Middle East]," *Guoji Zhanwang* (2012): 25.

181 Lirong Ma, "Ba yi hejie zhengce kunjing zhong de yelusaleng wenti [The Jerusalem Issue in the Dilemma of Reconciliation between Palestine and Israel]," *Alabo Shijie Yanjiu* (2013): 31.

182 Jinglie Wang, "Ba yi chongtu: Lilun goujian yu qianzhan fenxi [Palestine-Israel Conflict: Construction of Theory and Prospective Analaysis]," *Alabo Shijie Yanjiu* (2006): 13.

183 Yaning Wang, "Yesilie bianfang zhanlüe dui woguo bianfang de qishi [The Implications of Israeli Border Strategy on Chinese Border Defense]," *Shanxi shi daxue bao* 38 (2011): 122.

The last factor shaping China's perception of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is related to its ability to affect the details of any peace initiatives. According to Pan Guang, China's bilateral relations with Israel have the potential to change the current dynamics of the conflict. Both sides should correctly evaluate their basic positions to reach a consensus. Pan argues that three problems repeatedly appear when China gets involved in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. First, although Sino-Israeli relations have improved since 1992, the problem of communication between the two societies has remained unchanged. Another problem is related to Chinese national interests which were seriously violated during the conflict. In some cases, Chinese citizens have been killed and wounded. The biggest problem, for Pan, is US interference in Israeli politics and military relations, as was evident during the Phalcon controversy. For the Chinese, Israel's unconditional concessions to the US complicate bilateral relations between China and Israel. They also directly affect China's position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.[184] On the other hand, some scholars argue that China's involvement in the conflict should be encouraged because in some cases Israel needs China to communicate with countries that Israel has not diplomatic relations such as Syria and Iran.[185]

China has created new diplomatic tools to influence the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In November 2002, for the first time in its diplomatic history, China appointed a special envoy to the Middle East.[186] Wang Shijie, Sun Bigan, and Wu Sike were appointed to the post between 2002 and 2011. The envoy, who is a significant tool of Chinese foreign policy in the region, has three responsibilities: issuing China's policy statements, promoting peace talks and communication, and sharing information with related countries. In this way, China aims to be involved in Middle Eastern affairs and act as a responsible global power during times of crisis in the region. According to Hou Yuxiang, China

184 Guang Pan, "Zhongguo-Yiselie Guanxi de Lishi Yanjin he Xianzhuang Fenxi [Historical Evolution of Sino-Israeli Relations and Analysis of Existing State of Affairs]," *Shehui Kexue* (2012): 162.

185 Shai, "Sino-Israeli Relations," 20.

186 Hou, "Zhongguo zai ba yi wenti shang de juese tiaozheng [China's Role Adjustments on the Palestine-Israel Issue]," 40.

wants to increase intermediary role in the region by promoting soft power tools.[187]

All in all, China's three strategic priorities – global, regional, and domestic political and economic concerns – have shaped its diplomatic position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In terms of global politics, according to Liu, the most important factor in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is geo-political competition over Middle Eastern resources. Therefore, the ambitions of the United States and other global powers in the Middle East cause unprecedented problems.[188] According to Tao, "When George W. Bush took into office, anti-terrorism and democracy became the two interconnected objectives of US Middle East strategy, which made Palestine-Israel peace process more and more marginalized in the dual domain of anti-terrorism and democracy."[189] These global political concerns forced China to implement active diplomacy in the period 2001-2011. However, in terms of regional politics, two significant regional powers, namely Saudi Arabia and Iran, have problematic relations with Israel. Neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran has diplomatic relations with Israel. However, they are the two biggest economic partners of China, especially in the energy sector. Thus, China's economic priorities have prevailed over improving Sino-Israeli relations after 1992. Although China tried to balance its relations between Arab countries and Israel, its pro-Palestinian stance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remained unchanged in the period 2001-2011.

187 Ibid., 45.

188 Liu, "China's Diplomacy on the Hot Issues of Middle East," 15.

189 Wenzhao Tao, "Bushi zhengfu de zhongdong zhengce yanjiu [Studies on Bush Administration's Middle East Policy]," *Meiguo Yanjiu* (2008): 9.

6

China and the Cyprus Question

The Cyprus question is an international crisis in which multiple actors have been involved including the UN, European Union, Great Britain, the United States, Greece, Turkey, and Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Although not a serious issue in terms of Sino-Turkish relations, as a permanent member of the UNSC with veto power, China is a crucial actor in the Cyprus question. Therefore, China's diplomatic behaviors on the Cyprus question are a significant indication of its foreign policy orientation, especially in the period 2001-2011. In this chapter, China's role in Cyprus questions is analyzed by taking both Sino-Turkish relations and China's strategic objectives in the Eastern Mediterranean into consideration.

§ 6.1 The Cyprus Question

Cyprus has been exposed to a number of invasions throughout its history and has served as a crucial geostrategic asset for every political or military entity that has controlled it. Possession of the island has granted such entities economic and military advantages over their enemies in the region, such as during the governance of the island by Rome, Venice, Byzantium, and the

Ottoman Empire.[1] Though Cyprus has been the scene of power struggles throughout history, contemporary debates over the island began in the middle of the nineteenth century.

6.1.1 *Historical Background of the Cyprus Question*

The first Muslim and Christian confrontation began after the Ottoman Empire's conquest of Cyprus in 1571. From that time until the mid-nineteenth century, the island was governed by the classical Ottoman administrative system.[2] Cyprus first became a province in 1703 and began to be governed by the grand vizier. In a word, the Ottoman Empire started to govern Cyprus directly from Istanbul. After Russia became the protector of Orthodox Christians on the island as a result of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the religious dimension of the Cyprus question emerged for the first time.[3]

Another dimension of the Cyprus question – nationalism – emerged in Europe as a result of the aftershocks of the French Revolution in 1789. Nationalist revolutions became a turning point for the Ottoman Empire as for other European empires at that time. The most crucial were the Greek revolts, which started at the beginning of the nineteenth century and ended with the independence of Greece in 1832. Similar revolts also took place in Cyprus and a number of archbishops supporting the independence of Greece were executed by the governor.[4] Along with the spread of nationalist ideology, the Megali Idea[5] and Enosis[6] became the foci of a crucial discussion among Greece religious and political elites.[7]

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1 Eric Solsten, *Cyprus: A Country Study* (Washington D.C: Claitor's Law Books and Publishing Division, 1993), 5.

2 Bill Mallinson, *Cyprus: A Modern History* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 4.

3 Farid Mirbagheri, *Historical Dictionary of Cyprus* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 25.

4 Mirbagheri, *Historical Dictionary of Cyprus,* 16.

5 The Megali Idea is a Greek nationalist discourse expressing the ideal of all ethnic-Greek people in Greek-inhabited regions living together in a common state.

6 Enosis is a Greek word which means union but became a political motto of the Greek nationalists with respect to Greek Cypriots' unity with Greece.

7 Mallinson, *Cyprus: A Modern History,* 11.

The Cyprus question became a multilateral question after the British involvement began in 1878. If Greek independence in 1832 was the first rupture in the history of the Cyprus question, the second was the war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in 1877-1878. As a result of this war, the Treaty of San Stefano was signed between the two empires. In turn, Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire signed the Anglo-Turkish Convention on June 4, 1878, as a result of which the administration of Cyprus was transferred to Great Britain.[8] According to the Convention, if Russia tried to take possession of any further territories of the Ottomans, Great Britain would protect Ottoman lands by force if necessary.[9]

In 1880, Great Britain transferred Cypriot affairs to the jurisdiction of the Colonial Office in London. This meant that the British would not allow unification of the Cypriots with Greece. Turkish Cypriots were not in favor of unification since the Ottoman Empire still had rights of possession over Cyprus. For them, British rule was not permanent. Thus, when Greek members of the Legislative Council voted for Enosis by majority in 1903, Turkish Cypriots abstained.[10]

The idea of Enosis matured with the unification of Greece and the Ioinian islands in 1864 and Thessaly and a district of Epirus in 1881. In addition, Crete became autonomous in 1897, and during the Balkan Wars between 1912 and 1913, Greece increased in size by 68 percent by integrating north Aegean islands.[11] Meanwhile, World War I changed the nature of the Cyprus question in terms of the authoritative body of the island. Cyprus was annexed by Great Britain due to the Ottoman Empire's alliance with the Entente powers during the World War I. All previous agreements and conventions were canceled. During the period of British rule, Greek Cypriots asked the British

8 Ata Atun, Kıbrıs Antlaşmaları, Planları ve Önemli BM, AB kararları 1571-1983 (Mağusa: Samtay Vakfı Yayınları, 2007), 10-12.

9 Ersi Demetriadou, "The British acquisition of Cyprus in 1878 and the Cyprus Convention," *Cyprus History Notch*, April 27, 2012, accessed December 18, 2016, http://mkp-archive.blogspot.com.tr/2012/04/the-british-acquisition-of-cyprus-in.html

10 Mirbagheri, *Historical Dictionary of Cyprus,* 25.

11 Mallinson, *Cyprus: A Modern History,* 3.

government for Enosis while Turkish Cypriots advocated the maintenance of the current British administrative structure in Cyprus. However, the Treaty of Lausanne, which was signed after the Turkish War of Independence in 1923, officially determined the fate of Cyprus. With the treaty, Turkey officially recognized the annexation of Cyprus by Great Britain.[12]

After World War I, Greek Cypriots continued to struggle for Enosis. To this end, Greek Cypriots revolted against British rule in 1931. Nevertheless, the uprising was heavily suppressed by Great Britain. World War II brought about another opportunity for Greek Cypriots to unify with Greece, but the invasion of Greece by Germany prevented Greek Cypriot unification attempts and they started to organize local associations to propagandize Enosis, instead. As a political response to Germany's invasion of Greece in 1941, the British allowed political activities that had been forbidden in Cyprus since 1931. As a result, the Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL), a left-wing Greek Cypriot party, was founded in 1941. In addition, the church also started to organize political activities by establishing a Cypriot National Party in the same year. The first Turkish Cypriot political activities also emerged in the political environment of World War II.[13]

6.1.2 *Resistance to ENOSIS and the Republic of Cyprus, 1945-1974*

The Second World War not only affected the new political and economic power structures in world, but transformed local political and economic problems with long historical backgrounds, such as the Cyprus question. After World War II, a peace treaty was signed in 1947 between Italy and the victorious powers. In this treaty, the Dodecanese were annexed by Greece. After the Greek annexation of the Dodecanese, Greek Cypriots increased their attempts to organize new political activities for Enosis.[14] In 1950, a plebiscite on the

12 Baskın Oran, "Lausanne Barış Anlaşması," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar* ed. Baskın Oran et al. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2004), 215.

13 Sebahattin Özel, "Birinci Dünya ve Milli Kurtuluş Savaşları ile Sonrasında Kıbrıs Türklerinin Genel Durumu" in *Dünden Bugüne Kıbrıs*, ed. Ali Ahmetbeyoğlu et al. (İstanbul: Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı Yayınları, 2001), 166.

14 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 96..

issue of enosis was arranged by Greek Cypriots, resulting in 96 percent of Greek Cypriots voting in favor. This was the beginning of an important political controversy that would have a negative influence on Greek and Turkish Cypriot relations in the following years. In addition to the political activities of Greek Cypriots, they established a full-fledged armed resistance organization, the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA), in 1955.[15]

In the early 1950s, the Cyprus question for Turkey and Great Britain was not an international issue but a domestic problem among Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, and British rule. Therefore, they opposed attempts to bring the issue to international bodies such as the UN. For example, six months before EOKA's armed resistance against British rule, Greece brought the right of self-determination for Cyprus to the attention of the UN steering committee on September 23, 1954, but it was not dispatched to higher committees.[16]

After the first clashes between Greek Cypriots and the British government in 1955, Great Britain invited Greece and Turkey to a tripartite conference in London. For the first time, Turkey became a legitimate participant in the Cyprus question in spite of the opposition of Greece and Greek Cypriots. Turkey had two legitimate reasons to coming involved in the conflict: to protect Turkish Cypriots and to preserve the status quo established by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. At the London talks, Turkey supported a two-state solution – that is, the partition of Cyprus and self-determination for both communities. On the other hand, Greece supported a one-state solution and self-determination for the community as a whole. Therefore, they did not reach a resolution at the London talks. Meanwhile, Turkish Cypriots started to establish associations to protect their rights given the heavy clashes between Greek Cypriots and the British government after 1955. Along with political associations, Turkish Cypriots established a Turkish Resistance Organization, (Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı, TMK) in 1957.[17]

15 EOKA was an armed resistance organization.

16 R. F. Holland, *Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus* 1954-1959 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 41.

