

REALIST CONSTRUCTIVISM: UNDERSTANDING FOREIGN POLICY INTENT

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## **Abstract**

International Relations theory is a guide for understanding state behavior, which is especially important when dealing with potentially threatening countries whose intentions are difficult to decipher due to a perceived influence of ideology. Realism suggests that state behavior is essentially the pursuit of power and decisions are pragmatic calculations of self-interest, while Constructivism asserts that ideas drive behavior. Rather than being mutually exclusive, some scholars argue that Constructivism can play a complementary role within the Realist worldview by focusing on the ideas that drive the decisions of actors pursuing their self-interests, contextualizing foreign policy behavior.

I argue that J. Samuel Barkin's Realist Constructivism hybrid is better suited to explain the role of ideology in state foreign policy, thereby clarifying intent, than Classical Realism alone, which acknowledges ideational variables, but does not go far enough to explain. To test this hypothesis, I measure to what extent ideology—a term used in the Constructivist sense, signifying a system of ideas, to include culture and religion—influences the foreign policy of China, Pakistan, and Iran. Respectively, Confucianism, Islam, and revolutionary Shia Islam are the ideologies I evaluate. These cases were chosen due to the perceived influence ideology has on their foreign policy, which often leads to them being portrayed as threats. I predict that ideology, while not being the sole motivator for a decision, will function as an intervening variable in justifying or explaining why that particular Realist pragmatic decision was made.

My research shows that the foreign policy of China, Pakistan, and Iran demonstrate the intervening role of ideology. For China, Confucianism explains why

Beijing chose a particular pragmatic policy. For Pakistan and Iran, their Islam-based ideologies are used to justify or create a narrative for what are ultimately rational decisions. I conclude that Realist Constructivism is better than Realism alone because it goes further in explaining intent. Policymakers would be wise to keep this in mind lest they misperceive the role of ideology as leading to irrational behavior, resulting in miscalculated threat perceptions.

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## THESIS INTRODUCTION

In a world with countless potentially menacing phenomena, understanding why a state conducts its foreign policy in a certain manner helps governments determine whether that state is a threat or not. When a government correctly recognizes which actors in the international system actually intend to inflict harm, that government has the opportunity to redirect its finite resources in an effort to thwart the threatening actor's plans. However, when a government miscalculates and makes an inaccurate assessment, it could either leave itself exposed to a threatening actor or, through unnecessarily aggressive posturing, turn a benign actor into an adversary. Therefore, it is crucial for governments to understand what constitutes a threat.

According to the academic Stephen Walt, two key sources for calculating the level of threat are: capability and intent.<sup>1</sup> The difficulty in quantifying the latter makes understanding a particular state's behavior an extraordinarily worthwhile endeavor. Unlike capabilities, such as military weapons or manpower, which can be measured, intent is much more nebulous. So, in order to avoid leaving ourselves exposed or needlessly creating new enemies, how do we evaluate intent?

Alliances between countries indicate that governments are in fact capable of assessing each other's intent. A state would not encourage weapon sales or joint military training exercises with an ally if there were a chance the ally would target the offering state. For nations to be allied, there must be some level of understanding between them regarding common interests, such as a shared desire for economic growth or in combating organized crime.

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Spring, 1985, p. 8-9.

However, when another state is perceived as a threat, perhaps due to conflicting interests or actions that do not line up with rhetoric, that state's intent can be hard to decipher. Understanding foreign policy behavior as well as the rationale behind that behavior will shed light on intent and help determine whether that state is truly a threat. In cases such as these, there are often ideological barriers, such as culture or religion, that cloud outside perceptions of that country's intent. Current examples of this dynamic would be the United States' relationship with countries like China, Pakistan, or Iran. Washington is often perplexed at the foreign policy of these states, at times assuming this due to the influence religion or culture has on their behavior.

In these situations, the question resurfaces of how to identify intent to better understand potential threats. A more accurate threat assessment is important so governments can avoid wasting time and resources on a benign state—which, incidentally, could become adversarial in response to these misallocated resources—and instead orient itself towards actual threats.

In turning to International Relations theory for an explanation, Realism dictates that state behavior is the result of the pursuit of their vital national interest, which is maximizing power.<sup>2</sup> The problem with Realism is that this proposition assumes a universally held notion of “national interest.” While it acknowledges a role for ideology, the theory does not go far enough in explaining the ideological factors that influence how nations perceive power and define their interest, which is especially important for interpreting the behavior of states with ideological governments.

Constructivism, which some see as a rival theory, may make its greatest contribution as a supplement to Realism. Constructivists argue that ideas and culture

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<sup>2</sup> Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories,” *Foreign Policy*, November 2004, p. 3

define how societies perceive the world and, therefore, drive state behavior.<sup>3</sup> As such, Constructivism can complement the Realist worldview by focusing on the ideational lenses through which national interests are formulated. This provides a more complete contextualization of foreign policy behavior by more thoroughly explaining the role of ideology in state foreign policy, which also clarifies the intent of the behavior.

Realism alone is not enough to explain how ideas affect calculations of national interest and, in turn, the intent behind a particular foreign policy. Though it does acknowledge that ideology can play a role in state foreign policy, Realism does not go far enough in examining the role of ideology in the behavior of states with heavy ideological underpinnings. Therefore, I argue that by applying a Constructivist lens to Realism, the outcome is a clearer understanding of foreign policy behavior for governments that appear to have a strong ideological influence. This hybrid approach better explains the “why” behind a state’s foreign policy, thereby clarifying intent. This would improve Washington’s ability to assess whether a given country poses a threat or not, which can help it avoid a needless conflict or better protect itself against previously hidden threat.

To test this hypothesis, I will measure to what extent ideology—a term used in the Constructivist sense, signifying a system of ideas—influences the foreign policy of China, Pakistan, and Iran. In doing so, I provide a Constructivist assessment of a states foreign relations, followed by a Realist assessment of the same behavior. I then evaluate the two theories assessments and determine whether any gaps exist that might be better explained by Realist Constructivism. I predict that the hybrid theory will more thoroughly explain the role of ideology by illustrating that, while it is not the sole

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<sup>3</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 371.

motivator for a particular decision, it plays an important role in either explaining why a particular decision was made or creating a narrative for that decision. In that sense, ideology should function as an intervening variable, with the pragmatic pursuit of national interest serving as the independent variable and foreign policy behavior acting as the dependent variable.

### **Literature Review:**

#### *Realism:*

In this next section, I provide an overview of the International Relations (hereafter IR) theories that are used throughout this paper in an effort to define these often-contentious terms in the context of my writing. It is not my intent to provide a complete review of Realist or Constructivist thought. Rather, I aim to outline key concepts that relate to the determination of foreign policy decisions.

Realism, perhaps the dominant IR theory, views the international system as a state of anarchy. It is anarchic in the sense that there are no intrinsic rules or guidelines to protect state actors, so every state is out for their own self-interest. The relationship between actors in this anarchic system is governed by power, which is the key element in the Realist viewpoint. According to Hans J. Morgenthau, the scholar who is often regarded as the father of political Realism, “The balance of power in a multinational world is like the law of gravity. You can argue against it, but woe unto you if you disregard it and walk out of a third story window”<sup>4</sup> In other words, states are relentlessly competing for power as a means of advancing their own self-interests. A Realist would argue that any attempt to ascribe other values to state behavior is naïve and ultimately

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<sup>4</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, “Enduring Realities and Foreign Policy,” reprinted in *American Foreign Policy Interests*, 33:143-146, 2011, p. 144.

dangerous. Realism assumes that states adopt a “ruthless pragmatism” towards international affairs in the pursuit of a balance of power.<sup>5</sup>

As it relates to my thesis—understanding foreign policy behavior—Realism argues that a state’s foreign policy reflects its pursuit of power. And these power-motivated foreign policies are conducted in competition with other states who also are seeking increased power, creating an international system defined by states balancing each other’s power. In other words, foreign policy behavior is oriented towards the balance of power concept that Morgenthau refers to above.

