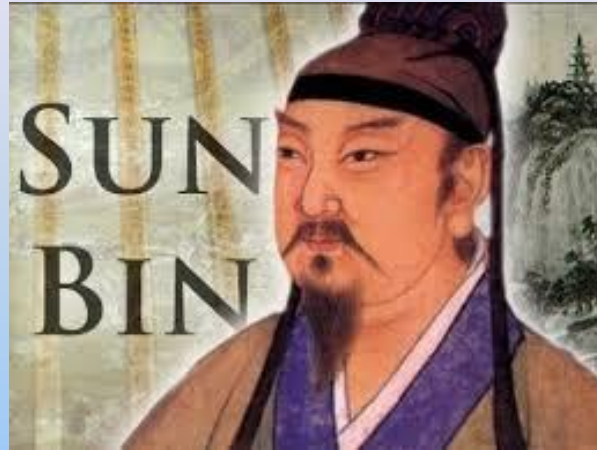


Rethinking Security Policies: Determining Aggressiveness Through Economic Preponderance and Strategic Partnerships – the Case of China



AN ANECDOTE



Warring States Period (475-220)



354 BCE - Battle of Guiling



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

➤ **RQ1: What factors determine a country's security policies?**

➤ **RQ2: To what extent, if so, how, do economic preponderance and strategic partnerships determine a country's security policies?**