17 Ahmet C. Gazioğlu, *Direniş örgütleri, gençlik teşkilatı ve sosyo-ekonomik durum 1958-1960* (Ankara: Kıbrıs Araştırma ve Yayın Merkezi, 2000), 5.

The first Turkish and Greek causalities started in 1956, and their numbers rose by the middle of 1958. The situation forced Greece, Turkey, and Great Britain to take action. In 1958, Turkey, Greece, Great Britain, Greek Cypriots, and Turkish Cypriots came together for the first time to discuss proposals to resolve the Cyprus question. On February 11, 1959, Turkey and Greece agreed to establish an independent, common state in Cyprus. The Zurich agreement led to a London conference that convened on February 19, 1959, with the participation of Greece, Turkey, Britain, and Greek and Turkish Cypriots. As a result of these negotiations, all sides signed the London Agreements which were the most comprehensive attempt to solve the Cyprus question to date.[18]

Three different agreements were signed in London: the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Guarantee, and the Treaty of Alliance. The first agreement, the Treaty of Establishment, was signed to determine the sovereign rights of all sides. Enosis and Taksim[19] were forbidden, and British military bases at Akrotiri and Dhekelia were to be maintained. The second agreement, the Treaty of Guarantee, was signed among Britain, Greece, and Turkey. According to Article IV of the treaty,

> in the event of a breach of the present Treaty, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom undertake to consult together with respect to the representations or measures necessary to ensure observance of these provisions. In so far as common or concerted action may not prove possible, each of the three guaranteeing powers reserve the right to take action with the sole aim of reestablishing the state of affairs created by the present Treaty.[20]

This article would be a legitimate argument for Turkey's intervention in Cyprus in 1974. The last agreement was the Treaty of Alliance, signed among Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey to determine the nature of military cooperation and

18 Mallinson, *Cyprus: A Modern History,* 184.

19 Taksim (parittion of island) was an idea emerged among Turkish Cypriots as the counterbalance to Greek Cypriots' idea of Enosis.

20 Mallinson, *Cyprus: A Modern History,* 34.

the number of Greek and Turkish troops to be stationed in Cyprus. In this agreement, 950 Greek and 650 Turkish troops would stay in Cyprus.[21]

The state of emergency in Cyprus came to an end on December 4, 1959. Archbishop Makarios of the Greek Cypriot community became the president and Fazıl Küçük of the Turkish Cypriot community became Vice President that same month. Just after the first legislative elections in September 1960, the Republic of Cyprus became a member of the UN.[22]

The Republic of Cyprus was thus established in 1960. It was a sui generis state, since its sovereign rights and decision-making procedures were under the control of guarantor states. In addition, this sui generis state started to alarm both communities just three years later, especially on administrative matters. During the first three years, Makarios had a tendency to ignore the Turkish community in making decisions, while Vice President Fazıl Küçük did not hesitate to use his constitutional veto power on every disputed issue. As a final straw, Makarios proposed thirteen amendments to the constitution in 1963, including one to abolish the veto rights of the vice president.[23] In response, the Turkish side used its veto right to prevent the amendments from being implemented. This was the end of the 1960 status quo that had established a common state in Cyprus.

The violence between the two communities had started before the political crisis in parliament. The harshest attacks against Turkish Cypriots placed on December 20-21, 1963, which is known as Bloody Christmas. Many Turkish Cypriots lost their lives or were kidnapped and tortured. The violence spread all over the island, especially in cities and villages in which Turkish Cypriots lived – Larnaca to Famagusta. In response to the increasing violence, the three guarantor states established a new peace force under the command of a British general in December 1963. In the same month, a Green Line or buffer zone was drawn as a cease-fire line. Turkey convened an emergency meeting of guarantor states to end the violence against Turkish Cypriots and find a

21 Ata Atun, *Kıbrıs Antlaşmaları, Planları...*, 63.

22 Mehmet Hasgüler, *Kıbrıst'ta Enosis ve Taksim Politikalarının Sonu* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000), 218.

23 Gazioğlu, *Direniş örgütleri, gençlik teşkilatı…*, 373.

solution to the crisis. Unfortunately, Makarios unilaterally abolished all the agreements that had been signed in 1960.[24]

After the increase in violence against Turkish Cypriots, Turkey decided to apply its rights of guarantor which were granted by the Treaty of Guarantee signed in 1959. Engaged in heavy fighting, Turkish Cypriots appealed to their constitutional rights and demanded the help of the Republic of Turkey. Although Turkey respected the sovereign rights of Cyprus, the Treaty of Guarantee provided it with certain rights, including the right to intervene in such circumstances. Given the threat of a Turkish military intervention, US President Lyndon Johnson sent a historic letter to Turkey in 1964 warning against intervening. As a result, Turkey did not intervene in 1964.[25] In March 1964, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) became functional. In addition, the UN secretary general assigned Galo Plaza as the first UN mediator in Cyprus. From that time, the UN has remained an indispensable part of the Cyprus question.[26]

Another important development in the Cyprus question occured on April 21, 1967, with a military coup d'état in Greece.[27] Given the chaotic political atmosphere in both Greece and Cyprus, intercommunal violence in Cyprus increased again in November 1967. The massacres of Boğaziçi and Geçitkale created a negative perception in the mind of Turkish Cypriots against a shared state. However, US shuttle diplomacy conducted by US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance prevented a wider conflict. As a result, a new opportunity to reach a solution was created by new talks between two communities. Turkish and Greek Cypriot community leaders came together four times between June 1968 and September 1971, but they could not reach an agreement.[28]

In July 1974, a political crisis between the Greek junta and Makarios turned into a political crisis in Cyprus. Makarios's demands such as for the removal

24 Ibid., 470.

25 Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 107.

26 "UNFICYP Background" accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unficyp/background.shtml

27 Hasgüler, *Kıbrıst'ta Enosis…* 243.

28 Mirbagheri, *Historical Dictionary of Cyprus,* xvi.

of Greek officers from Cyprus accelerated military coup d'état attempts in Cyprus. A Greek-junta-backed coup d'état took place in Cyprus on July 15, 1974,[29] leading to Turkey's intervention to protect Turkish Cypriots under the guarantor rights granted by the Treaty of Guarantee.

Heavy pressure following the Greek coup d'état created a chaotic atmosphere in Cypriot politics. For example, Makarios escaped and fled from the island with the help of Britain in July 1974. Nicos Sampson, a nationalist leader and important figure of the EOKA, replaced Makarios as president.[30] Sampson's presidency caused Turkey's military intervention in Cyprus.

Turkey, in response to the coup d'état, intervened in Cyprus in two stages applying its rights of guarantor under the Treaty of Guarantee signed in 1959. The first stage, on July 20, 1974, was to end the violence against Turkish Cypriots. This first phase of the military intervention was welcomed by the international community since it was opposed to the unilateral decisions taken by the military junta in Cyprus. On July 22, 1974, the military government in Greece and the puppet regime in Cyprus collapsed. After the collapse, Turkey, Greece, and Britain arranged a meeting in Geneva to discuss the future of Cyprus. Nevertheless, after two phases of talks in Geneva between July 25 and August 14, they did not reach a solution. Therefore, applying the same guarantor rights under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, Turkey intervened in Cyprus a second time on August 15, 1974. This time, the international community, including the United States, Britain, and other European countries, did not welcome the Turkish intervention.[31]

6.1.3 *Turkey's Intervention and the Europeanization of the Cyprus Question, 1974-1999*

After Turkey's intervention, the UN demanded an end to Turkish military operations in Resolution 353. On November 1, 1974, the Uited Nations General Assembly (UNGA) strengthened the UNFICYP controlling the 180 km Green

29 Ibid., 38.

30 Jan Asmussen, *Cyprus at War: Diplomacy and Conflict during the 1974 Crisis* (New York and London: I.B. Tauris, 2008), 36.

31 Hasgüler, *Kıbrıst'ta Enosis…* 251.

Line that divided the island, including its capital, Nicosia. From that time, discussions concern the Turkish military presence on the island and the long-term territorial situation of the Cypriot state.[32] Contrary to its previous political and diplomatic position, the bicommunal and bi-zonal structure of Cyprus was accepted as the status quo by Turkey, while Greece treated the Turkish military presence on the island as an invasion of a member state of the UN. The truth is that from 1960 until 1974, all legitimate political structures, the constitution, and indeed the state itself had collapsed in Cyprus. Therefore, there was an urgent need to establish a new consensus and agreement on the Cyprus question.

UN-centered negotiations began for the purposes of discussing the future of Cyprus after Turkey's intervention. Despite lengthy negotiations, the various sides were unable to arrive at a concrete solution between 1974 and 1983. On August 14, 1974, Greece withdrew from NATO's military wing because of what it viewed passive US diplomacy during Turkey's second intervention.[33]

Turkish Cypriots proclaimed the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC) in February 1975. Just afterward, the UNSC condemned the decision taken by Turkish Cypriot leaders.[34] Since years of negotiations had resolved the Cyprus question, Turkish Cypriots unilaterally declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983. This decision was also related to the withdrawal of Greece and Greek Cypriots from the latest round of talks in 1982. After the TRNC's declaration of independence, Turkey recognized the new state and Rauf Denktaş became its first president. The UNSC, however, again condemned the declaration of independence made in November 1983.[35]

After Greece became a member of the EEC (European Economic Community), the Cyprus question began to be discussed as a problem between a

32 Soyalp Tamçelik, *Kıbrıs'taki Çatışmanın Hukukî Boyutu* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2012), 91.

33 Soyalp Tamçelik, "BM Güvenlik Konseyi'nin Kıbrıs'la İlgili Aldığı Bazı Kararların Özellikleri ve Analitik Değerlendirilmesi," *Turkish Studies* 8 (2013):1242.

34 "UN Security Council Resolution 367," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/367

35 "UN Security Council Resolution 541," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/541(1983)

member state of the EEC and Turkey. This was the first indication of the Europeanization of the Cyprus question. As another indication, the EEC openly declared for the first time at the Dublin Summit in June 1990 that the Cyprus question was a factor in Turkey's potential EEC membership. One month later, on July 3, 1990, Cyprus officially submitted its application for full membership in the EEC. Although TRNC President Denktaş sent a warning to the EEC not to accept Cyprus' application before a solution on the Cyprus question was reached, it was not heeded by EEC decision makers.[36]

Turkey and Turkish Cypriots tried to negotiate the Cyprus question within the framework of the UN, not within that of the EU. This was a new strategy for the Turkish side. In 1990, the UNSC proposed a new plan for common solution to the Cyprus question, referring to the 1977 and 1979 summits between the two communities. Two years later, in August 1992, Boutros Ghali proposed a "Set of Ideas" to bring peace and resolution to the Cyprus question.[37] In this resolution, there were three controversial issues which included territorial rights; the situation of immigrants, settlements, and properties; and the constitution. Another UNSC resolution in November 1992 proposed the reduction of military forces in Cyprus, UNFICYP control of Maraş (Varosha), and free movement between the two sides of the island.[38] The EU accepted the Greek Cypriot application for full membership in the EEC on June 30, 1993. The Maastricht Treaty (the Treaty on European Union) determined the fate of European countries and also provided a new opportunity for Greek Cypriots to become full members of a politically united Europe. The most important milestone was a decision made by the General Affairs Council of EU Ministers in March 1995. According to this decision, "Cyprus' accession to the EU would enhance security and prosperity to both communities and allow the North to

36 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler" in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar* ed. Baskın Oran et al. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2001), 454.