It is worth highlighting that there are two major branches of Realism: Classical and Structural (also referred to as Neo-Realism). The Classical variant, as associated with Morgenthau, is detailed throughout this section. The Structural variant, as advocated by scholars like Kenneth Waltz, retain many of the same assumptions as Classical Realism, like the balance of power. However, it emphasizes the importance of the structure of the international system and how that structure impacts interstate relations.<sup>6</sup> However, because of this emphasis on the international system, Structuralism is less concerned with state foreign policy and, thus, less relevant to my hypothesis regarding foreign policy intent. Therefore, throughout the course of this paper, when I refer to Realism, I am referring to the Classical variant, which I outline below.

As touched on earlier, the Realist assumption about pragmatism, implying that states are essentially all rational actors, is another hallmark of Realism. According to John Mearsheimer, a Realist scholar, rational states are “aware of their external environment and they think intelligently about how to maximize their prospects for

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<sup>5</sup> Snyder, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, “Structural realism after the Cold War,” *International Security*, Vol. 23, Issue 1, Summer 2000, p. 40-41.

survival.”<sup>7</sup> They evaluate the behavior of other states and, after assessing the costs and benefits of potential power-maximizing strategies, choose the most beneficial one.

Another component of Realism is the centrality of states as the key actors in the international system, due to their status as the highest level of authority in the anarchic international system. A semblance of order is imposed on the international system through the rational decision-making of states pursuing and maintaining a balance of power. Power can be broadly defined as the ability to sway the behavior of other actors in line with one’s interests. Realists tend to quantify power in material terms, especially in terms of military might given its undeniable ability to effect change and enforce compliance. This is commonly referred to as hard power. At the same time, states can also use things like diplomacy or cultural influence to change another state’s behavior, which is referred to as soft power, a concept championed by the scholar Joseph Nye.<sup>8</sup>

This is not to say, however, that Realism completely disregards all elements other than power. Of particular note in the context of this paper is the Realist view on ideology. Though there is no universal consensus, many Realists give credence to political ideologies – such as democracy or communism.<sup>9</sup> Morgenthau wrote about the importance of the “moral and social context” within which state populations perceive values like security or freedom, referring to reasons why political ideologies are not unanimously compatible with all populations’ values and interests.<sup>10</sup> This is informative

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<sup>7</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “Reckless States and Realism,” *International Relations*, June 2009, p. 244.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Get Smart,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2009, Vol. 88, Issue 4, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Hartmut Behr and Amelia Heath, “Misreading in IR theory and ideological critique: Morgenthau, Waltz, and neo-realism,” *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 35, Issue 02, April 2009, p. 343-345; Hans J. Morgenthau, “A Positive Approach to Democratic Ideology,” *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 30, No. 3, May, 1971, p. 200-202; Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power,” p. 24-27.

<sup>10</sup> Morgenthau, “A Positive Approach to Democratic Ideology,” p. 201-202.

for understanding, for example, why democracy has taken root in the United States and Europe but has not in China.

While Realism still dominates discussions of IR theory, there are criticisms leveled against it. Although Realism argues that states pursue their self-interest—maximizing power—in the international system, it cannot explain how a given state determines the particular decisions that are made along the path of the national interest. State actors may be rational actors, but there is no universal “cost-benefit assessment” that applies for all policymakers. Although Realism does acknowledge the existence of an ideational variable that may predispose certain populations towards certain ideologies, it does not go far enough in its examination of this variable. It typically stops short of asking important questions like: through what social or cultural lenses are national interests formulated? What ideas are components in the formulations of interests? What ideas, due to their culturally distinct context, may be misunderstood by other states? It would be more helpful for American policymakers to understand the role of ideology in a rival state’s foreign policy and how that ideology shapes national interest in more specific terms than the pursuit of power. This would shed light on why its foreign policy is conducted in such a manner, clarifying the intent behind that behavior and, ultimately, reducing the likelihood for miscalculation by policymakers.

*Constructivism:*

While not necessarily discounting the importance of power and the pursuit of self-interest, Constructivism argues that ideas are in fact the ultimate driving force in the international system. As the Constructivist thinker Alexander Wendt puts it, “The key is to reclaim power and interest from materialism by showing how their content and

meaning are constituted by ideas and culture.”<sup>11</sup> Wendt acknowledges that power and interest play an important role in state behavior, but these concepts are the product of the ideas and culture. More specifically, ideas define how actors identify their interests. In the case of international relations, ideas that influence a state’s perception of its environment depend on “historical, cultural, political, and social context.”<sup>12</sup> These contexts constitute the underlying ideas that frame how a state perceives its national interests and, in turn, drive foreign policy. This is in contrast with the Realist belief that there is a mutually assumed notion of “interest” held by all states in the international system.<sup>13</sup>

Constructivism challenges the Realist notion of a rational actor. Using the definition provided above, rationality in a Constructivist sense seems to be more a subjective term than an objective condition. An assessment of the most beneficial action in a given scenario depends on the values that one has learned through ideas and socialization. Or, as Wendt asserts, “state *cognition* depends on states systemic *culture* [emphasis in the original].”<sup>14</sup> In essence, the ideas that make up the culture of a state dictate how that state understands the world.

As discussed above, Constructivists believe ideas, rather than power, are the key to creating international change. Ideas can subvert and, at times, supersede state authority. For example, nationalism and religious extremism are transnational forces that are not contained within the borders of one particular state. This is currently

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<sup>11</sup> Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 371.

<sup>12</sup> Ted Hopf, “The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory,” *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer 1998), p. 176.

<sup>13</sup> Hopf, p. 176.

<sup>14</sup> Wendt, p. 372.

demonstrated in the Middle East by the role played by Islamic extremism.<sup>15</sup> Another example would be transnational activist groups, which can influence the behavior of states with superior military might through the groups' ability to change international ideas or norms, which in turn pressures the state to change course.<sup>16</sup>

*Realist-Constructivism:*

Hard-line Realists and Constructivists tend to view their theory as being mutually exclusive. Either you believe that power or ideas drive the international system. However, as touched on earlier, both sides have shortcomings. Critics of Realism sometimes argue that its tenets are too broad. As Wendt puts it, "The proposition that the nature of international politics is shaped by power relations invariably is listed as one of the defining characteristics of Realism. This cannot be a *uniquely* [emphasis in the original] Realist claim, however, since then every student of international politics would be a Realist."<sup>17</sup> In other words, while Realism may be correct in its assertions about international relations being a struggle for power, it is such a general concept that it fails to shed enough light on the details of those relations; in particular, how states define power and how they elect to pursue it. For its part, critics of Constructivism argue that, much like Liberals and Idealists, the theory fails to recognize that the international organizations they champion only exist because states allow them to in order to further the state's agenda.<sup>18</sup>

Given these shortcomings, some scholars advocate taking a hybrid approach. The academic J. Samuel Barkin proposes Realist Constructivism. As he characterizes it,

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<sup>15</sup> Snyder, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Snyder, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> J. Samuel Barkin, "Realist Constructivism," *International Studies Review*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (September 2003), p. 334.

<sup>18</sup> Snyder, p. 14.

Realist Constructivism “looks at the way in which power structures affect patterns of normative change in international relations and, conversely, the way in which a particular set of norms affect power structures.”<sup>19</sup> In essence, it calls for a more thorough examination of how ideas affect balance of power relations among actors in the international system. The theory applies Constructivist principles to the overall Realist worldview by emphasizing the importance of ideas to enhance one’s understanding of how and why states make particular decisions in the pursuit of their interests.

Significantly, this provides more depth to the Realist concept of a rational actor. Proponents of Realist Constructivism would agree that states make cost-benefit assessments and subsequently choose a policy that is most beneficial vis-à-vis other states. However, they would disagree with the assumption that there is an objective assessment that is applied equally by all actors. Instead, the theory advocates looking at how ideology (i.e., ideas) influences perceptions of self-interest and how power is defined.