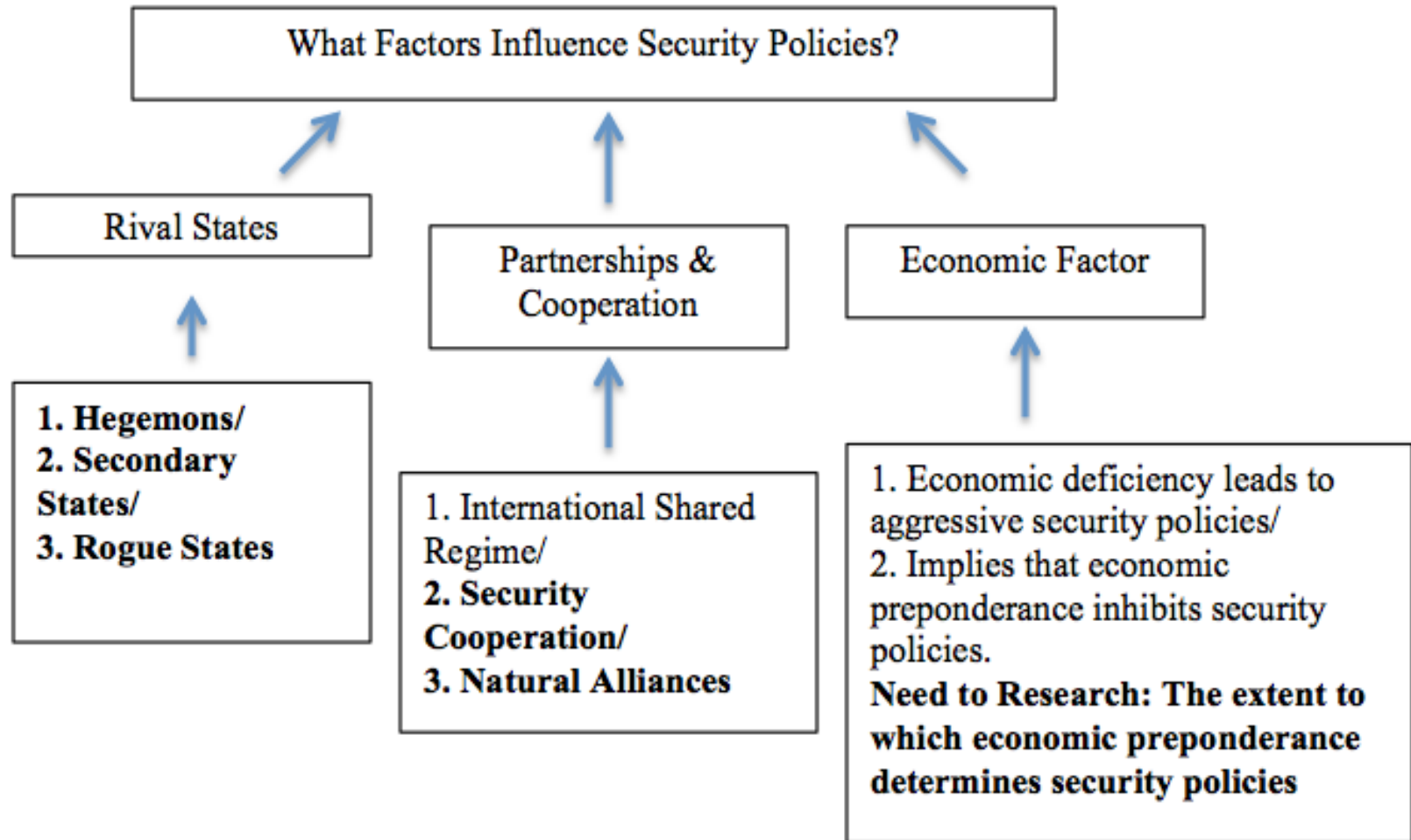
Definitions

Security Policies: implementable policies with variable objectives, which relate to the survivability of a country in terms of economic, diplomatic, and military and nuclear initiatives.

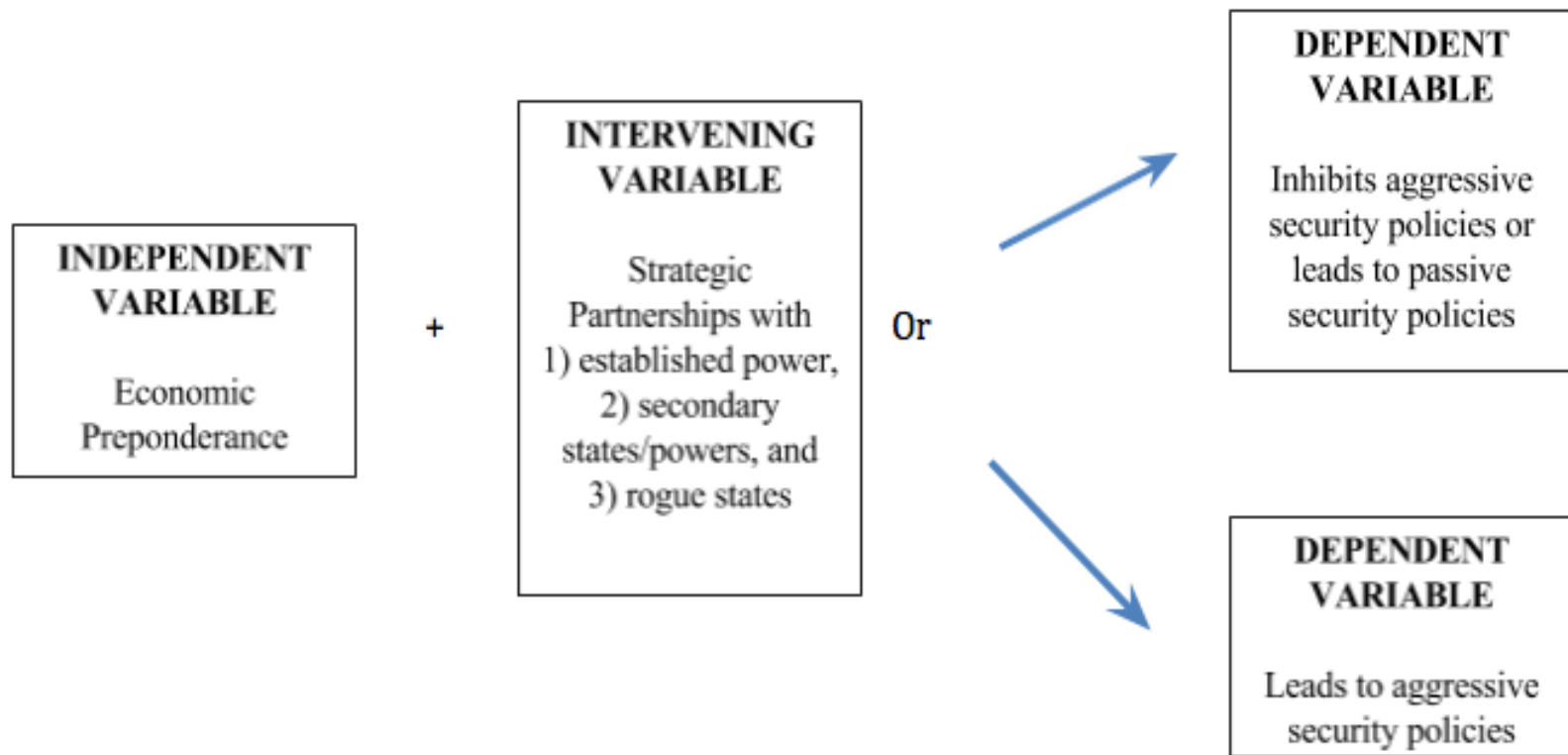
Economic Preponderance: the projection of national economic powers that enhances interconnectivity with other countries, and the ability to exert political economic influence across nation states.