37 "UN Security Council Resolution 774," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/774(1992)

38 "UN Security Council Resolution 789," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/789(1992)

catch up economically by improving growth and employment for the Turkish Cypriot community."[39]

On December 22, 1995, Turkey entered a customs union upon the decision of the European Community-Turkey Association Council. In this way, Turkey accepted all treaties between the European Union and non-European Union countries with respect to bilateral trade relations. The customs union increased the economic integration of Turkish markets to the European Union, as well. In response to Turkey's entering into a customs union, Greece began to force the European Union to start accession negotiations with Cyprus.[40] In 1997, the European Council instructed the European Commission to start accession negotiations with Cyprus.[41]

Turkey responded to the EU's decision by strengthening ties with the TRNC. Turkey's President Süleyman Demirel and the TRNC's President Rauf Denktaş made a joint declaration in December 1995 emphasizing that Cyprus should not become a member of the European Union without first resolving the Cyprus question. According to them, the Federal State of Cyprus should join the European Union only "simultaneously with Turkey's accession."[42] However, in the Luxemburg European Council Summit, Turkey's candidacy was refused while accession negotiations with Cyprus along with five other countries were set to commence in 1998.[43] One year later, at the 1999 Helsinki Summit, the European Union declared Turkey's candidacy and listed it among the candidate countries. In addition, the European Union stated that

> a political settlement will facilitate the accession of Cyprus to the European Union. If no settlement has been reached by the completion of accession negotiations, the Council's decision on accession will be

39 Michális S. Michael, *Resolving the Cyprus Conflict: Negotiating History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 152.

40 "Decision No 1/95 of the EC-TURKEY Association Council," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.avrupa.info.tr/fileadmin/Content/Downloads/PDF/Custom_Union_des_ENG.pdf

41 Michael, *Resolving the Cyprus Conflict* 152.

42 Ibid., 153.

43 Ibid., 154.

made without the above being a precondition. In this the Council will take account of all relevant factors.[44]

In a word, the European Union opened up an important and controversial issue by lifting a significant precondition for the potential membership of Cyprus.

6.1.4 *The Annan Plan and the New Deal, 1999-2004*

Along with the Europeanization of the Cyprus question, the US invasion of Iraq in the Middle East, non-conventional security threats, and energy competition changed the behavior of actors involved in the conflict throughout the period 1999-2004. Turkey witnessed a dramatic change in domestic politics after the 2001 economic crisis. The Justice and Development Party (JDP) came to power with a Europe-orientation foreign policy. Therefore, in the first years of the JDP government, the main foreign policy objective was to satisfy the European Union and resolve EU-related problems. The Cyprus question was but one problem between Greece and Turkey, but it had been a major problem between the European Union and Turkey since the beginning of negotiations. The TRNC leadership was also changing and pro-European Union politicians gained strength during this period.[45] In terms of Greek politics, Costas Simitis was elected as prime minister in 1996, and Greece changed its foreign policy strategy on the Cyprus question by trying to resolve the conflict within the framework of the European Union. This was another important milestone that shaped the future of negotiations.

Before the Annan Plan, which was officially promulgated in 2002, proximity talks had started between Denktaş and Klerides at the end of 1999. For Denktaş and the Turkish side, it was difficult to reach a consensus in these talks: the European Union did not yet determine the preconditions for Cyprus' accession negotiations – such as resolving the Cyprus question – at Helsinki

44 "Helsinki European Council 10 and 11 December 1999 Presidency Conclusion," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/hel1_en.htm

45 İlhan Uzgel, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne* ed. Baskın Oran et al. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2013), 302.

Summit in 1999.[46] Two years later in November 2001, in accordance with Turkey's new foreign policy orientation, Denktaş sent a letter to Klerides to start new negotiations without any preconditions. Between January 2002 and September 2002, six talks were arranged but no solution to the Cyprus question emerged. These talks were the basis for the Annan Plan, which was to be the most comprehensive plan since the beginning of the Cyprus question.

The European Union addressed the fate of Turkey's EU membership and the Cyprus question in the same framework, Turkey's objections notwithstanding. At the 2002 Seville summit, the European Union openly declared that

> the European Council reaffirms that, if the present rate of progress in negotiations and reforms is maintained, the European Union is determined to conclude the negotiations with Cyprus, Malta, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia by the end of 2002, if those countries are ready.[47]

In a word, Greek Cypriots were granted European Union membership as the sole representatives of the whole island, without any resolution to the Cyprus question. This was a serious setback for future negotiations.

On the side of Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, there was a new hope for reaching a solution on Cyprus. The newly emerged JDP government declared that a Belgian-style solution to the Cyprus question could be taken as a model. This would later serve as an important part of the Annan Plan. In November 2002, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan submitted his plan suggesting a common state composed of the two component sides. Kofi Annan's new plan combined Belgian and Swiss models to resolve the Cyprus question. The Annan Plan used a different strategy to find a common solution to Cyprus question by suggesting a new reunifying plan.[48]

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46 Kudret Özersay, "Kıbrıs Konusu," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne* ed. Baskın Oran et al. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2013), 632.

47 "Seville European Council 21 and 22 June 2002 Presidency Conclusion," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/72638.pdf

48 Michael, *Resolving the Cyprus Conflict* 145.

Annan's strategy rested on four approaches: the first was that EU accession the taken as catalyst; the second was that the United States and Britain be external parties involved in developing a solution; the third was that Greece and Turkey, as motherlands, should be key actors; and the last was to change the initial diplomatic positions of two communities in Cyprus.[49] In addition, for the first time in the history of the negotiations, a deadline was set. According to the Annan Plan, a referendum was to be arranged in March 2004, just before Cyprus was to become a member of the European Union.

In the final version of the Annan Plan there was one founding agreement and nine annexes of it, including "constitution, constitutional laws, federal laws, agreements between federal government and constituent states, list of international treaties, territorial arrangements, treatment of property affected by events since 1963, reconciliation commission, and the new state of affairs."[50] According to the Annan Plan, the name of the new state would be the United Republic of Cyprus and would be comprised of two equal, constituent states: the Greek Cypriot State and the Turkish Cypriot State.

However, at the Athens Summit on April 16, 2003, ten new member states of the European Union, including Cyprus, signed accession agreements. In this agreement, the European Union separated the north of the island from the EU *acquis communautaire*.[51] This meant that while Greek Cypriots would enjoy the rights of the European Union, Turkish Cypriots would not. This was a serious shock to the Turkish side, since the European Union had implemented the EU *acquis communautaire* without resolving the Cyprus question.

In response to the EU unilateral decision to accept Greek Cypriots as EU members before the settlement of the Cyprus question, the TRNC passed a bill allowing free transit across the border from north to south after a thirty-year ban. In addition, they opened new, free gates. By making this move, the

49 Ibid., 169.

50 Ibid., 173.

51 Frank Hoffmeister, *Legal Aspects of the Cyprus Problem: Annan Plan and EU accession* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2006), 198.

Turkish side was urging both the European Union and Greek Cypriots to negotiate a solution.[52]

The EU's explanations regarding Cyprus's potential EU membership were a significant obstacle to a positive vote in the referendum of Annan Plan. Despite these negative effects, Turkish Cypriot politicians did not give up working for a 'Yes' vote on the Annan Plan, which strongly emphasized a bi-zonal, bicommunal common state in Cyprus. As an indication of the support of Turkish Cypriots, massive demonstrations were held in Nicosia against Turkish Cypriot leader Denktaş, one of the most influential political figures supporting a 'No' vote in the referendum. The year 2003 was dynamic in terms of political debates on the Annan Plan.

On April 24, 2004, the Cyprus referendum was held across the whole island. While 64.9 percent of Turkish Cypriots voted in favor of the Annan Plan, 75.8 percent of Greek Cypriots opposed it. Right after the referendum, the EU published a regulation on the Green Line.[53] In this regulation, the EU did not define the Green Line as a border of the EU but arranged for special rules accommodating people, goods, and services on the northern part of the island in line with Protocol 10 of the 2003 Accession Treaty. Greek Cypriots were responsible for implementing these rules.[54] On May 1, 2004, the Republic of Cyprus under the governance of Greek Cypriots, became a member of the European Union.

6.1.5 *The Post-Annan Plan Period and Rising Uncertainty, 2004-2011*

After the Annan Plan and Cyprus' entry into the European Union, the role of the EU in the Cyprus question increased. In spite of the Turkish Cypriots' 'Yes' vote to the Annan Plan, the European Union officially separated the north of the island from the southern part with the Green Line regulation. This

52 Costa Carras, "The International Relations Aspect of the Annan Plan," in *Reunifying Cyprus: The Annan Plan and Beyond* ed. Andrekos Varnava et al. (London and Newyork: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 63.

53 "The Green Line Regulation," accessed December 18, 2016, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32004R0866R(01)

54 S. Gülden Ayman, "Kıbrıs Sorununda Güç Eşitsizliği ve Koalisyon Arayışı," *Akademik Ortadoğu* 3(2008): 57.

situation strongly disappointed pro-Annan Plan politicians in the TRNC. The main political discussion in the post-Annan Plan period was whether to establish a new status quo in the TRNC with the help of the international community. One of the most important topics was lifting the restrictions created after the declaration of independence by the TRNC in 1983 in UN Resolutions 541 and 550. According to the UN resolutions, the TRNC's independence was illegal and it was not accepted as a legitimate nation state. Therefore, aside from Turkey, which is the only country that recognizes the TRNC, the TRNC has been isolated from the international community. Turkish Cypriots and Turkey started a new diplomacy to lift these restrictions on the TRNC and end its international isolation.

Negotiations between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots continued after the Annan Plan. In place of Denktaş, Mehmet Ali Talat, the new president of the TRNC, conducted the new negotiations with the Greek Cypriot leader Papadopulos. Until 2008, negotiations were at a stalemate, since neither part of the island was able to create a new offer for resolving the Cyprus question after the Annan Plan. As a first step, Greek Cypriots submitted a report to the UN in May 2005 explaining the reason for their 'No' vote.

The European Union launched Turkey's accession negotiations at the Brussels Summit on 16-17 December, 2005. This was an important milestone since two months before Turkey had signed an additional protocol with a condition. As officially declared by Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

> on 29 July 2005, the Additional Protocol extending the Ankara Agreement to the new member States that acceded to the EU in 2004 was concluded by an exchange of letters among Turkey, the EU Presidency and the Commission. An official declaration to legally constitute an integral part of our letter and signature was also made. In the declaration, it was explicitly stated that Turkey, by signing the Additional Protocol, did not recognize the "Republic of Cyprus" by any means.[55]

55 "Turkey-EU Relations," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa

In January 2006, Turkey declared a new plan of action on the Cyprus question. According to the plan, Turkey would agree to "open of the sea ports of Turkey to Greek Cypriot vessels; to allow Greek Cypriot air carriers to use the Turkish airspace; to open of the sea ports in North Cyprus; to open of Ercan Airport to direct flights etc."[56] To implement these commitments, Turkey proposed a high-level meeting under the auspices of the UN to discuss the future of the Cyprus question. Turkey intended to establish a new diplomatic mechanism similar to the Annan Plan. However, that same month, the secretary general of the UN appointed Michael Moller as Special Representative for Cyprus and UNFICYP Mission Chief. In February 2006, Moller suggested establishing technical committees under the UN in the fields of health, environment, water management, and humanitarian issues. The result was complete failure and the European Union imposed punitive measures and froze negotiation talks with Turkey.[57] However, in December 2006, the EU Council decided that negotiations on eight chapters could not be opened since Turkey did not meet its obligations stemming from the additional protocol, referring to Turkey's position on the Cyprus question.[58]

The EU-Turkey relations seriously discussed among Turkish politicians between 2004 and 2005 since the Council of the EU "invited the Commission to present to the Council a proposal for a framework for negotiations with Turkey, on the basis set out in paragraph 23. It requested the Council to agree on that framework with a view to opening negotiations on 3 October 2005."[59] Turkey, long the way, became an EU candidate on October 3, 2005. This important development had important implications for the TRNC. Turkey

56 "New Initiative by Turkey on Cyprus," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/new-initiative-by-turkey-on-cyprus.en.mfa

57 Michael, *Resolving the Cyprus Conflict* 163.

58 Stephen Castle, "EU freezes talks on Turkey membership," *Independent*, December 12, 2006, accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/eu-freezes-talks-on-turkey-membership-428085.html

59 "Brussels European Council 16/17 December 2004 Presidency Conclusion," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf

declared that it would not recognize the Republic of Cyprus until the Cyprus question had been resolved.[60]

A new political environment for a new negotiation process was created in February 2008. Mehmet Ali Talat and Demetris Christofias, the new Greek Cypriot president, came together on March 21, 2008, and agreed to establish new working groups and technical committees, as had been discussed in 2006. One month later, on April 16, 2008, six working groups on the chapters on governance and power sharing, EU matters, security and guarantees, territory, property, and economic matters were announced.[61] In addition to those working groups, seven technical committees were working to reach a final agreement on the Cyprus question. As a result of those initiatives, on September 3, 2008, comprehensive negotiations started between the two leaders with the support of the UN. In the first period of this new negotiation, between 2008 and 2009, the two sides focused on governance and power sharing, EU matters, and economic issues. As a result of the work of the separate technical committees and working groups, more than thirty joint papers were submitted to the leaders. In the second period, between 2009 and 2010, both sides focused on divergences in the working groups and technical committees. Although the two community leaders held two rounds of intensified negotiations in January 2010, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon emphasized that time was not on the side of a settlement.[62] In this manner, the second most comprehensive negotiations came to an end.