### **Methodology:**

As mentioned earlier, I hypothesize that the Realist Constructivism theory allows one to better understand the foreign policy of potentially threatening states with unclear intentions, especially if those governments have a strong religious or cultural undercurrents clouding perceptions of their intent. Rather than seeing their actions as confusing or irrational, my hypothesis would see them as ultimately pursuing their interests but through the lens of a Constructivist ideology, helping to clarify intent. Throughout the course of this paper, I test my hypothesis by measuring the influence of ideology on a state’s foreign policy. To clarify, I use the term ideology to indicate a

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<sup>19</sup> Barkin, p. 337.

system of ideas in a Constructivist sense – in other words, the product of cultural, social, historical, and political contexts.<sup>20</sup> Each state will have its own “ideology,” in the way that I use it, because it is a summation of the aforementioned contexts that establishes behavioral norms. Therefore, it encompasses concepts like learned cultural or religious norms.

The cases I chose to examine are China, Pakistan, and Iran. These cases were selected as three prominent examples of states often portrayed in the United States as being threats. This perception may be due to their unique style of government that is viewed by some observers as being more ideologically driven and, at first glance, conventional Western notions of rationality are unable to explain their behavior. The distinctive Chinese culture, which via Confucianism essentially takes the shape of a parallel ideology, plays a significant role in determining how Beijing approaches its national interests when dealing with other countries. Pakistan, in distinguishing itself from its former colonial bunkmate India, pushed for an Islamic national identity and struggles to maintain that identity when conducting its foreign policy. After the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, Tehran continues to function as self-described Islamic government as influenced by the late Ruhollah Khomeini’s brand of revolutionary Shia Islam.

In each chapter, I focus on one particular country. To measure the role of ideology on that state’s foreign policy, I identify a range of ideological indicators that, if present in a particular policy decision, suggests the decision was affected by ideology. In each case study, the independent variable is the role of ideology and the dependent variable is foreign policy behavior. Note that while in the individual chapters the

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<sup>20</sup> Hopf, p. 176.

independent variable is ideology, my overall thesis uses the independent variable of pragmatic balance of power calculations, with ideology then playing the role of the intervening variable. The difference is because, for testing purposes, it is easier analytically to measure only the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. After I am able to make an assessment about the variables' relationship in the chapters, I am better positioned to evaluate whether ideology acts as an intervening variable, which I predict will be the case.

After examining the international relations of a given country—the scope of which will be defined in the individual chapters' methodology sections—I analyze the events, evaluating whether the ideological indicators were present. In doing so, I provide a Constructivist assessment of that state's foreign policy. Next, I provide a Realist assessment of that same foreign policy. I then evaluate the two theories' explanations to determine whether any gaps exist that could be better explained by Realist Constructivism.

# CHAPTER ONE: THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIANISM ON CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

## Introduction

The “rise of China” is a commonly used assertion in describing today’s international system. China’s economy, already the second largest in the world, is expected to keep growing and eventually surpass the United States as the largest economy within the next few decades.<sup>21</sup> In turn, economic wealth is translating into swelling military budgets, which have at least quadrupled since the turn of the century and, according to some observers, will continue to rise until outpacing the United States around 2035.<sup>22</sup> The United States’ National Intelligence Council predicts, in its 2012 Global Trends report, that China’s rise will significantly contribute to a diffusion of Western power and usher in a multipolar international system.<sup>23</sup>

If China’s rise is as inevitable as we are lead to believe, then there is a real risk of conflict with the United States, the current leading power, as the balance of power shifts. Despite statements from Beijing describing their ascension as “peaceful,” the foregoing paragraph’s statistics on military spending make Washington nervous.<sup>24</sup> Given this gap in rhetoric and action, Washington has a difficult time gauging Beijing’s intent – in other words, whether this military expansion is for self-defense or for a planned conflict with America or its allies. To make this sort of calculation, the United States needs to better understand why the Chinese behave the way they do with regards to foreign policy.

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<sup>21</sup> Thom Shanker, “Study Predicts Future for U.S. as No. 2 Economy, but Energy Independent,” *The New York Times*, December 10, 2012, para. 1.

<sup>22</sup> “China’s military rise: The dragon’s new teeth,” *The Economist*, April 07, 2012, para. 2.

<sup>23</sup> “Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds,” U.S. National Intelligence Council, December 2012, p. iv.

<sup>24</sup> Zheng Xiwen, “China’s peaceful rise is beyond doubt,” *The People’s Daily Online*, July 19, 2011.

Much of today's predominant literature on China's international relations tends to focus on Realist calculations on balance of power issues, with only passing mention of the socio-cultural roots behind Chinese behavior, as would be advocated by a Constructivist.<sup>25</sup> However, there is a minority of authors that focus on how these cultural roots affect modern China domestically. And, according to these authors who take a Constructivist approach, one of the key influences in shaping Chinese society and government is Confucianism. Yet, these works generally provide only a cursory dialogue on foreign policy. As a result, there is a gap between analyses of domestic Chinese issues, which often incorporate Confucian influence, and the analyses of Chinese foreign policy, which generally do not examine Confucian influence. This chapter seeks to bridge this gap by applying the Realist Constructivism theory to Chinese foreign policy.

Realism assumes that China's international relations are a pursuit of Chinese national interest. Though I agree with this assumption, I believe it fails to explain how particular interests are defined and, in turn, why specific foreign policy decisions were made. I aim to address these knowledge gaps by adding Constructivism to the equation and viewing Chinese actions through a lens of Confucianism. If Chinese foreign policy is the dependent variable and pursuit of interest is the independent variable, I seek to assess whether Confucianism—functioning as a Constructivist ideology—is an intervening variable. In other words, my goal is to measure whether Confucianism plays a role in shaping Chinese foreign policy. I attempt to prove this point by providing a Constructivist assessment followed by a Realist assessment of Chinese foreign relations.

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<sup>25</sup> Zheng Bijian, "China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2005; Andrew J. Nathan and Andrew Scobell, "How China Sees America," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2012.

Then, I evaluate the two theories and seek to identify any gaps that would suggest Realist Constructivism is better suited to explain Chinese foreign policy behavior.

I would note that evidence of ideology influencing foreign policy behavior does not indicate that ideology in fact caused the behavior; instead, it simply suggests ideology plays an intervening role that is worth examining in order to better understand that behavior. Also, to be clear, I refer to Confucianism as an ideology in the sense that it is a set of ideas—Chinese cultural principles distilled into social normative framework—that shape how the Chinese perceive themselves and their place in the world.

I begin this chapter by outlining existing literature on Confucianism and its political influence, followed by a section outlining key criteria that, if present in the data, will serve as an indicator of Confucian influence, proving an intervening relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Subsequently, I discuss the methodology for the two case studies to be examined: China's relationship with the United States and with Sudan. Finally, I present the results of this analysis and provide concluding remarks.

### **Defining Confucianism**

Confucianism is a complex term for which a precise and universally held definition is difficult to find. A good starting point is to understand that the Chinese term for "Confucianism" is *ru*, which translates as "the tradition of scholars."<sup>26</sup> The primary scholar in this tradition is Master Kong, better known as Confucius, who lived during the fifth century B.C. and advocated values like morality, harmony, loyalty, and education.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Julia Ching, "Confucianism and Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Ethics and Weapons of Mass Destruction*, January 2004, p. 248.

<sup>27</sup> Ruby Tsao, "Confusion on Confucius," *Chinese American Forum*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, July 2011, p. 22-23.