Strategic Partnerships: Important bilateral relations that enable effective implementations of a participant country's desired security policies

How Conventional Scholarship Explains Security Policies



The Economic Preponderance + Strategic Partnerships (EPSP) Framework



Thesis Argument

I hypothesize that a country's economic preponderance and strategic partnerships significantly shift its security policies from a subservient and benign stance toward a more aggressive stance. Such aggressive stance aims to establish regional hegemony and dominance of authority within regional management. Regional management entails the authority to manage regional conflicts through military deployments and alliances, to lead diplomatic process of negotiation, and to organize the provisions of public goods, such as macroeconomic stability to the region

RESEARCH DESIGN

CASE SELECTIONS:

- China – Indonesia
- China - Iran

METHODOLOGIES

- Process Tracing
- Path Dependency
- Convergent Colligation Theory

VARIABLES:

- Independent Variable (I.V.): China's Economic Preponderance
- Intervening Variable (Int.V.): Strategic Partnerships
- Dependent Variable (D.V.): China Security Policies and Level of Aggressiveness

RESEARCH DESIGN

Case 1

Longitudinal Analysis:
Process Tracing + Path Dependency
Need to Examine:
I.V. + Int. V. → Critical Juncture →
D.V.?

Case 2

Longitudinal Analysis:
Process Tracing + Path Dependency
Need to Examine:
I.V. + Int. V. → Critical Juncture →
D.V.?

Outcome for D.V.

Convergent Colligation
Theory/Congruence Procedure:

- 1) Similar patterns of changes associated with I.V. and Int. V across both causal chains.
- 2) Convergence of both causal chains occurs within the same outcome for D.V.

FINDINGS: China - Indonesia

Economic Preponderance:

- 1) Growing economic preponderance and stature convinces Indonesia to normalize and intensify trade under Soeharto's regime.
- 2) China becomes the second top export destination for Indonesian commodities.
- 3) China becomes the top import origin for Indonesia.
- 4) China has exponentially increased its investments in Indonesia, as Indonesia seeks to invite more Chinese investors.

FINDINGS: China - Indonesia

Strategic Partnerships:

From China's Perspective:

- 1) Indonesia serves as a leader within the Southeast Asian community.
- 2) Indonesia is both the biggest economy and military force in Southeast Asia.
- 3) Indonesia has a history of influential Chinese minority groups, which provides intimacy for the bilateral relations

FINDINGS: China - Indonesia

Strategic Partnerships:

From Indonesia's Perspective:

- 1) China serves as perhaps the most important economic partner.
- 2) Cooperation with China invites positive sentiments and support from the influential and wealthy Chinese minority groups and business communities.
- 3) China is willing to assist the new government regime by investing in their infrastructural reform projects.
- 4) Partnership with China improves Indonesia's global standing and stature, and solidifies the new regime's credence.

FINDINGS: China - Indonesia

Security Policies

Economic Security:

- 1) Supplier of critical resources for China's energy and industrial needs.
- 2) Supplier that is closer to China's own borders warrants against potential disruptions of the supply chain by rival states
- 3) Allows China to possess the resources needed for military modernization.
- 4) Adds a dimension of protection within the "anti-access and area denial" strategy.
- 5) Overall: Increased maneuvering room for China to act aggressively due to increased and modernized military capabilities, as well as increased cost and less return for continued U.S. military presence in Asia.