Over the first decade of twenty-first century, the Cyprus question, along with its traditional problematic issues such as immigrants, territorial disputes, and property, evolved into a geopolitical problem related to Eastern Mediterranean energy resources. According to international law, all states which have boundaries with those energy resources can exercise their legitimate rights to

60 "Turkey-EU Relations," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa

61 Stéphanie Laulhé Shaelou, *The EU and Cyprus: Principles and Strategies of Full Integration* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2010), 69.

62 "Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good," accessed December 18, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/238

the resources. In February 2003, Greek Cypriots signed an agreement with Egypt on an exclusive economic zone.[63] For both Turkey and Turkish Cypriots, this was unacceptable because it was a unilateral decision made by the Greek Cypriots. In addition, Greek Cypriots issued thirteen licenses to different companies, including US companies, to carry out resource exploration. After joining the EU, Greek Cypriots tried to force Turkey to accept their legitimate sovereign rights over energy resources, but Turkey and the TRNC wholly disagreed with the current management of energy resources around Cyprus. In the next part of the chapter, China's reaction to the Cyprus question is analyzed, focusing on relations among China, Turkey, and the EU – as well as China's attention to Eastern Mediterranean energy resources which are in part related to other Middle Eastern countries like Egypt and Israel.

§ 6.2 Sino-Turkish Relations

Sino-Turkish relations date back to the first interactions between the Chinese and various ethnic groups along the borders of China proper. According to Sinologist Togan, the basic historical materials which are related to the Chinese and ancient Turks, though this argument is controversial, date to the seventh century.[64] However, putting aside the main historical controversies of Sino-Turkish relations may aid in understanding current relations.[65] Historical approaches to Sino-Turkish relations tend to focus on common experiences and positive contributions, especially in recent decades. Before the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1971, historical approaches to Sino-Turkish relations used ideological and religious concepts. The atmosphere of

63 According to international law, only legitimate sovereign countries have a right to use and make agreements on their exclusive economic zone. Since Turkey does not recognize the Republic of Cyprus, its agreement with Egypt was not valid for Turkey.

64 İsenbike Togan, *7. ve 8. yüzyıllarda Çin ve Türk Resmî Tarih Anlayışına Farklı Yaklaşımlar* (Ankara: Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2008), 9.

65 Tao Zan, "Sino-Turkish Relationship: Centering on Turkey's Perception about the Rise of China," in *Sino-Turkey Relations: Concept, Policies and Prospects* ed. R. Kutay Karaca et al. (İstanbul: İstanbul Gelişim University Press, 2015), 83.

the Cold War and ideological competition between the two super powers were the primary reason for this. During the Cold War, it was difficult for Turkey and the PRC to find a common ground for improving their diplomatic relations.[66] As soon as diplomatic relations were established in August 1971, Sino-Turkish relations gradually started to develop and continue to do so.

6.2.1 *Political and Diplomatic Relations*

Although common historical experiences in the nineteenth century such as imperialism, modernization, and Westernization led both societies to political, economic, and social reforms, their responses to those reforms and their implications were not the same. The collapse of the Qing and Ottoman Empires affected both societies in a similar way, causing great political and economic turmoil in their successive states. After the collapse of these two ancient dynasties, the Republic of China (ROC)[67] was established in 1912, and the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923.

Turkey established a diplomatic office in Nanjing, then capital of the ROC, in 1929.[68] Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding father of the Turkish Republic, and his reforms were perceived as a transition of power that continues to be praised by Chinese nationalists, who laud "the cavalier manner with which the Turkish nationalists compelled foreign powers to sign the new Treaty of Lausanne in 1923."[69] Another diplomatic gesture was the visit of ROC military officials to Turkey in February 1934.[70] Two months later, Tevfik Rüştü Aras, then

66 Çağdaş Üngör, "Türkiye Solunda Çin Etkisi: Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık Hareketi Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme (1969-1977)," in *Türkiye'de Çin'i Düşünmek: Ekonomik, Siyasi ve Kültürel İlişkilere Yeni Yaklaşımlar* ed. Selçuk Esenbel et al. (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 171.

67 The ROC was inherited by nationalists obliged to flee Taiwan after they lost the civil war against the communists in December 1949. From that time until today, Taiwan's territorial integrity and sovereign rights have been a dispute among Taiwan, China, and the US.

68 Hasan Bilgin, *Stratejik Açıdan Çin* (Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2010), 98.

69 Li Wang and Syed Hasanat Shah, "The Dynamics of Sino-Turkish Relations in the New Century: Viewed from a Diplomatic Perspective" in *Sino-Turkey Relations: Concept, Policies and Prospects* ed. R. Kutay Karaca et al. (İstanbul: İstanbul Gelişim University Press, 2015), 16.

70 Bilgin, *Stratejik Açıdan Çin,* 103.

foreign minister of Turkey, met with the ROC's ambassador to Bern, M. Hoo. In this meeting, the first "friendship agreement" was signed between the two countries. In 1940, Jiang Jieshi (Chang Kai Shek), president of the ROC, warmly welcomed Turkey's chargé d'affaires to Chongqing in the absence of an ambassador.[71]

Turkey's recognition of the ROC as the sovereign representative of all China remained unchanged until 1971.[72] From 1949 until 1971, ideological trends and geopolitical realities forced the PRC and Turkey to remain on different sides in the Cold War. During the Japanese occupation, the Second World War, and the civil war between the communists and nationalists in China, there were no direct communications between the PRC and Turkey. Not only world politics but also China's and Turkey's domestic politics were in the midst of a transition between 1945 and 1950. While the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) won a victory over the Kuomintang (KMT) in the civil war in 1949, Turkey transformed its political structure from one-party rule to a multi-party parliamentary system in the 1950 general elections. These transformations in both countries were indications of a new era in their bilateral relations after World War II.

After KMT politicians, including Chang Kaishek, fled to Formosa Island (Taiwan), Mao Zedong, the supreme leader of the CCP, promulgated the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a new state in 1949. As a result, the civil war and domestic political struggle between the two Chinese fractions became an international issue. The Taiwan issue, which continues today, emerged as the first political problem between China and Turkey since Turkey continued to recognize the ROC as the one legitimate government representing all China. Meanwhile, Turkey's participation in the Korean War in 1950 increased the negative perception of Turkey in the eyes of the PRC.[73] Except for the Chinese Communist Party's ideological discourses, which resonated in Turkey in the

71 Ibid., 106.

72 Harris, *China Considers the Middle East*, 59.

73 Çağdaş Üngör, "Perceptions of China in the Turkish Korean War Narratives," *Turkish Studies* 7 (2006):407.

1960s, there were no direct political or diplomatic relations between the two countries.[74]

The Uyghur issue, another political problem between the PRC and Turkey, started to take shape in the beginning of the 1950s with the arrival of the first Uyghur immigrants to Turkey. Uyghur politicians, intellectuals, and businessmen migrated to Turkey from East Turkistan and communicated directly with politicians and businessmen in Turkey.[75] This was also a time of political turmoil in Turkey. After the coup d'état on May 27, 1960, US president Lyndon B. Johnson's letter to Turkish President İsmet İnönü intended to prevent Turkey's intervention in Cyprus caused serious tensions between the two countries. Just after the letter was received, the Turkish Foreign Ministry and related ministries started to research the possibilities for improving Sino-Turkish relations in the middle of the Cold War. Establishing relations with the PRC was seriously discussed by both bureaucrats and members of parliament at that time.[76]

Turkey recognized the PRC after the United States and NATO countries began to send warm political messages to the PRC in 1971. The Sino-American rapprochement eventually provided a new basis for improving bilateral relations between Turkey and China, something that had already been under discussion in Turkey six years earlier.[77] Turkey declared officially that relations with the PRC would be in accordance with procedures similar to those used for other socialist countries. Beyond official statements, the recognition of the PRC was seriously discussed in the Turkish parliament and in the mainstream

74 Üngör, "Türkiye Solunda Çin Etkisi," 175.

75 The region is officially defined by China as "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR-新疆维吾尔自治区)." In some historical documents "East Turkistan" and "Turkistan-ı Çini" have also been used to define the region. Bilgin, *Stratejik Açıdan Çin,* 125.

76 Altay Atlı, "12 Mart Muhtırası ve Türkiye'nin Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'ni Tanıması," in *Türkiye'de Çin'i Düşünmek: Ekonomik, Siyasi ve Kültürel İlişkilere Yeni Yaklaşımlar* ed. Selçuk Esenbel et al. (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 154.

77 Atlı, "12 Mart Muhtırası..," 150.

media.[78] After its recognition, several agreements were signed between Turkey and the PRC, including trade protocols, the establishment of consulates, and cooperation on standardization, medical issues, tourism, and air transportation in 1972.[79]

The ongoing Cold War political and economic conditions did not provide the opportunity to improve Sino-Turkish relations until the 1980s. The first high-level diplomatic visit was made by Turkish President Kenan Evren in December 1982. Three years later, Chinese President Li Xiannian visited Turkey.[80] Then Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal and Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang improved bilateral relations in diplomatic visits in 1985 and 1986, respectively.[81] Actually, the 1990s were the real beginnings of bilateral relations between the two countries due to end of the Cold War. In addition to diplomatic visits such as those of President Süleyman Demirel in 1995 and Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem in 1998, Turkey tried to create a new political atmosphere and increase its role in Central Asia, which was likely a concern for the PRC. The assetive, post-Cold War foreign policy discourse in Turkey did not turn into reality during the 1990s due to domestic and regional political crisis such as the Gulf War and unstable coalition governments in Turkey.

Bilateral Sino-Turkish relations reached their zenith at the turn of the century. Chinese President Jiang Zemin's diplomatic visit in April 2000 opened new channels for improving not only economic but also political and military relations. Jiang's visit had two main objectives for China at the time. The first was to acquire support from Turkey to become a member of the WTO (World Trade Organization). The second was to accelerate current relations between the two countries. In addition to economic relations, political and diplomatic relations also reached a new level with both sides supporting an action plan

78 R. Kutay Karaca, "Establishment Process of Diplomatic Relations between Turkey and China," in *Sino-Turkey Relations: Concept, Policies and Prospects* ed. R. Kutay Karaca et al. (İstanbul: İstanbul Gelişim University Press, 2015), 138.

79 Bilgin, *Stratejik Açıdan Çin,* 127.

80 Xian Xiao and Wenzhang Wang, "Zhong Yu Tuerqi Guanxi De Yanbian, Wenti Yu Weilai [The Evolution of Sino-Turkish Relations]," Waijiao Pinlun 95 (2007):35.

81 Bilgin, *Stratejik Açıdan Çin,* 129.

signed in 1995. Importantly, however, the PRC's demands and comments on the Uyghur issue and the Uyghur diaspora living in Turkey gradually increased before Jiang's visit. The PRC openly put the Uyghur issue on the agenda of bilateral relations by emphasizing cooperation against international terrorism and separatism in this visit.[82]

As developing economies, both countries tried to diversify their foreign policy priorities, energy resources, and market orientation during the period 2001-2011. In this sense, the Middle East became a crucial region for both cooperation and competition between Turkey and China. This was not a zero-sum competition over resources and market orientations but a win-win competition providing new kinds of relations between them. This common perspective in bilateral relations and diplomatic visits contributed to this competition between the two sides. From 2001 until 2011, the PRC has been visited by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (once as leader of the JDP and once as president), Abdullah Gul (once as minister of foreign affairs and once as president), and Ahmet Davutoglu (once as the minister of foreign affairs). On the other hand, there has been no presidential-level diplomatic visit from China since Jiang Zemin's visit in 2000.