It was not until the Han dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.) that Confucian thought took hold and became the official philosophy. During this period, important Confucian writings were produced. One key text is the *Analects*, which consists of a series of recorded discussions Confucius held during his life. Other noteworthy volumes, like the “Five Classics” and “Four Books,” are comprised of other texts produced by Confucius as well as a book containing the writings of Confucius’s disciple Mencius.<sup>28</sup>

These writings “were believed to contain the basic precepts needed for leading a moral life, and to offer a valid record of an earlier utopian period of Chinese history that had reached its apogee of enlightened government.”<sup>29</sup> Confucian thought provides guidelines for not only how its adherents can lead a “good” life, but also presents a blueprint for an ideal form of government, succinctly described by one scholar as “China’s Bible and its Constitution combined.”<sup>30</sup> However, unlike other religions or philosophies that urge adherents to look to the future and create something new, Confucianism implies that the answers its followers seek are in the past. One must closely examine the past to recover answers once known – in other words, “[t]he goal was rectification, not progress.”<sup>31</sup>

In line with Confucius’s emphasis on education, Confucian doctrine became the subject of a rigorous examination process that had to be passed by anyone seeking to join the Chinese state bureaucracy. This Confucian exam system lasted through the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911—though there were brief periods where it was deactivated—and it

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<sup>28</sup> Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Third Edition, (W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2013), p. 57.

<sup>29</sup> Spence, p. 57.

<sup>30</sup> Henry Kissinger, *On China*, (The Penguin Press: New York, 2011), p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Kissinger, p. 14.

is not dissimilar from the tests that China requires prospective bureaucrats to pass today. As a result, in a Confucian society, it was through learning that one advanced.<sup>32</sup>

Confucius also stressed the concept of social hierarchy where the key was to “[k]now thy place.”<sup>33</sup> This affected not only the relationships within familial structures, like the authority a husband has over his wife or a father has over a son, but also between rulers and the ruled. According to Henry Kissinger:

To its adherents the Confucian order offered the inspiration of service in pursuit of a greater harmony. Unlike the prophets of monotheistic religions, Confucius preached no teleology of history pointing mankind to personal redemption. His philosophy sought the redemption of the state through righteous individual behavior. Oriented toward this world, his thinking affirmed a code of social conduct, not a roadmap to the afterlife.<sup>34</sup>

Kissinger is asserting that Confucianism’s brand of hierarchy downplays the importance of individuals in relation to the state. Followers must be prepared to make personal sacrifices to maintain overall harmony.

This leads directly into the Confucian concept of legitimizing a ruler’s authority. A government or Emperor can only rule if it has the “Mandate of Heaven,” which is obtained by “respecting virtue” and maintaining harmony for “All Under Heaven,” in accordance with Confucian teachings.<sup>35</sup> Essentially, rulers are deemed legitimate only if they can sustain social stability. Once a leader begins to falter and can no longer maintain order, this leader loses the “Mandate of Heaven” and must be replaced.<sup>36</sup> Given the emphasis on preserving harmony, further to the Confucian concept of hierarchy, the

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<sup>32</sup> Spence, p. 58; Kissinger, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> Kissinger, p. 15.

<sup>34</sup> Kissinger, p. 15.

<sup>35</sup> Liang Tao, “Political Thought in Early Confucianism,” *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, 5(2), June 2010, p. 214

<sup>36</sup> Ching, p. 250; Kissinger, p. 15-16.

ruler is deemed more important than the individual, who is expected to know his or her place in the social order.<sup>37</sup>

### **Political Confucianism**

Today, academics have highlighted Confucianism's influence in virtually every corner of Chinese life. One scholar analyzed the religious aspects of Confucianism and argued that its astral tenets provide a way to understand how the Chinese interpret religion, while another focused on Confucian teachings as they relate to business ethics and implications for the Chinese economy.<sup>38</sup> And, interestingly enough, there is even an article on the impact of Confucianism on Chinese reproductive behavior.<sup>39</sup>

Authors cited in the preceding section argued that the Confucian value system laid the foundation for the dynastic Chinese style of government by emphasizing concepts like social hierarchy and the "Mandate of Heaven." However, another group of authors apply notions of Confucianism directly to the political realm in an effort to better understand how the Chinese government operates domestically.

Dieter Kuhn examines China's dynastic history and concludes that the Song dynasty, which ruled circa mid-Tenth century, was the most influential in establishing the notion of "traditional" China as understood today. Even though its predecessors followed Confucian principles, they were not as committed as the Song, which actually created a form of government based on Confucian thought. Key Confucian attributes of this government include an emphasis on education, loyalty to one's family and the Emperor,

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<sup>37</sup> Yao, p. 214.

<sup>38</sup> Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Religious Dimensions of Confucianism: Cosmology and Cultivation*, *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 48, No. 1, January 1998, p. 5; Kit-Chun Joanna Lam, *Confucian Business Ethics and the Economy*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 43, No. ½, March 2003, p. 153.

<sup>39</sup> Zongli Tang, *Confucianism, Chinese Culture, and Reproductive Behavior*, *Population and Environment*, Vol. 16, No. 3, January 1995, p. 269.

civil administration, and downplaying the importance of military might.<sup>40</sup> In characterizing a Confucian state, Kuhn quotes William De Bary, who argues that the “historically close association of the leading intellectual tradition with the dominant bureaucracy.”<sup>41</sup> Essentially, Confucianism provided the Chinese government with values, like the prioritization of education and social hierarchy, to use as the basis for their laws in addition to guidance for structuring society. As a result, by infusing Confucian precepts into state behavior and ensuring compliance among its population, the Song dynasty left an indelible mark on the Chinese.<sup>42</sup> And, as other literature to be discussed in this section demonstrates, the Confucian influence is apparent still today.

The reign of Confucian-styled governments did not go unabated, however. Shaohua Hu outlines a period of decline for Confucianism, which began in the early twentieth century, around the fall of the Qing dynasty and the establishment of the nationalist Republic of China. During this period, the traditional Confucian-based form of Chinese government was in decline – a decline that continued through Mao Zedong’s reign – though its influence lingered.<sup>43</sup> This is because the Chinese, yearning for change after thousands of years under dynastic rule, equated Confucianism with the old way of government.<sup>44</sup> Eventually, as revolutionary fervor subsided, the latent Confucian influence became more apparent in post-Mao China, especially in light of Deng Xiaoping’s socioeconomic changes in the 1980’s and early 1990’s.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Dieter Kuhn, *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China*, (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 2009), p. 2-3

<sup>41</sup> Kuhn, p. 29; William De Bary, *Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1993), p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Kuhn, p. 29-30.

<sup>43</sup> Shaohua Hu, “Confucianism and Contemporary Chinese Politics,” *Politics and Policy*, Vol. 35, Issue 1, 2007, p. 139-142.

<sup>44</sup> Hu, p. 136, 143.

<sup>45</sup> Hu, p. 136.

Hu concedes that certain aspects of Confucian thought may not be relevant today, such as the antiquated rejection of economic profit and believing that a legal code is secondary to hierarchical obligations, such as honoring ones father at the cost of breaking a law.<sup>46</sup> Yet, as Hu states, “The dividing line between politics, the economy and culture, for instance, is by no means clear, and Confucianism has had an effect historically in each of these spheres.”<sup>47</sup> In other words, Confucianism has thoroughly permeated Chinese society and, thus, its influence clearly extends into the political realm.

Another analyst of Confucianism in modern China is Jiang Qing (not to be confused with Mao Zedong’s wife of the same name), who looks to Confucian traditions in an effort to provide a blueprint for the direction in which Chinese political institutions should evolve. Qing argues against turning to the West for guidance on China’s political future because he believes it will ultimately dilute Chinese traditions and culture. Instead, he claims that China should focus on early forms of political Confucianism, such as the kind Kuhn discussed in the Song dynasty, when contemplating political institutions for modern China. However, other than discussing a few political institutions, Qing does not outline specific guidance as to how modern China’s Confucian political body should operate, which is a probably due to fears that the Chinese government would censor such writings.<sup>48</sup> Qing’s works remain in the theoretical realm and there is no practical explanation of how a modern Confucian China would diplomatically engage with other states.

Daniel Bell expands on Qing’s work not only by providing more practical demonstrations of Confucianism in Chinese politics, but also applies Confucian values to

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<sup>46</sup> Hu, p. 145-146.

<sup>47</sup> Hu, p. 137-138.