FINDINGS: China - Indonesia

Security Policies

Diplomatic Security:

- 1) Allows China to exercise the “island-hopping” strategy by using Indonesia’s stature as a partner to undermine the Southeast Asian community.
- 2) Discourages rival nations in Southeast Asia from uniting within a concerted regional effort/forum.
- 3) Guarantees diplomatic security with Indonesia, a major player within Southeast Asia, a region in which China currently has a lot of interests.
- 4) Overall: Sino-Indonesian relations encourage China to act more aggressively, especially within the South China Sea dispute against Southeast Asian countries. Accelerated constructions on disputed islands confirm China’s increased aggressiveness within the region.

FINDINGS: CHINA - IRAN

Economic Preponderance:

- 1) Growing economic preponderance and stature convinces Iran to intensify trade and bilateral relations with China following the Iran-Iraq War. In doing so, China becomes the most prominent arms and nuclear technology supplier to Iran.
- 2) China becomes the first top export destination for Iranian commodities.
- 3) China becomes the third from the top import origin for Iran.
- 4) China has exponentially increased its investments in Iran, as hundreds of state-owned and private Chinese enterprises operate in Iran.
- 5) Iran seeks to cooperate more with China within an international economic cooperation forum by applying for full membership with the SCO.

FINDINGS: CHINA - IRAN

Strategic Partnerships:

From China's Perspective

- 1) Iran serves as the most prominent established regional power in the Middle East.
- 2) Iran provides China with the invaluable oil and energy-related commodities that China is highly dependent upon for industrial sector and modernization purposes.
- 3) Iran allows China to utilize nuclear knowledge and technology transfer as a way to covertly divert adversaries' attention away from China's interests and movements by creating nuclear security issues in the Middle East.

FINDINGS: CHINA - IRAN

Strategic Partnerships:

From Iran's Perspective

- 1) China serves as perhaps the most important economic partner due to its constant partnership even during times of isolation for Iran.
- 2) China's stature within the international community adds a layer of protection and support against Western oppositions.
- 3) China has aided Iran immensely in developing its infrastructure and energy sector

FINDINGS: CHINA - IRAN

Security Policies:

Military and Nuclear Security

- 1) China's long-established arms trade with Iran results in periodically intensifying trade of weapons and nuclear technologies with a rogue state. In playing a direct role within the nuclear proliferation process, China is acting aggressively in terms of security policies.
- 2) China co-opts Iran's nuclear posture as part of its own nuclear strategy and security policies, allowing it to divert adversaries' attention away from its own movements by empowering Iran to behave aggressive also through nuclear proliferation.

FINDINGS: CHINA - IRAN

Security Policies:

Military and Nuclear Security

- 3) China secures the necessary resources, in terms of oil and energy-related commodities, to modernize the PLA. Such modernization levels the playing field more against other rival military forces, hence encouraging China to behave more aggressively.
- 4) The modernization of the conventional forces also allows for closer integration between conventional forces and nuclear forces. This could potentially allow China to adopt a more proactive and aggressive assured retaliation nuclear posture. Simply put, its second-strike capability could transform into a first-strike capability.

CONCLUSION

- ❑ **China – Indonesia: economic preponderance + strategic partnerships with a secondary power = aggressive security policies in the economically preponderant country.**
- ❑ **China – Iran: economic preponderance + strategic partnerships with an established power and a rogue state = aggressive security policies in the economically preponderant country.**
- ❑ **Overall: China gains more maneuvering space to act aggressively.**
 - ❑ **Establishment of partnerships with crucial suppliers**
 - ❑ **Modernization of PLA**
 - ❑ **Reduction of American maritime superiority**
 - ❑ **Improved anti-access strategy**
 - ❑ **Accelerated and aggressive territorial expansion**
 - ❑ **Co-optation of Iran's nuclear posture**
 - ❑ **More proactive and aggressive China's nuclear posture**

Implications

- ❑ Rethink the explanations of security policies within the post-globalization era.
- ❑ Re-evaluate the relationship between economic growth, national power projections, and security policies.
- ❑ Expanding both the possible motivations and consequences of future diplomatic relations
- ❑ Re-examine modern categories of nuclear postures and tactics.
- ❑ New discourses on liberal internationalism's world order, as well as hegemonic stability and conflicts.
- ❑ New perspectives on China's rise, as well as the rise of other emerging powers.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- **Separate case studies for established power and rogue state**
 - **China – Great Britain**
- **Examining geographic proximity as a potential variable**
- **Utilizing the EPSP framework to better explain China's contemporary grand strategy**
- **Linking economic assets and preponderance with global security cooperation**