The Uyghur issue is the bottleneck of Sino-Turkish relations, and has the potential to affect diplomatic and political relations between the two countries. For example, after the 2009 Urumqi riot, which was the largest clash between the Uyghur people and Chinese security forces to date, the Uyghur issue became a serious political topic between the two countries. Then Prime Minister Erdoğan's remarks on the situation were the first to openly declare controversy between the two countries. However, Chinese PM Wen Jiabao's official three-day visit to Turkey in 2010 demonstrated that the most serious tensions over Xinjiang in the aftermath of the Urumqi accident had settled down.[83]

82 Barış Adıbelli, *Doğu Türkistan* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2008), 123.

83 "China, Turkey upgrade ties to strategic cooperative relationship during Wen's visit," *Xinhua*, October 9, 2010 accessed December 20, 2016, http://www.gov.cn/english/2010-10/09/content_1718048.htm

6.2.2 *Economic Relations*

Sino-Turkish economic and trade relations have been generally accepted as the longest and most stable aspect of relations between the two countries. As Togan has stated, the Chinese and ancient Turks were involved in constant trade relations along the Silk Road.[84] In addition to trade, the social and cultural aspects of their relations long contributed to a peaceful atmosphere between the two ancient cultures. In the middle of the twentieth century, however, these historical relations transformed completely and reached a new level. Modern Turkey and China reestablished these economic relations approximately four decades ago. Before recognizing China in 1971, Turkey's economic and trade relations were established with the ROC – that is, Taiwan. Although this situation changed after Turkey's recognition of the PRC, Turkey maintains a trade office in Taiwan to coordinate economic, social, and cultural relations with Taiwan, as well.[85]

China transformed its economic policies from a closed economy to a more open one after the opening-up reforms in 1978. These reforms were aimed not only at economic transformation, but also at a new political and social development model, with the latter being implemented by the new political and economic elite at the beginning of the post-Mao era. Thus, the Chinese economy started to diversify its economic model and integrate it with the global economy. It is interesting to note that Turkey was also transforming its previous economic model, import substitution industrialization (ISI), to a more liberal, open-market economy over the same years. Turgut Özal, then undersecretary of the prime minister, prepared an economic reform package emphasizing more liberal economic policies than the planned economy previously under the control of the state. Indeed, Deng Xiaoping's leadership in the

84 İsenbike Togan, "Türk-Çin İlişkilerinde Ticaretin Rolü," in *Türkiye'de Çin'i Düşünmek: Ekonomik, Siyasi ve Kültürel İlişkilere Yeni Yaklaşımlar* ed. Selçuk Esenbel et al. (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 13.

85 Selçuk Çolakoğlu ve Arzu Güler, "Turkey's Policy Towards Taiwan," in *Sino-Turkey Relations: Concept, Policies and Prospects* ed. R. Kutay Karaca et al. (İstanbul: İstanbul Gelişim University Press, 2015), 105.

opening-up of China and Özal's leadership in the 1980s represent another shared experience of both countries in the economic realm.[86]

In 1971, Turkey and China did not have intense economic relations except for one trade agreement signed in 1974.[87] In the 1980s, both countries developed new economic orientations under the guidance of the Washington Consensus.[88] Although political systems of the two countries were completely different, China's economic fate intersected with that of another developing country, Turkey.

Sino-Turkish economic relations started to improve in the middle of the 1990s. In that period, for the Chinese, Turkey was an opportunity to reach alternative markets and resources. Turkey was trying to become a full member of the European Union but also had social and cultural relations with Middle Eastern countries because of its Muslim population. As stated by Yılmaz, "Chinese firms consider Turkey an investment location with access to crucial markets in the Middle East, Central Asia and Europe."[89] Moreover, Turkey was planning to increase its exports to the Far East, including China. China also represented a gateway to future economic relations with other East and Southeast Asian countries. But, the result of the competition between the two export-oriented economic models was a failure for the Turkish economy. The main reason was that the Turkish manufacturing and commodity markets could not compete with their Chinese equivalents. Under the guidance of Özal's new economic orientation, Turkish businessmen who wanted to discover new markets and resources became importers of goods from China during the 1990s.[90]

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86 Altay Atlı and Sadık Ünay, *Küreselleşme Sürecinde Çin-Türkiye Ekonomik İlişkileri* (İstanbul: SETA Yayınları, 2014), 19.

87 Derya Yurdakul, "Türkiye-Çin Ekonomik ve Ticari İlişkileri," in *Türkiye'de Çin'i Düşünmek: Ekonomik, Siyasi ve Kültürel İlişkilere Yeni Yaklaşımlar* ed. Selçuk Esenbel et al. (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 232.

88 Ziya Onis and Fikret Senses, "Rethinking the Emerging Post-Washington Consensus," *Development&Change* 36(2005):265.

89 N. K. Yilmaz, F. L. Cooke and R. Dellios, "Turkey's FDI Policy and Chinese Foreign Direct Investments in Turkey: Some Economic and Management Implications," *Global Business Review* 9 (2008):32.

90 Atlı and Ünay, *Küreselleşme Sürecinde Çin-Türkiye..,* 20.

However, in spite of the conflicting objectives of two similar economic models, Sino-Turkish economic relations continued to develop. Several agreements in the 1990s promoted economic and trade relations, including the prevention of double taxation and the promotion of standardization, tourism, health, bilateral investments, technical cooperation, and energy. As described above, these growing relations favored China because of the asymmetrical dimensions of relations between the two countries. China's increasing investment capacity, huge flow of capital, and cheap labor were the primary reasons for this asymmetry. For example, Turkey's exports to China dramatically dropped by 81.1 percent in 1995, while imports from China increased by 109.1 percent. This trend gradually worsened for Turkey following China's WTO membership in 2001.

The year that China joined the WTO was critical not only for the Chinese economy, but also for China's global economic and political engagement. Although Turkey was one of the developing countries suffering under China's economic pressure in all sectors, it was also an opportunity for Turkey to take advantage of China's cheap raw materials and its huge market – that is, its population of 1.3 billion people. After 2001, however, Turkey was unable to take advantage of these opportunities due to a lack of knowledge and information about China. A sectoral analysis of the bilateral trade deficit clearly demonstrates, however, that China has been able to take the advantage of the situation.

Table 6.1 Sino-Turkish Trade Balance, 2001-2011 (millions of dollars)[91]

Years	Export	Import	Balance	Total
2001	199	926	-726	1125
2002	268	1368	-1100	1637
2003	505	2610	-2106	3115
2004	392	4476	-4084	4868
2005	550	6885	-6336	7435
2006	693	9669	-8976	10362
2007	1040	13234	-12195	14274
2008	1437	15658	-14221	17095
2009	1599	12677	-11077	14276
2010	2260	17180	-14920	19440
2011	2467	21692	-19225	24159

As a matter of fact, not only Turkey but also the United States and other global economic powers were greatly concerned about China's double-digit economic groxth during the first decade of the twenty-first century. The main question concerned the nature of China's economic development model. At the beginning of 2011, Turkey was still the sixteenth largest economy in the world, but China had become the second, overtaking Japan. This was another asymmetrical dimension of Sino-Turkish economic relations. Therefore, it is important to analyze the main challenges and opportunities of Sino-Turkish economic relations during this period.

The first challenge was the increasing trade deficit between the two countries. As seen in Table 6.1, total trade volume reached approximately 24 billion dollars, of which Turkish exports constituted only 2.4 billion dollars. The trade deficit reached to 19 billion dollars by 2011, up from 726 million in 2001. The second challenge was related to intellectual property rights. Turkey, as a candidate for membership in the European Union, was obliged to comply with EU standardization agreements and property rights regimes, while China, as a third party, had no obligation to adhere to these dictates in its economic

91 "Turkey-China Foreign Trade Values," accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.economy.gov.tr/portal/faces/home?_afrLoop=5996950836630

activities. Thus, property rights violations became a significant problem in Sino-Turkish trade relations.[92] Thirdly, the flow of cheap and poor-quality Chinese goods into Turkish markets negatively affected Turkish manufacturers during this period.

However, there were some opportunities which may prove beneficial for economic relations between China and Turkey in the future. Yılmaz notes that a new Silk Road and Eurasian connection could be an alternative economic network for both countries.

> By exploiting the opportunities offered by the flourishing global finance market the two countries positioned at the East–West extremities of Eurasia would be in a prime position to redefine the contours of a renewed Sino–Turkic "Silk Road." It would be one in which the market power of ancient Rome is replaced by the EU and Xian by the Beijing–Shanghai arc of Chinese political and economic power.[93]

China's growing economy represents another crucial opportunity, as it needs to diversify its foreign investment projects all over the world. Contracted projects between China and Turkey increased from 4.7 million dollars in 2001 to 4.3 billion dollars in 2011[94] These projects offer the most realistic prospect of closing the trade deficit with China by providing economic advantages to Chinese companies investing in Turkey. To reach this objective at a diplomatic level, the Ministry of the Economy announced a new strategy to understand the Chinese market, such as "Asia-Pacific Strategy". Under this strategy, a Turkish-Chinese Business Council was established as early as 1992 to promote cooperation with Chinese businessmen. It was an initiative started by the Foreign Economic Relations Board and the China Council for the Promotion of

92 Kadir Temiz, "Türkiye'nin Asya Pasifik Politikası 2015," in Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2015 ed. Burhanettin Duran et al. (Ankara: SETA Yayınları, 2016), 437.

93 Yılmaz, Cooke and Dellios, "Turkey's FDI Policy and Chinese Foreign Direct Investments," 42.

94 Jingxiong Yu, *"2011 Nian du Zhongguo dui wai zhi jie tou zi tong ji gong bao" [2011 statistical bulletin of China's outward foreign direct investment]*, 12.

International Trade (CCPIT).[95] Although there were plenty of bilateral mechanisms to improve economic and trade relations between the two countries, they were unable to achieve the expected results. For example, according to statistics of the Turkish Ministry of Economy, there were 36,300 firms in 2013 with foreign investments in Turkey, including 540 Chinese firms. On the other hand, according to Chinese statistics, the total amount of Chinese investments in Turkey was approximately 406 million dollars in 2011. According to statistics of the Turkish Undersecretary of the Treasury, all Turkish capital stock was approximately 111.4 million dollars.[96] These investments were obviously not enough to fill the huge gap in the trade deficit.

6.2.3 *Military and Security Relations*

The Korean War was the first confrontation between the Chinese and Turkish militaries in the second part of twentieth century, though not only Turkey but also the United States and UN alliances took part in the military conflict. From the end of the Korean War until today, there have been no conflicts or clashes between the two countries, nor common security threats or security-related problems in bilateral military relations. However, especially in the 1990s, China's high-speed economic growth made it more concerned about security issues such as energy security and social and political instabilities in the Middle East and its immediate neighbors.

Turkey and China gradually started to have common security concerns in the 1990s. For example, international terrorist networks that expanded their operations from Afghanistan to Libya became a common security concern for both countries. In addition, China increasingly started to feel the burden of the instability of the energy resources on which it relied in the Middle East. Due to new security threats such as the First Gulf War (1990-1991), the Bosnian War (1992-1995), and the Afghan Civil War (1992-1996), China and

95 "Turkey-China Business Council," accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.deik.org.tr/Konsey/38/Turkey_China.html

96 Jingxiong Yu, *"2011 Nian du Zhongguo dui wai zhi jie tou zi tong ji gong bao" [2011 statistical bulletin of China's outward foreign direct investment]*, 15.

Turkey began to improve their military and security relations, especially after the 1990s.