<sup>48</sup> Bell, “Jiang’s *Political Confucianism*,” p. 176.

modern Chinese society. Bell believes many studies of China fail to grasp the influential role Confucianism has played in so many aspects of Chinese life.<sup>49</sup> He identifies three primary currents of Confucianism in modern China. The first emphasizes Confucian values such as maintaining harmony. This has the effect of distracting the Chinese from real political or economic issues they may have with their government. The second is rooted in the dynastic tradition, as Kuhn outlined. Bell describes this as the enshrinement of Confucian values into actual the legal framework, which encourages a hierarchical submission to the state for the sake of preserving harmony. However, Bell believes the third strand, “left Confucianism” – a hybrid of Confucianism and socialism – is most influential in modern China.<sup>50</sup> He intimates that this is essentially what we have today in China, with former Chinese President Hu Jintao’s “Eight Honors and Eight Shames” speech, which advocates values that may nominally be in line with Communist teachings but are clearly influenced by Confucianism, being case in point. Bell’s study highlights the pervasiveness of Confucianism in today’s China, but he maintains focus on domestic Chinese issues.

### **Confucianism and Chinese External Issues**

Other academics have touched on Confucianism influencing Chinese foreign relations—though not in the same manner as this chapter—and some of their research will be used to construct my argument, which is outlined in the next section. The proceeding literature looks at traditional Confucian values and details how they affect Chinese perspectives on contemporary issues that are not purely domestic, but entail interacting with other parties in the international system.

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<sup>49</sup> Bell, *China’s New Confucianism*, Princeton University Press (Princeton, NJ: 2008), p. xiv.

<sup>50</sup> Bell, *China’s New Confucianism*, p. xiv – xvi.

Qing Cao examines the rise of Confucian rhetoric and discourse in modern China and he specifically parses statements by Chinese leaders about China's "peaceful rise." He focuses largely on the public statements and articles generated by the Chinese government to determine the influence of Confucianism.<sup>51</sup> For example, Cao discusses former President Hu Jintao's efforts to deflect international concerns over China's growing military and economic power. He argues that, "Confucian rhetoric provides the accommodationist policy with a cultural underpinning to ease tensions and potential conflicts."<sup>52</sup> In essence, by emphasizing Confucian virtues like harmony and peace, Hu was able to portray Beijing's intentions as being harmless, reassuring potential rivals. This is in line with traditional Chinese foreign policy that operates according to *dezheng*, or "reign by virtues," because the Chinese prefer, Cao says, to exert themselves via soft power by gaining the favor of potential rivals rather than engage in military conflict.<sup>53</sup>

Justin Chou argues that Confucian values have directly influenced cultural norms, which, in turn, affects the way the Chinese think about intellectual property rights (IPR). One example of this is the term *guanxi*, which has no direct English translation, but represents the obligation for reciprocity between relationships; crudely put, "I do you a favor, now you owe me a favor." While in the West there is a tendency to view this type of behavior as nepotism or corruption, it is simply a manifestation of Chinese Confucian values.<sup>54</sup> Another factor Chou highlights is the Confucian emphasis on filial piety that affects not only familial relationships but the government as well. He mentions that

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<sup>51</sup> Qing Cao, "Confucian Vision of a New World Order? Culturalist Discourse, Foreign Policy, and the Press in Contemporary China," *International Communication Gazette*, 2007, 69:431, p. 445-447.

<sup>52</sup> Cao, 435.

<sup>53</sup> Cao, 436.

<sup>54</sup> Justin Chou, "The Influence of Confucius on Intellectual Property Rights in China," *Journal of Emerging Markets*, Fall-Winter 2011, vol. 15, issue 3, p. 8-16.

Confucius believed people who did not accept their hierarchical place caused most of society's problems. Therefore, citizens must obey the government, and the government "must act like a good father" and "take care of" its subjects.<sup>55</sup> Chou points out that, if the rulers consist of a small unaccountable group that makes decisions for others' best interests, this is essentially "elitism."<sup>56</sup> Thus, when Western governments engage Beijing on enforcing IPR, they are often frustrated by some of these Chinese Confucian-influenced tendencies, like *guanxi* and elitism, which they generally perceive as corruption.

Julia Ching's article "Confucianism and Weapons of Mass Destruction" looks at weapons of mass destruction (WMD) through the lens of Confucianism. She begins by describing Confucianism in general and moves on to Confucian theories of "just" forms of government and war. She asserts that Confucian thinkers generally do not dwell much on war and instead focus more so on self-reflection and learning.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, she believes modern Confucian scholars place more emphasis on "good global governance" than on advanced weapons technology, like WMD, which are regarded as irresponsible in light of their indiscriminate destructiveness.<sup>58</sup>

While many scholars view Confucian values as inherently peaceful, Fuchuan Yao argues that it may drive China to war. He believes that two particular Confucian precepts are to blame. The first explanation is that Confucian values pressure Chinese rulers to go to war to preserve peace, per their mandate to achieve "harmony." The second is that Chinese citizens are encouraged by Confucianism to rebel against rulers who do no

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<sup>55</sup> Chou, p. 11-12.

<sup>56</sup> Chou, p. 12.

<sup>57</sup> Ching, p. 260.

<sup>58</sup> Ching, p. 260-262.

maintain the “mandate of Heaven.” With regards to Confucianism in modern China, Yao concludes that in the near term China will not likely act as an aggressor, but the hostile Confucian tendencies may surface in the future, given their historical prominence.<sup>59</sup>

### **Indicators of Confucian Foreign Policy**

The primary point of departure between my writing and the foregoing articles is that, while I too will be measuring the influence of Confucianism on Chinese external relations, I will be examining the broader foreign relations between China and a particular country in the context of IR theory. The literature has, however, provided key Confucian concepts that may indicate whether the independent variable, Confucian influence, does in fact impact the dependent variable, modern Chinese foreign policy. To aid the reader, the five indicators of a Confucian-influenced foreign policy outlined in this section are depicted in “Table 1 – Five Indicators of Confucian Influence in Chinese Foreign Policy,” located at the end of this section.

First, the concept of *guanxi* present in foreign relations may be an indicator of Confucian influence. I argue that a Confucian foreign policy would result in behavior based on personal relationships between state leaders and perceptions of reciprocity – Beijing may commit an action because it “owes” another state. Or, if a state fails to return the “favor” and does not fulfill its *guanxi* obligations, the Chinese may take offense and react negatively. Additionally, because of the significance placed on reciprocity, the Chinese tend to disregard international laws that run contrary to these values.

Second, we would expect a Confucian foreign policy to also exhibit signs of elitism as a response to the Chinese government viewing itself at the top of the Confucian

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<sup>59</sup> Fuchuan Yao, “War an Confucianism,” *Asian Philosophy*, Vol. 21, No. 2, May 2011, p. 213 – 226.

hierarchy. Practically speaking, this would be manifested by Beijing treating other nations as though they are junior and inferior partners or a belief that their unique and special status renders China exempt from some international norms.

The third indicator stems from the Confucian emphasis on education. Studying the past and learning from the classics were key principles for any person who wished to excel and attain government positions in Confucian China. As discussed earlier, Kissinger argues that there was an emphasis on regaining knowledge from the past vice looking to the future and pioneering new thought. Thus, a Confucian foreign policy would be heavily informed by history. This could take the form of Beijing referring to territorial claims from hundreds of years ago or examining historical Chinese cases to inform policymaking. An example would be in 1962 when Mao Zedong was contemplating military action against India over border disputes. Mao reportedly gained tactical insight by analyzing a war fought between the Tang dynasty and the Indians over a thousand years earlier, in addition to another war fought six hundred years later between the Mongolians, who then ruled China, and the Indians.<sup>60</sup>

Fourth is the influence of virtues extolled by Confucius, like harmony, self-restraint, and education, as well as a disinclination for those he did not favor, like militarism. As discussed earlier, Ching asserts that Confucianism eschews the use of the military when civilian enterprises could better maintain harmony.<sup>61</sup> This is not to say China refuses to fight wars – a claim that history has clearly disproven. Rather, this indicates that, in the mind of a Confucian, war is not the first choice in achieving foreign policy goals.

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<sup>60</sup> Kissinger, p. 1-2.

<sup>61</sup> Ching, p. 260.

According to Kissinger, virtues like self-restraint and education provide non-military alternatives, such as exhibiting patience and restraint as a “diplomatic tool”, which enables the Chinese to take the “long view” when pursuing foreign policy objectives.<sup>62</sup> In essence, when engaging with a stronger adversary, the practitioner would, for the sake of maintaining harmony and Chinese interests, appear tolerant and even friendly to the opponent. This allows the practitioner to subtly manipulate the situation to his or her favor. Also, the Confucian propensity for learning has provided for a deep understanding of the role psychological factors play in conflict, which have been heavily emphasized by Chinese leadership.<sup>63</sup> In sum, the fourth indicator would expect a Confucian foreign policy to avoid military conflict in unfavorable conditions, while emphasizing psychological factors or a willingness to take a long view and wait to achieve one’s goals.

Fifth, and lastly, a Confucian-inspired foreign policy would emphasize upholding “Harmony” or, in other words, domestic stability. To retain the “Mandate of Heaven” discussed earlier, a Confucian government would emphasize internal cohesion as a key driver for foreign policy because, should inner turmoil grow, the risk of that government collapsing or being overthrown is high.

*Table 1 – Five Indicators of Confucian Influence in Chinese Foreign Policy:*

<b>Indicators of Confucian Influence</b>	
First	Favoring personal relationships over laws
Second	Exhibiting elitism
Third	Heavily influenced by historical precedents
Fourth	Avoid military conflict; prefer restraint, taking “long view” and gaining psychological advantage
Fifth	Domestic stability as key priority

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<sup>62</sup> Kissinger, p. 73, 94.

<sup>63</sup> Kissinger, p. 101.

## **Methodology**

The cases I will be examining for this study are China's relationships with the United States and Sudan. Each will be discussed in their modern context because the goal of this chapter is to better understand modern Chinese foreign policy. I chose these cases in particular because they encapsulate concerns with which many states' foreign policies are confronted: managing relationships with stronger nations and engagement with weaker or potentially unstable states. Moreover, given the differences between engagement with a great power and a lesser power, these case studies will provide a broad range of behaviors to analyze, resulting in a more thorough examination.

The technique used to measure the role of Confucianism in modern Chinese foreign policy is process tracing. In each case study, I will look back at series of events (i.e., Chinese diplomatic behavior) within a defined period of time. Rather than scrutinize every aspect of the Sino-American or Sino-Sudanese relationships, I chose to focus on salient issues in which Beijing has vested interests in achieving favorable outcomes. I acknowledge that America and Sudan are very different countries and naturally would require different types of engagement. Yet, given that each case maintains the commonality of Chinese engagement with a foreign actor, the cases are appropriate for comparison and should not produce outliers in my analysis. At the end of the case study analyses, to ease reader comprehension, "Table 2 – Confucian Influences in Chinese Foreign Policy" recaps the key identifiers of Confucian influence discussed in the preceding sections.

### **Case Study One: China's relationship with the United States**

The general tone of today's Sino-American relationship was set by then-President Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972 and the normalization of relations between the two states. Both Nixon and Chairman Mao feared the Soviet Union and sought means for enhancing their strategic posture, believing a relationship with each other would strengthen them against the Soviets. Once the Soviet Union collapsed, the basis for the relationship changed, but remained solid with the help of economic ties, despite setbacks like the Tiananmen Square violence in 1989.<sup>64</sup>

This leads up to what, in the context of this chapter, I define as modern China, beginning in 1993 when Jiang Zemin was named President of the People's Republic of China (PRC). During this period, Sino-American relations were fairly stable, especially when compared to those earlier in the twentieth century. Therefore, this case will outline key conflict points in the relationship and illustrate how the Chinese responded. Two major events in Sino-American relations came to a head around same time in the mid-1990's: tensions over extending China's Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status with the United States and a China-Taiwan crisis that prompted an American intervention.

Former President Bill Clinton, as a result of Tiananmen and other human rights abuses committed by Beijing, declared his intention of linking Sino-American economic ties with China's ability to protect human rights. China's MFN status was up for review in Washington, and Clinton tried using it as leverage against the Chinese, threatening that unless certain steps were taken, MFN would not be renewed.<sup>65</sup> Beijing, loath to have another state meddling in domestic issues, responded indirectly. Rather than focusing its efforts solely against the Clinton administration, the Chinese reached out to American

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<sup>64</sup> James Mann, *About Face*, First Edition, (Vintage Books: New York, 2000), p. 9-11.

<sup>65</sup> Mann, p. 295.

business leaders to encourage disagreements within the United States over Clinton's policy. Further, they granted lucrative contracts to the Germans and French in an effort to portray the administration as being isolated on its economic-human rights linkage, as well as to demonstrate that this policy was causing America to lose out on Chinese contracts.<sup>66</sup> After a failed attempt by Secretary of State Warren Christopher in visiting China to push for traction on human rights concerns, Clinton relented and renewed MFN.<sup>67</sup>

The aftermath of the foregoing leads into the Taiwan crisis of 1996. After Clinton backed down on the MFN issue and, fearing he would look "soft" on China, he acquiesced to domestic calls for the Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui to visit the United States, which was an unprecedented event.<sup>68</sup> In response, Beijing conducted a series of military drills and missile tests, including launching missiles into the Taiwan Strait, measures that were "equal parts military deterrent and political theater."<sup>69</sup> The Chinese were less interested in starting a war than in symbolically warning—the missiles launched into the Strait did not have live warheads—both the Taiwanese and Americans that Taipei had gone too far in asserting itself. As the exercises continued, in tandem with other psychological operations, Washington deployed two aircraft carrier strike groups to the Strait, calling for relaxed tensions on both sides of the Strait. The Americans assured China of their continued support for the "one-China" policy and

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<sup>66</sup> Mann, p. 296-297.

<sup>67</sup> Mann, p. 308-309.

<sup>68</sup> Mann, p. 324-325.

<sup>69</sup> Kissinger, p. 473.

called for restraint from Taipei. Sino-American relations subsequently returned to the status quo.<sup>70</sup>

Other more recent sources of tension in the relationship are again related to economics. The Americans accuse the Chinese of disregarding IPR and artificially devaluing their currency so their exports are more competitive. China's explanation as to why they cannot meet American demands are succinctly encapsulated in a statement from former Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, who proclaimed, "You don't know how many Chinese companies would go bankrupt. There would be major disturbances."<sup>71</sup> In essence, Beijing argued that it must continue with its current policies to ensure economic growth and, thus, prevent political upheaval.

### **Case Study Two: Chinese engagement with Sudan**

Beijing's policy for engagement with Khartoum can be summed up in one word: noninterference. Premier Zhou Enlai first articulated this principle at a joint Asian-African conference in 1955 by asserting, "We are against outside interference; how could we want to interfere in the internal affairs of others?"<sup>72</sup> The two have enjoyed positive relations as long as Sudan has been an independent country. Part of this bond is a result of both nations having previously suffered under British colonialism. In light of Sudan's near-constant state of civil war since declaring independence from the British in 1956, Khartoum welcomed Beijing's continued willingness to not ask questions and provide support, such as weapons and economic investments.<sup>73</sup> The relationship proceeded in

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<sup>70</sup> Kissinger, p. 474-477.

<sup>71</sup> David Barboza, "Chinese Leader Fields Executives' Questions," *The New York Times Online*, September 22, 2010, para. 16.

<sup>72</sup> Daniel Large, "China & the Contradictions of 'Non-interference' in Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 115:93-106, p. 94.