Sino-Turkish military relations were strengthened through increasing bilateral visits, military agreements, hardware cooperation, and joint exercises from 1996 until 2011.[97] After the first bilateral visits of Air Force Chief Yu Zenwu and his Turkish counterpart İsmail Hakkı Karadayı in 1996, China and Turkey signed an arms deal for twenty-four WS-1 rockets.[98] Since this first arms purchase, Turkey has continued to purchase several types of military hardware including Kasirga Rockets, B611/Yıldırım Missiles, and medium and short-range missile technologies.[99]

Although it was officially declared that Sino-Turkish bilateral relations reached to strategic partnership in 2010, military relations between China and Turkey did not demonstrate this strategic partnership. Their military relations were a matter of necessity rather than one of rational, strategic choice. For example, the PRC is a marginal military supplier to Turkey. The value of China's arms transfers to Turkey between 2001 and 2011 is estimated at 25 million dollars, while Turkey's total arms acquisitions in that period are valued at approximately 6.8 billion dollars.[100]

Turkey's new foreign-policy objectives in Central Asia at the beginning of the 1990s were viewed as a potential threat in Chinese political and security circles due to the likelihood that they would affect the Uyghur problem. China's security concerns in Central Asia necessitated an immediate, strategic solution. For example, to prevent potential threats China improved political and diplomatic relations with Central Asian countries, on the hand, countenancing the rising authoritative power of Russia over the region, on the

97 Atul Kumar, "Sino-Turkish Strategic Partnership: Prudent Hedging or Irreversible Shift?," *China Report* 49 (2013):126.

98 Evren Değer, "Çinle gizli füze anlaşması," *Milliyet Gazetesi* December 20, 1996, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/1996/12/20/siyaset/cinle.html

99 Eyüp Ersoy, *Turkish-Chinese Military Relations: Spinning More Moving Less* (Ankara: USAK Publications, 2008), 138.

100 "SIPRI Yearbook 2012: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security," accessed December 14, 2016, https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2016-03/SIPRIYB12Summary.pdf

other.[101] As a last step, China, Russia, and three other Central Asian countries established the "Shanghai Five" in 1996 to bolster economic and security cooperation in the region.[102] After this turned into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001 when Uzbekistan became a member, it was clear that it constituted a new Central Asian security-oriented organization intended to prevent both internal and external security threats. Although Turkey's interests in the region were critical for diversifying its economic and political influence Turkey did not join the SCO but did become a dialogue partner in 2012.[103]

With respect to joint exercises, China and Turkey reached a new level in military relations in October 2010 with the Anatolian Eagle joint air exercises. Indeed, it was a rejoinder to Israel's stance on Turkey in the Mavi Marmara flotilla crisis, China and Turkey conducted a joint military exercise for the first time in their bilateral military relations.[104] One month later, China and Turkey conducted joint commando training exercises in the Turkish Commando School and Training Center in Eğirdir, Isparta.[105]

As mentioned before, political, economic, and military relations have accelerated this process. Common political, economic, and military relations and non-traditional security threats such as terrorism have shaped Sino-Turkish relations. Turkey's NATO membership and China's status as a challenger in a power transition period in the global politics make these relations more complicated and open to new challenges.

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101 Kumar, "Sino-Turkish Strategic Partnership," 122.

102 Shanghai Five: A regional organization founded in 1996 by Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. The main objective was to provide mutual security for each country in the economic and political realms. It became the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization" with participation of Uzbekistan in 2001.

103 Emre Erşen, "Türk Dış Politikasında Avrasya Yönelimi ve Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü [Euroasian Orientation in Turkish Foreign Policy and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization]," *Ortadoğu Analiz* 52 (2013):19.

104 Chris Zambelis, "Sino-Turkish Strategic Partnership: Implications of Anatolian Eagle 2010," *China Brief* 11 (2011):8.

105 Kumar, "Sino-Turkish Strategic Partnership," 133.

§ 6.3 China's Diplomatic Position in the Cyprus Question

In this part of the chapter, three dimensions of China's involvement in the Cyprus question are analyzed. First, the historical background of Sino-Cypriot relations reveal the basic interests of both countries in terms of diplomatic, economic, and military relations. Second, China's current political and diplomatic positions are analyzed to show the essence of China's role in the conflict. Last, three aspects of China's involvement in the Cyprus question are analyzed to understand China's strategic objectives, both respect to the Cyprus question and to the Eastern Mediterranean region more generally. This section concludes with an analysis of China's involvement in the Cyprus question and its effect on Sino-Turkish relations.

6.3.1 *Historical Background of China's Involvement in the Cyprus Question*

China (then the ROC) recognized the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, just after the establishment of the first Republic of Cyprus. It was one of the first countries to establish relations with both communities on the island.[106] Since it was the ROC rather than the PRC that represented China in the UN up until 1971, it was the diplomatic position of the former rather than the latter that determined China's official position on the Cyprus question. However, over the course of years of violence and conflicts between the two communities in Cyprus, China has offered no clear, concrete offer to resolve the Cyprus question.

China and Cyprus established diplomatic relations on December 14, 1971, following the US rapprochement with the PRC. The first Cypriot embassy in China opened some time later, in 1989. China and Cyprus accelerated their relationship in 1980s with specific bilateral agreements, including the Cultural Cooperation Agreement (1980), the Agreement on Trade (1981), and the Economic, Scientific, and Technical Agreement (1984). In addition, the Chinese Xinhua News Agency established an office in Nicosia in 1989. The first

106 "Admission of New Members to the UN: Cyprus," accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/155(1960)

agreement on the cooperation of health was signed in 1999. At the end of the 1990s, both countries started to cooperate in the fields of education and culture with specific exchange programs.[107]

The first presidential visit from Cyprus to China by Glafcos Clerides in 1999 indicated the increasing relations between China and Cyprus. Two years later, in 2001, Chinese vice-president and future president Hu Jintao visited Cyprus. In 2002, Socrates Hasikos, the first Cypriot defense minister, visited China.[108] After the EU's decision to accept Cyprus as a member in 2004, Sino-Cyprus relations continued to strengthen, with a flurry of high-level diplomatic visits taking place between the two countries over the ensuing years. For example, Tasos Papadopoulos, as president of the Republic of Cyprus, visited China in 2006 to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries. By 2011, China and Cyprus had negotiated eighteen agreements, including ones on taxation, tourism, and technology. One reason for the expansion of Chinese economic relations with Cyprus was that its corporate tax rate (10 percent) was lower than that of other EU countries.[109]

Sino-Greek relations also influence in Sino-Cyprus relations. For example, in June 2006 during an official visit by Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis to Beijing, Greece reiterated that "Greece agrees that the EU arms embargo against China should be lifted and will continue making efforts to this end" as a gesture of good relations with China. In the same visit, the Chinese and Greeks explained that the Cyprus problem should be solved according to

107 Jinhui Li, "China-Cyprus Relations Developing," *Beijing Zhoubao*, May 1999, accessed December 19, 2016, http://gongwai.xaufe.edu.cn/englishonline/bjzs/BeijingReview/99May/Tnh46bjr99-22e-17.asp?

108 "Top Legislator Li Peng Meets Cypriot Defense Minister," *People's Daily* January 24, 2002, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/200201/23/eng20020123_89214.shtml

109 Michalis Zambartas, "Cyprus: Cyprus-China bilateral relations," *International Tax Review*, October 1, 2012, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.internationaltaxreview.com/IssueArticle/3094194/Archive/Cyprus-Cyprus-China-bilateral-relations.html

relevant UN resolutions.[110] This meant that China was in favor of Greek Cypriots in the Cyprus question as long as Cyprus and Greece benefitted China's EU affairs. This diplomatic position towards China was officially explained by Tassos Papadoupulos in an interview with *Xinhua* in November 2006, according to which he clearly stated that "Cyprus is participating in the dialogue between the EU and China, and will continue to support legitimate requests that Beijing is negotiating with Brussels."[111]

Cyprus' main intent was to attract foreign investment from China and develop its tourism sector with China. As stated by the Cypriot ambassador to China at the time, "Foreign companies can benefit from the numerous incentives and low taxes by using Cyprus as a base for their investments. The industrial trade zone offers possibilities for setting up manufacturing and assembling units for the production of goods destined for export to Europe and nearby markets."[112]

Although Sino-Cyprus trade relations are but a small part of China's total trade volume to EU countries, increasing trade relations have affected the diplomatic and political relations between them. In 2010, while imports of goods to Cyprus from China totaled 342 million euros, exports of goods to China amounted only to some 14 million euros. Three years later, in 2014, imports decreased to 226 million euros, while exports increased to 38 million euros. In 2010, 5.26 percent of Cyprus's total imports came from China, whilw exports to China constituted 2.57 percent of its total exports. These numbers changed to 4.40 percent and 5.29 percent, respectively, in 2014. In terms of sectors accounting for Cyprus' imports from China, electric goods and machinery constituted 14 percent, mechanical appliances 13 percent, furniture and textiles 10 percent, and organic chemicals about 8 percent of total imports. Some 78

110 "Greece to continue working for lifting EU arms embargo against China," *Xinhua*, January 20, 2006, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.gov.cn/misc/2006-01/20/content_165181.htm

111 "Cyprus president starts state visit to China," *Xinhua*, December 6, 2006, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.gov.cn/misc/2006-12/06/content_462193.htm

112 "From Copper Island to Investment Haven," *Beijing Review*, December 13, 2007, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/qanda/txt/2007-12/08/content_89482.htm

percent of total exports to China in 2014 were pharmaceutical products. In terms of the trade volumes of services, Cyprus's exports to China were around 7 million euros in 2013. Cyprus's imports from China were around 4 million euros in the same year. In terms of service sectors, transportation constituted 67 percent of export services, travel around 15 percent, and financial services around 5 percent. In the same year imported services from China were comprised of 48 percent financial services, 38 percent transportation, and 8 percent travel.[113]

6.3.2 *China's Political and Diplomatic Position on the Cyprus Question*

The bilateral relations of Cyprus and China reveal that neither country has any disagreement about current political and diplomatic affairs. While Cyprus officially supports China's claims on important controversial issues as Taiwan and the EU arms embargo, China supports Greek Cypriots on the Cyprus question. As mentioned earlier, the PRC did not espouse a full-fledged diplomatic or political position on the Cyprus question until the 1980s since China had tried to remain neutral regarding controversial issues on which the ROC had taken an earlier position.

As an example of the PRC's neutral position, China did not participate in any of the eighteen votes on the Cyprus question in the UNSC between 1971 and 1981. This was not only related to the Cyprus question since China did not participate in fifty-five other votes, including ones on Middle Eastern and South African issues. China's main motivation for not participating was related to the ROC government that had previously occupied China's seat in the UNSC. Since the PRC did not inherit the ROC after 1949, it also did not want to take direct responsibility for decisions that had been taken by the ROC. After 1981, China altered this strategy and began to participate in all votes, but did not vote differently from other UNSC members.[114]

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113 "China-Cyprus Trade Relations," accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/trade/ts.nsf/All/8A346235DFDE026BC2257CE10045B2CD/$file/Cyprus-China%20Trade%20Relation%20(Sept%202015).pdf

114 Sydney D. Bailey and Sam Daws, *The procedure of the UN Security Council*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 351.