<sup>73</sup> Large, 94-95.

this manner for decades, until China's economic boom in the 1990's increased their demand for oil, driving Beijing closer to Khartoum than ever before.<sup>74</sup>

In this case, I define modern Sino-Sudanese relations as beginning in 1990, when the Sudanese leader of the National Islamic Front (NIF), Omar al-Bashir, visited China. The NIF had just recently come to power in Khartoum after a military coup and Bashir was looking to repair diplomatic relations with the international community. Not long after his visit, in 1991, Beijing provided \$300 million dollars worth of military equipment to Sudan. After establishing this precedent, military sales to the NIF continue today.<sup>75</sup>

To ensure arms sales from Beijing continue unabated, Khartoum sells its oil to China. The strategy worked for the Sudanese because once the Chinese began drilling and extracting oil in the late 1990's, Beijing's economic investments in Sudan significantly increased.<sup>76</sup> The Chinese, who receive close to ten percent of their oil from Sudan, infused billions of dollars into the country's oil infrastructure and, today, own a forty percent share of Khartoum's oil company, which controls all of Sudan's oilfields.<sup>77</sup>

In essence, this is the crux of the relationship between China and Sudan – Beijing invests and sells weapons, while Khartoum responds with oil and other natural resources. However, China has faced international pressure recently because these arms transfers are in violation of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1556, adopted in 2004, and Resolution 1591, adopted in 2005.<sup>78</sup> These resolutions place embargoes on weapons shipments destined to either individuals or government entities in the conflict-ridden

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<sup>74</sup> Large, 93.

<sup>75</sup> Large, 95.

<sup>76</sup> Large, 95.

<sup>77</sup> Felix M. Edoho, "Globalization and Marginalization of Africa: Contextualization of China-Africa Relations," *Africa Today*, Vol. 58, No. 1, Fall 2011, p. 117.

<sup>78</sup> Richard O. Iroanya, "Arms Transfer and Conflict in Africa: The Role of China in Sudan," *Africa Insight*, Vol. 40 (3), December 2010, p. 191.

Darfur region. Furthermore, for its participation in the Darfur violence, the NIF has been accused of war crimes and Bashir became the first sitting head of state to be the subject of an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court.<sup>79</sup>

However, both Beijing and Khartoum argue that the Darfur issue is a domestic problem and foreign interference violates Sudan's sovereignty, in accordance with Beijing's noninterference principle. Furthermore, even though it continues shipping arms to Sudan, it denies that it is violating the UN sanctions.<sup>80</sup> While China maintains that it is respecting Sudan's sovereignty by not interfering with internal issues, critics of the arms transfers claim that Beijing is fueling a Sudanese civil war that has claimed countless civilian lives.<sup>81</sup>

## **Analysis of Case Studies**

### *Case Study One Analysis*

To begin, I will review the ideological indicators and assess whether they are present in China's foreign policy behavior. In doing so, I seek to explain Chinese behavior from the viewpoint of a Constructivist. Subsequently, I review the same Chinese foreign relations highlights and argue the issue from the Realist perspective. Then, I will jointly evaluate the two theories' assessments, determining whether any gaps exist and whether the Realist Constructivism hybrid is better suited to explain China's foreign policy.

The case study indicates there is evidence of Confucian influence on Chinese foreign policy towards the United States. The first indicator of Confucian influence—

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<sup>79</sup> Xan Rice, "Sudanese president Bashir charged with Darfur war crimes," *The Guardian*, March 04, 2009, para. 1.

<sup>80</sup> Iroanya, p. 192.

<sup>81</sup> Iroanya, p. 195-196.

*guanxi*, personal relationships, and a resulting diminished willingness to entertain laws incongruent to these values—is present in Beijing’s efforts to retain MFN status. The Chinese were uninterested in meeting Clinton’s demands for progress on enforcing human rights because, in doing so, Beijing would risk losing control over domestic dissent, potentially leading to widespread instability. Similarly, this is the case for IPR and currency manipulation. Beijing is again more interested in economic growth as a way to ensure domestic stability. There is a personal obligation, of a kind, between the CCP and those it governs, which compels the CCP to provide this economic growth. Rather than giving in to what it perceives as arbitrary rules regarding currency valuation and IPR as dictated by outsiders, the CCP is bound to its *guanxi* obligation to the Chinese population.

The second criterion of Chinese elitism was detected in this case. Beijing is without a doubt aware of the concerns surrounding IPR and currency manipulation. Further, Beijing is surely aware that other major powers enact laws to mitigate the economic damage caused by these issues. Consequently, an explanation of China’s unwillingness to take similar measures could be that Beijing believes it is above such claims and not subject to policies of other states. A sense of elitism, that it is unique and not subject to the same restrictions of other states in the international order, may be the root cause of China’s behavior.

The third indicator, historical precedents informing modern policy-making, can be found in China’s approach to the 1996 Taiwan crisis, which resembled its handling of the two Taiwan Strait crises of the 1950’s. Aggravated with Taipei over perceived moves towards independence, Beijing mobilized troops and fired artillery near the island and

appeared to be preparing for an invasion.<sup>82</sup> And, much like the events in the 1950's, this prompted the Americans to intervene and restrain Taiwan, giving the Chinese what they wanted without actual military confrontation.

The fourth indicator can be found in the MFN negotiations where, to increase pressure against the Clinton administration, Beijing gained a psychological advantage before engaging Washington. It did so by portraying Clinton's policy as harmful to U.S. economic interests and winning over American business leaders, a point further driven home by the lucrative contracts given to France and Germany. Also, the fourth criterion is demonstrated in the 1996 Taiwan crisis, where, rather than actually engaging in violent conflict, China employed psychological means by conducting military exercises and firing missiles without active warheads. As Kissinger argues, Beijing generally takes a long view on the Taiwan issue and, instead of demanding a solution overnight, is willing to wait for a favorable outcome.<sup>83</sup> Once progress stalls, however, as it did in this situation, the Chinese used their symbolic warning—missiles with inactive warheads—to get the issue back on track.

The fifth criterion, emphasizing domestic stability over all else, is present in Beijing's foreign policy calculus in dealing with the Americans on the MFN issue, IPR, and currency manipulation. Regarding the first, Beijing was willing to risk positive relations with Washington in order to retain all measures for suppressing internal dissent and maintaining domestic cohesion. For the latter two issues, the Chinese are highly concerned with sustained economic growth because they equate it with social stability. Thus, they are unwilling to give in to American calls for reform.

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<sup>82</sup> Mann, 334-335.

<sup>83</sup> Kissinger, p. 475.

The above analysis represents a Constructivist assessment of China's foreign relations with the United States. A Realist would respond to this and argue that, rather than being driven by ideology, these foreign policy decisions were each motivated by pragmatic balance of power calculations. In other words, China's behavior is in line with Realist expectations because Beijing pursued policies that are motivated by its best interest.

Beijing's manipulation of the U.S. business community to pressure the Clinton administration to drop its push human rights reform in response for MFN status was clearly a pragmatic decision. Rather than changing its policies and risking domestic instability, Beijing determined a way to get its way in MFN negotiations without conceding to U.S. demands. Moreover, in the Taiwan Strait dispute, Beijing recognized it was not militarily capable of defeating the United States and therefore ratcheted up tensions only to a point. As had happened in the past, Beijing calculated this would motivate Washington, interested in avoiding conflict, to reign in Taipei's independence-related behavior. Again, this was handled pragmatically by China in line with its national interest. With regards to the other foreign relations issues discussed, IPR and currency devaluation, Beijing is, much like its handling of MFN negotiations, acting according to its interests. In an effort to maximize power, in this case economic power, China is willing to ignore criticism from the international community over IPR and currency devaluation because these issues provide a benefit for the Chinese economy. Beijing calculates that the gain from maintaining these policies outweighs cost of being criticized by some in the international community.

Despite having each of the Confucian ideological indicators present in China's relations with the United States, the Constructivist assessment failed to differentiate itself from Realist expectations in the sense that it always arrived at what are ultimately Realist conclusions – China consistently acted in accordance with its best interest. However, while the Realist assessment correctly characterizes Beijing's decisions as being motivated by the pursuit of power, it fails to explain *why* a particular decision was selected or *how* it was implemented. Therefore, when both theories are jointly used, Constructivism helps explain how a country arrived at Realist ends by clarifying the role of ideology in Chinese foreign policy.