China's rising economic and political integration with the world led it to become more involved in international conflicts. In a similar fashion to the other cases discussed in this dissertation, China greatly increased its involvement in regional conflicts during the 2000s. For example, for the first time in history of bilateral relations between China and Cyprus, Cyprus' Minister of Defense Socrates Hasikos visited China and met with his counterpart Chi Haotian in January 2002. During the same visit, Li Peng, the Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC), explained China's diplomatic position on the Cyprus issue, emphasizing the role of the UN and international law.[115] Four months later, China's Prime Minister Zhu Rongji and his delegation, including Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, held a five-day visit to Turkey. After a special meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister İsmail Cem, Tang Jiaxuan stated that "the Chinese government was pleased to see the beginning of direct talks between the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, hoping that the two sides would find an early solution based on the relevant U.N. resolutions through peaceful negotiations."[116]

During an official visit in 2003, Wu Guanzhen, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China, also conveyed China's support for Cyprus President Tassos Papadopoulos on the Cyprus question. In October 2003, before the Annan Plan vote, one of China's NPCSC members (the name was censored in *Xinhua*), again explained China's official position during a Cyprus visit. According to the statement, China would align with the international community for a reasonable solution to the Cyprus issue.[117] In another *Xinhua* analysis, published just before the vote on the Annan Plan in April 2004, the phrase "Turkish invasion of Cyprus"

115 "Top Legislator Li Peng Meets Cypriot Defense Minister," *People's Daily* January 24, 2002, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/200201/23/eng20020123_89214.shtml

116 "Chinese Turkish FMs Meet in Istanbul," *People's Daily*, April 19, 2002, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/200204/18/eng20020418_94322.shtml

117 "China to Work for Rational Solution to Cyprus Issue: Senior Official," *Xinhua*, October 28, 2003, accessed December 19, 2016, http://china.org.cn/english/international/78522.htm

was used.[118] However, just four days before the Annan Plan, russia vetoed a draft resolution submitted to the UNSC. In this critical vote in the UNSC in April 2004, China favored the resolution backing Cypriot unity and UN security arrangements. In response to the Russian veto, China's Ambassador to the UN Wang Guangya said that the result was something no one have wished for. According to this statement, the Chinese side was unhappy about friction among UNSC members ahead of the serious reunification referendum.[119] After the Annan Plan vote, Chinese Foreign Minister spokesperson Kong Quan made the first official statement. He said that "China respects the choice of the Cypriots and will continue to make its efforts with the international community for a proper solution to the Cyprus issue." In the same statement, China revealed its official position once again, emphasizing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, comprehensive dialogue and negotiations, and regional peace, development, and stability. Kong Quan also repeated that "China will continue to join with the international community and exert its efforts for a proper solution to the Cyprus issue."[120]

Although China tried to remain neutral, at least in official statements, Sino-Cyprus relations began to improve after the Annan Plan vote. For example, in a presidential visit to China in December 2005, President Tasos Papadopoulos of Cyprus openly criticized the EU's ban on arms sales to China for the first time. According to his statement, "it is unreasonable and unacceptable for the bloc to seek to expand economic and trade links with China on one hand while maintaining the ban on the other."[121] In January 2006, similar statements were issued from Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis during

118 "EU 'cheated' by Greek Cypriots ahead of key vote," *China Daily*, April 22, 2004, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-04/22/content_325350.htm

119 "UN Security Council Press Release," accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.un.org/press/en/2004/sc8066.doc.htm

120 "China expresses respect for Cyprus' choice," accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.hri.org/news/cyprus/cna/2004/04-04-28.cna.html

121 "Cypriot president praises friendly ties with China," *People's Daiy*, December 9, 2005, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/200512/09/eng20051209_226877.html

a visit to China.[122] It is thus clear that China brought its own agenda to the table in return for support on the Cyprus question. Sino-Greek Cypriot relations were improving, but China had no contact with Turkish Cypriot officials.

At the end of 2006, during a visit by Cyprus President Tasos Papadopoulos, Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao reiterated China's position on the Cyprus issue. In the statement, Wen Jiabao stressed that China took the UN resolutions seriously and considered interests of both the Turkish and Greek communities in the Cyprus. However, he insisted that the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Cyprus were the most important issues and that these should not be violated. China saw Turkey's intervention as an occupation, like other permanent UNSC members.[123]

§ 6.4 Assessment of China's Role in the Cyprus Question

Although the Cyprus question is a serious historical and political controversy between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, it is not a serious concern for China in terms of its primary national interests. Therefore, China is unwilling to confront regional and international powers with respect to the Cyprus conflict. Instead, China sees the Cyprus question as an opportunity to enhance its collaboration in the UNSC with the European Union, the United States, and Russia. As is clear from China's statements regarding UN resolutions on the Cyprus question, China supported the decisions which were unanimously taken.[124]

Improving Sino-Cyprus relations in both the political and economic realms indicate that China wants to take advantage of Cyprus's EU membership. Turkey – the only country that does not recognize the Republic of Cyprus – is the one obstacle impeding China from improving its relations with

122 "Greece to continue working for lifting EU arms embargo against China," *Xinhua*, January 20, 2006, accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.gov.cn/misc/2006-01/20/content_165181.htm

123 "China says Cyprus issue be resolved through dialogue," *People's Daily*, December 9, 2006, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/200612/09/eng20061209_330294.html

124 "UN Security Council Resolution 1847," accessed December 19, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1847(2008)

Cyprus. In this way, China has risked Turkey's political and economic responses. However, from 1971 until the present, Turkey has not seriously considered using its political or economic leverage against China on the Cyprus question. Turkey's position on the "One China policy" with respect to Taiwan issue and rising Sino-Turkish trade relations could be bargaining chips to influence China's position on the Cyprus question. But for now, China's pro-Greek Cypriot position in the conflict has not been directly challenged by Turkey or Turkish Cypriots.

Although the Cyprus and Taiwan questions are not identical, China worries about the possible consequences of the Cyprus question for the Taiwan issue. The Greek Cypriot leadership's special attention to "One China" statements in official visits to Beijing is appearent.[125] The main dilemma or controversy concerns whether Taiwan is an independent political, economic, and social entity or part of China. For China, the current status of Taiwan is not among the issues which would be discussed with other countries. In other words, for China, Taiwan is not a foreign policy issue but a domestic one. Thus, accepting the "One China" principle is the most important choice for any country hoping to improve its relations with China.

With regard to Taiwan, there are two crucial, strategic reasons China supports Greek Cypriot arguments on the Cyprus question. First, although China has been criticized as a revisionist state with respect to disputes in the South China Sea, it strongly criticizes any kind of separatist movement for pro-independence political discourse on the Taiwan issue. Similarly, on the Cyprus question, China accepts the current situation as the "status-quo" and opposes revisionist tendencies such as Turkish claims of TRNC independence. For China, although Turkish and Greek Cypriot's claims and demands are negotiable, all sides should refrain from anti-status quo diplomatic behaviors.[126]

Second, according to official Chinese foreign policy on the Taiwan issue, if there are to be any changes to the current situation, it should favor China –

125 "Cyprus reaffirms one-China policy," *People's Daily*, August 11, 2007, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/90001/90776/6237116.html

126 "China says Cyprus issue be resolved through dialogue," *People's Daily*, December 9, 2006, accessed December 19, 2016, http://en.people.cn/200612/09/eng20061209_330294.html

that is, Taiwan should reunify with the mainland.[127] According to this argument, the people of Taiwan can easily become citizens of the PRC regardless of their political, social, and economic differences since 1949. In a similar way, since China sees the political and economic benefits, it would not be rational to support a separate state for the TRNC in Cyprus. Instead of it, Turkish Cypriot should accept the Greek Cypriot's authority in the island regardless of their political, economic and social differences since 1963. For this reason, if there are to be any changes to the status quo, they should favor Greek Cypriots. Although this argument has not been expressly declared by Chinese officials, it is easy to infer it from Chinese political and diplomatic statements on the Cyprus question. For example, as Sino-Cypriot relations were rapidly increasing after the EU membership of Cyprus in 2004, China gave little support to Turkish Cypriots to end their current isolation.

As described in previous parts of this chapter, there are multiple consequences of the Cyprus questions in regard to geographical features of Cyprus. As an island that is physically closer to Turkey than Greece, Cyprus is not immune from disputes among regional powers about territorial waters and exclusive economic zones. Therefore, even today, Turkey opposes any violations of its maritime activities and natural resources in exclusive economic zones around Turkey and the TRNC.

In China's Middle East policy, economic priorities and energy security trump other issues. As soon as the first natural gas exploration efforts started off the shores of Cyprus in 2007, China focused on Cyprus and energy resources around the southern parts of the island.[128] From China's perspective there are three crucial reasons to become involved in Eastern Mediterranean power relations.

First, the Eastern Mediterranean is a significant geopolitical region. It lies at the center among Europe, Northern Africa, and the Middle East. It hosts a large military presence from regional and global powers such as the US, France, the UK, Russia, and Turkey. The security and stability of the Eastern

127 Thomas J. Christensen, "The Contemporary Security Dilemma: Deterring a Taiwan Conflict," *The Washington Quarterly*, 25 (2002):11.

128 Elodie Sellier, "China's Mediterranean Odyssey," *The Diplomat Magazine*, April 19, 2016, accessed December 19, 2016, http://thediplomat.com/2016/04/chinas-mediterranean-odyssey/

Mediterranean are also important for trade and economic activities. All these factors combine to make the region strategically important. Therefore, for China, it is crucial to become involved in power relations in the Eastern Mediterranean. The main problem for China – and one that plagues its entire Middle Eastern policy – is the perception of China as a "latecomer" to the region and to the ongoing power struggles among other actors there.

Although China, which has been a permanent member of the UNSC since 1971, has the capability to affect the current power dynamics in the region, its internal dynamics prevented it from becoming a global actor until the first decade of the twenty-first century. Similar to the cases of Iran and Israel, the Cyprus question provided a new opportunity for China to become a more responsible, effective actor in the Eastern Mediterranean. To be successful in this effort, China conducted closer relations with the Cyprus government, especially after Cyprus became a member of the EU in 2004. But as of 2011, China had no military capability in the Eastern Mediterranean, unlike the US and Russia. However, given its rising economic relations and more specific trade agreements with Cyprus, China may increase its military capability in the region in the future.

Second, China's primary objective has been to implement more specific trade and economic agreements with Cyprus. The Suez Canal and Syrian and Northern African ports could provide more secure routes for Chinese goods and services destined for Europe. Although China has several different alternatives for reaching the European market, such as through Russia and Turkey, an Eastern Mediterranean route would help China diversify its options.

Last, conflicts over energy resources in the region draw a great deal of China's attention. Since 2007, not only Cyprus but Turkey, Israel, and Egypt have become involved in the Eastern Mediterranean energy controversy.[129] Israel explored its Tamar natural gas fields in 2009 and its Leviathan gas field in 2010. According to estimations, the Tamar fields have 250 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas reserves, and Leviathan has 476 billion.[130] In addition to these

129 Volkan Ş. Ediger, Balkan Devlen and Deniz Bingöl Mcdonald, "Levant'ta Büyük Oyun: Doğu Akdeniz'in Enerji Jeopolitiği," Uluslararası İlişkiler 33 (2012):85.

130 Mesut Hakkı Caşın, "A New Geopolitical Game in Mediterranean Hydrocarbons: Windows of Opportunities or New Challenges?," *Journal of Caspian Affairs*, 1 (2015):52.

new gas fields in Israel, the Aphrodite gas field was discovered in Cyprus in 2011. Even though its gas reserves of 140 bcm will have but a limited effect on the global gas market, they may have an important impact on the regional order and regional power dynamics. The Aphrodite field may exacerbate controversies over natural resources of Eastern Mediterranean for countries like Turkey and Cyprus.[131]

Eastern Mediterranean energy resources have increased the chance of resolving the Cyprus question. However, if not managed well, they could create unexpected outcomes for all actors involved in the conflict. The new conditions have also created an opportunity for China, which is engaged in a search for alternative energy resources and routes to supply its highly dependent need for energy. Apart from the gas amounts in the Eastern Mediterranian fields, the distribution of gas to the European market is another important controversy among regional actors. According to China, the diversification of energy resources and energy routes could provide for more secure and cheaper energy. Therefore, although China is a latecomer and lacks a military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, its economic priorities and energy-oriented policies have led it to play a larger role in solving controversies among the actors involved in the Cyprus conflict.

131 Atilla Sandıklı, Türkan Budak and Bekir Ünal, *Doğu Akdeniz'de Enerji Keşifleri ve Türkiye* (İstanbul: Bilge Adamlar Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu, 2013), 11.

7

Conclusion

This dissertation analyzes China's cross-regional foreign policy with a specific focus on non-Arab countries in the Middle East within the framework of debates on China's rise in international relations theory. The research question is how the rise of China has affected China's foreign policy vis-à-vis non-Arab countries in the Middle East in the period 2001-2011.

As is broadly examined in each case study, the findings of the dissertation center on bilateral relations between non-Arab countries and China, international crises in the Middle East (the Iran nuclear crisis, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the Cyprus question), and China's strategic interests related to these issues.

The findings of the dissertation show that China is not only a rising power at the global level but also in the Middle East. They also reveal that China's active diplomacy and pragmatism strengthen China's status as a rising power in the region. In all three cases examined in the dissertation, high-level diplomatic visits by Chinese officials increased dramatically during the period 2001-2011. Economic relations also substantially improved, and China's total bilateral trade volume also increased in each case. China's total trade volume with Iran increased from 3.3 billion dollars in 2001 to 45 billion in 2011, while Sino-Turkish trade increased from 1.1 billion dollars in 2001 to 24.1 billion in 2011. Although the total volume of Sino-Israeli trade did not reach the levels of Iran and Turkey, it also grew significantly from 1.3 billion dollars in 2001 to

9.7 billion in 2011. In addition, China's foreign direct investments also increased in parallel with increasing trade over the same period. Military relations, especially arms sales and transfers of sophisticated defense-industry technologies, were another significant example of China's dynamic, active relations with non-Arab countries in the Middle East.

China's active, dynamic relations with non-Arab countries also prove that China is a rising power making large economic, political, and military advancements in the Middle East. This is not a new process, and has taken various turns over its long history. From 1949 until 2011, China's foreign policy toward the Middle East has shifted a number of times. China embraced a revolutionary foreign policy between 1949 and 1971 and then shifted towards an independent foreign policy between 1971 and 1991. But the most significant changes occurred after the end of the Cold War. Over the last two decades, pragmatist foreign policies have shaped China's national security concerns and strategic objectives. While China implemented pragmatist policies between 1991 and 2001, it implemented active pragmatist policies between 2001 and 2011.

In each case study examined in the dissertation, a number of examples testify to this active pragmatist foreign policy. In the case of the Iranian nuclear crisis, for example, China supported all UN resolutions adopting heavy sanctions against Iran in order not to antagonize the United States, close relations with Iran notwithstanding. In addition, China offered its own proposal for solving the Iranian nuclear crisis – another indication of its active diplomacy.

China began to embrace active diplomacy even earlier in the case of Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This activism gradually increased during the 2001-2011 period. For example, China offered a five-point proposal – its first – on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in 1997. Its recognition of the State of Israel was another indication of China's pragmatist policies during the 1990s. Despite criticism from Arab countries, China recognized Israel in 1992. In addition, China closely observed domestic political developments in Palestine. For example, China sent five officials to the country to observe elections in 2005 – the first time it had done so. In the case of the Cyprus question, China started increasing its relations with Cyprus after the latter was granted EU

membership in 2004. One of the main objectives of China was to use both Greece and Cyprus as mediators between the EU and China.

Another argument of the dissertation is that the phenomenon of the rise of China in the Middle East mainly concerns the country's unprecedented economic development. Political and military achievements do not play the same role in its foreign policy behaviors. China did not involve militarily in any of the cases examined in the dissertation, though it engaged in military technology and arms sales. Moreover, China's political objectives were not clearly stated by Chinese officials, unlike in the case of its economic relations. Thus, China's primary concern, with respect to non-Arab countries in the Middle East was mainly its economic priorities. For example, in the case of the Iranian nuclear crisis, China continued its economic cooperation with Iran in December 2006 despite serious criticism by the United States concerning China's cooperation with Iran regarding sensitive technological equipment. Dual-use metal sales are an important example that shows China's economic priorities. In addition, China had reservations about the UNSC resolution impose sanctions on Iran's companies given that Iran was China's third-largest partner in terms of energy imports.

Sino-Israeli relations also revolve mainly around economic relations. The most sensitive economic relations between China and Israel involved sales of high-level technologic equipment and the modernization of weapons. Although the United States criticized Israel's arms deals with China, Sino-Israeli cooperation with respect to arms sales continued throughout the period 2001-2011. Furthermore, despite the close relationship between China and Arab countries, China officially recognized the State of Israel, serving to increase Sino-Israel trade relations. To improve economic relations between China and Israel, China started implementing a strategy of balance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For example, whenever China criticized Israel's unilateral military actions, it also criticized armed Palestinian groups for their illegal actions.

China's foreign policies on the Cyprus question mostly concerned its economic priorities. During the period 2001-2011, China neither became involved in the conflict nor offered concrete proposals for a solution. It also did not intend to be a party to negotiations as it had done it in the Palestinian-Israeli

conflict. Contrary to China's passive stance in the political and military fields with respect to the Cyprus question, China used it as a tool to improve economic relations with both Cyprus and the EU. For example, after Cyprus became a member of the EU in 2004, then president of Cyprus Papadopoulos openly supported China's demands to lift EU arms embargoes. Bilateral trade relations between China and Cyprus increased from 117 million dollars in 2001 to 1.1 billion in 2011. Furthermore, Eastern Mediterranean energy resources created an opportunity for China, which has become engaged in the search for alternative energy resources and routes.

According to another argument of the dissertation, China neither threatened the international political order nor international economic institutions between 2001 and 2011. Rather than challenging them, China has tried to be part of current international institutions. Contrary to pessimist assumptions on its rise, China generally looks for accommodationist policies with other countries in the Midle East, including the great powers. It seeks to work through rather than outside of international institutions. In none of the cases examined in the dissertation did China present a threat to the international order during the period 2001-2011.

At the beginning of the Iranian nuclear crisis, for instance, China tried to persuade other permanent UNSC members to resolve the crisis through the IAEA. Although China's main intent was to prevent serious UN sanctions on Iran, referring to the IAEA is a significant indication of China's willingness to work within and through international institutions. Throughout the 2001-2011 period, China emphasized the role of diplomatic mechanisms and political solutions in the Iranian nuclear crisis. Negotiations were carried out through such diplomatic mechanisms as the EU3 and P5+1, showing that China places importance on the rules and norms of such mechanisms. For example, even though China had serious reservations about the initial UN sanctions on Iran in 2006, it consistently emphasized harmony and cooperation among the permanent UNSC members. Therefore, China did not use its veto power, preferring instead to arrive at a common decision in the UNSC and through other diplomatic mechanisms. China also urged Iran to obey international norms and rules throughout the negotiations. According to China, the UN sanctions were diplomatic tools to warn Iran to change the illegal aspects of its nuclear

program. It also warned other great powers about the sanctions targeting Iranian people. Another indication of China's integration was its concrete proposals to solve the Iranian nuclear crisis. China explained six principles that laid out its desire to solve the crisis by means of peaceful diplomatic solutions.

Each of the case studies in this dissertation offers concrete examples rather than abstract assumptions to show the degree of China's integration into the international political and economic order. In the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, for example, China wanted to be part of the negotiation team. Before the conference in Annapolis in 2007, China again clearly explained its five-point proposal that offered concrete solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The main reason for desiring to be part of the quartet was China's desire to be a part of and to work within such institutional mechanisms. Another significant example that shows China's reliance on international institutions was its diplomatic position during the Madrid Conference, which started in 1991. For example, one of the reasons China recognized the State of Israel was Israel's moderate behavior during the Madrid Conference in 1992.

China supported all attempts at peace and diplomatic mechanisms for resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in a peaceful way. To realize this objective, China established its first Middle East envoy in 2001. China's Middle East envoy brokered diplomatic meetings among all sides. As an example of China's support for international institutions and diplomatic solutions, a UN Asia meeting on Palestine was held in Beijing for the first time in 2003. In addition, China started to be perceived as a "balancer" in the region in the eyes of both conflicting sides. China's clean historical record as a non-colonialist country in the region helped improve this image. Although China's positive image and perceived status as a balancer were advantages, it did not present an alternative to the current balance of power in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Rather than presenting itself as a dominant power, China has maintained its diplomatic position under the multilateral efforts of international institutions. China sent more than one thousand military personnel to Lebanon under the command of UNIFIL after a Chinese UN observer was killed by an Israeli bombing in Beirut in 2006. This is another important example of China's accommodating policies towards other great powers in the region.

The same year of US President Barack Obama's historical Cairo speech, which sent a message of peace to Muslims around the region and the world, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi made a historic visit to the Middle East. Yang explained China's view on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, emphasizing similar points to those in the speech Barack Obama gave in Cairo.

It is also possible to see China's commitment to international institutions in the case of the Cyprus question. For example, China never used its veto power in UNSC resolutions about Cyprus. As in other cases, China emphasized the importance of harmony among permanent UNSC members. For example, China criticized Russia's veto of the UNSC draft resolution supporting the Annan Plan referendum in 2004 because Russia had not behaved according to the common decisions made by other UNSC members. In addition, China supported international law and institutions during negotiations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

This dissertation shows that although China is not a threat to the international order, it does have serious reservations about and dissatisfactions with specific political, economic and military issues in the period 2001-2011. This means that China's integration into the current international order and institutions has not been easy. For example, although China did not veto UNSC resolutions adopting sanctions on Iran, it consistently expressed its view that UN sanctions were ineffective. According to China's representative in the UN, for instance, China saw all sanctions on Iran during the Iranian nuclear crisis as counterproductive. As another example of China's dissatisfactions, China criticized the unilateral actions of the United States during the negotiation process, including US President George W. Bush's condemnation of three countries—namely, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea—as "rouge states" and an "axis of evil" in his State of the Union address in 2002. These are clear indications of China's dissatisfaction with US policy discourse and behavior in both global and regional politics.

In the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China had serious reservations about Israel's unilateral actions. China was also dissatisfied by the US obstruction of UN resolutions criticizing Israel. Another important example of China's dissatisfaction with the existing state of the international order was the intervention of the United States in bilateral relations between China and

Israel. The cancellation of the Phalcon deal was a serious intervention in Sino-Israeli relations since China did not receive the technological assistance it desired from Israel. In contrast to the United States and EU, China recognized Hamas as a legitimate political group after Hamas won the elections in 2006. China also expressed the importance of Hamas for the negotiation process between Palestine and Israel. Israel's disproportionate use of force in several operations and wars was also severely criticized by China since it made a peaceful solution more difficult and increased the violence between the conflicting sides. After a Chinese UN observer was killed in Israel's bombing of Beirut in 2006, China increased its involvement in the region in the form of providing peacekeeping forces and foreign aid. The siege of Gaza in 2008 and the Mavi Marmara incident were also officially condemned by the Chinese government.

The dissertation also shows that China places more importance on its own domestic and regional political and economic problems than on global and cross-regional crises. The cases examined in the dissertation reveal that China has a tendency to compare its own regional and domestic political problems to other international crises. For instance, in the example of the Iranian nuclear crisis, China's main concern was any instability in Iran that would disrupt its energy exports. Since Iran was the third-largest oil supplier to China, any instability in the flow of energy from Iran could cause serious setbacks in the sensitive Chinese economy. In the worst-case scenario, a military intervention in Iran cause to increase the chaotic political atmosphere of Central Asia and the Middle East. Terrorist organizations could find an opportunity to expand their power outside of Iran. As a fragile region, Xinjang ran the risk of being affected by chaotic atmosphere.

The Cyprus question is the clearest example of China's domestic political and security concerns. The Taiwan question has some similarities to the Cyprus question in terms of maritime issues and the sovereignty of the state. As discussed in the previous chapter, there are two crucial, strategic reasons for China's support of Greek Cypriot arguments on the Cyprus question. First, China strongly criticizes separatist movements and pro-independence political discourses on the Taiwan question. Thus, in a similar way, China accepts the current situation as the status quo, opposing revisionist tendencies such as

Turkish claims of TRNC independence. "Two-state" and "common-state" solutions are the main proposals for resolving the Cyprus question. The common-state solution is more acceptable to China, since it corresponds to a "One China" solution on the Taiwan question. For China, a two-state solution would be detrimental to its own strategy vis-à-vis the Taiwan question. Thus, China has supported all proposals offering common-state solutions to the Cyprus question throughout the negotiation process during the period 2001-2011.

Although China's foreign policy towards the Middle East between 2001 and 2011 has defined as an active pragmatist foreign policy in this dissertation, this active pragmatism can not be understood as a static concept. There are ups and downs, increase and decrease in its diplomatic and political preferences in each case studies. After 2011, China was more visible and inluential in the Middle East than previous years. It actually needs another study to examine and define China's foreign policy towards the Middle East, because numbers of new circumstances, from Arab Spring to Syria's civil war, would probably provide new facts and evidences to redefine China's foreign policy towards the Middle East.

All in all, China's foreign policy toward the non-Arab countries in the Middle East during the period between 2001 and 2011 cannot be defined only from one perspective. Thus, this dissertation has tried to take both optimist and pessimist accounts of China's rising activism in the Middle East into consideration. Since the rise of China is a process which includes ups and downs in China's foreign policy behaviors, it will likely vary in different historical periods and case studies.

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