In the context of this case study, because of the demonstrated presence of the indicators of a Confucian foreign policy, ideology appears to function as an intervening variable, between the independent variable of national interest and the dependent variable of Chinese foreign policy behavior. In other words, ideology impacts how Beijing understands and pursues its interests when crafting foreign policy. For example, while there were multiple possible ways for obtaining a favorable outcome in response to Taipei's separatist behavior, Confucian ideology affected the way Beijing perceived the issue and explains how it ultimately decided to pursue its interests.

#### *Case Study Two Analysis*

As with the previous section, I begin my analysis by providing a Constructivist assessment, followed by a Realist assessment. Then, I evaluate the two theories and discuss whether Realist Constructivism helps explain any gaps.

Much like in Sino-U.S. relations, there is evidence of the Confucian ideological indicators present in the Sino-Sudanese relationship. The first criterion is present in this

case because Beijing maintains a personal relationship with Bashir and the NIF. Khartoum is providing the Chinese with natural resources like oil – which China needs to fuel its growing economy – and therefore seeks to meet its obligations by continuing to ship weapons to Sudan. Moreover, the Confucian characteristic of valuing commitments arising out of personal relationships over external rules or laws is present in this case as well. Beijing’s arms transfers are contrary to calls from the UN or ICC because the Chinese place more emphasis on their *guanxi* obligations.

The second criterion pertaining to elitism can arguably be found in this case. As one commentator indicates, rather than ensure proper care is taken for human rights or the local environment, China exploits its African trading partners.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the noninterference principle is used to justify Beijing’s indifference to internal problems in Sudan as long as it continues to extract resources. This scenario is reflective of a China that views itself as hierarchically dominant and above the affairs of its trading partner.

The third criterion, which involves the importance of historical precedents, can also be found in China’s relationship with Sudan. Beijing’s interaction with Khartoum resembles China’s past interactions with neighbors like Korea or other nations in Southeast Asia. Rather than act directly as an imperial power in the traditional sense of the term, China would indirectly influence states along its periphery to ensure friendly governments maintained a positive relationship. For example, during the Qing dynasty in 1788, the Chinese intervened in Vietnam to ensure the dynasty they had installed retained power.<sup>85</sup> And, in 1894, during a Korean leadership struggle, China tried to intervene to

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<sup>84</sup> Tom Levitt, “China’s elitist approach to overseas investments,” *Chinadialogue.net*, February 25, 2013, para. 11.

<sup>85</sup> Spence, p. 109.

make sure a pro-Chinese leader took place.<sup>86</sup> It is possible these historical examples inform Beijing's contemporary Sudan policy. Much like the referenced Korea and Vietnam cases, the Chinese do not seek to colonize the country, but instead to manipulate it in a way to maintain access to Sudanese resources. Beijing does so by providing weapons that allow Khartoum to continue its internal conflicts, which, in turn, reinforces Khartoum's reliance on Chinese weaponry for survival.

The fourth indicator, exercising diplomatic restraint and taking the "long view," is demonstrated through China's noninterference policy. Its diplomats claim that in conducting business with the Sudanese, it is wrong to question Khartoum's domestic policies because to do so is an infringement of its sovereignty. By maintaining this argument, Beijing has two long-term goals. The first is to retain ties to Sudan in order to ensure the continued flow of oil and natural resources. The second is to avoid setting a precedent for the international community to interfere in cases where a government uses violent force to quell domestic opposition. Beijing may be worried that if another Tiananmen Square breaks out on their soil, the international community may intervene. These goals illustrate that Chinese foreign policy is taking a longer view in pursuing their interests.

The fifth criterion of emphasizing domestic stability is also present in this case. Beijing seeks to sustain its level of economic growth to prevent internal unrest because, from their perspective, economic strength provides social stability. Sudan offers key resources needed to keep such an economy running. So, in order to maintain harmony and ensure domestic stability, China is willing to endure relations with an international

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<sup>86</sup> Spence, p. 213.

pariah like Sudan and risk facing international pressure if it means the flow of resources will continue.

The above analysis represents a Constructivist assessment of Chinese engagement with Sudan. Again, much like the previous case study, a Realist would respond to this and argue that, rather than being driven by ideology, these foreign policy decisions were each motivated by pragmatic balance of power calculations. In actuality, China's behavior matches Realist expectations because Beijing pursued policies that are motivated by its best interest.

The crux of the Sino-Sudanese relationship—Chinese weapons and funds in response for Sudanese oil and natural resources—can be explained by China's pursuit of its national interest. China needs natural resources, especially oil, to fuel its economic growth, which Beijing believes is a crucial element for maintaining stability and, thus, maximizing power. Therefore, the advancement of this vital national interest outweighs criticism from the international community that China is ignoring U.N. sanctions.

Despite having each of the Confucian ideological indicators present in China's relations with Sudan, the Constructivist assessment failed to differentiate itself from Realist expectations in the sense that it always arrived at what are ultimately Realist conclusions: China consistently acted in accordance with its best interest, trading Khartoum weapons for oil, in spite of international criticism. However, while the Realist assessment correctly characterizes Beijing's decisions as being motivated by the pursuit of power, it fails to explain *why* a particular decision was selected or *how* it was implemented. Therefore, when both theories are jointly used, Constructivism helps

explain how a country arrived at Realist ends by elucidating the role of ideology in Chinese foreign policy.

In the context of this second case study, because of the demonstrated presence of the indicators of a Confucian foreign policy, ideology appears to function as an intervening variable, between the independent variable of national interest and the dependent variable of Chinese foreign policy behavior. As with the first case study, it is evident that ideology impacts how Beijing understands and pursues its interests when crafting foreign policy. For example, though Sudan is not the only source of oil in the world, the lens of Confucian ideology affects the way Beijing perceives its relationship with Sudan, as well as emphasizing the principle of noninterference, which motivates the Beijing to continue engaging with Khartoum in spite of U.N. sanctions.

*Table 2 – Confucian Influences in Chinese Foreign Policy:*

<b>Confucian Criterion</b>	<b>Sino-American Relationship</b>	<b>Sino-Sudanese Relationship</b>
First	Disregard for international laws regarding human rights and IPR in favor of relationship to Chinese population	Beijing maintains personal relationship with Bashir, despite ICC warrant for arrest
Second	Beijing views itself above international norms/laws	Beijing perceives itself as hierarchically superior and willing to exploit Sudan for its resources
Third	Taiwan crisis in 1996 was handled the same way as the two Taiwan crises in the 1950's	Relationship with Sudan is similar to China's historical relationship with states along its periphery
Fourth	Beijing gained psychological advantage before negotiating MFN status with Clinton; avoided direct military conflict in 1996 Taiwan crisis in favor of psychological measures and restraint	Beijing taking the "long view" in foreign policy toward Sudan to retain access to resources and avoid precedent for international intervention for human rights violations
Fifth	Beijing willing to sacrifice positive relations with Washington over MFN, IPR, and currency for sake of preserving domestic stability	To maintain flow of oil/resources to sustain economic growth, Beijing willing to risk international ire

## **Conclusion**

In sum, this chapter finds that Confucianism influences how today's Chinese government identifies its interests and thus crafts foreign policy. If one believes that states generally pursue self-interests when engaging with other actors in the international system, then it is important to understand how a given state interprets what exactly those interests are. In line with the Realist worldview, all of Beijing's actions outlined above can be linked to the pursuit of self-interest. However, by applying Constructivist concepts to this worldview in the form of measuring Confucianism's role as an intervening variable, we gain further insight into why a specific foreign policy decision was taken. This is crucial for understanding Chinese intent, which is important for clarifying whether Beijing intends to use its capabilities to threaten Washington.

After analyzing the case studies, it is clear that Confucianism plays an intervening role in Chinese foreign policy. In both studies, all five Confucian influence criteria were demonstrated, which signifies that there is a Confucian current in modern China's foreign relations. As discussed in the Methodology section, by examining China's relations with the United States and Sudan, two very different countries necessitating very different policies, the cases present a broad range of diplomatic behavior, which enhances the strength of my hypothesis. I concede that these cases studies may have incomplete data; it is difficult to completely understand the calculus behind a government's diplomatic decision-making, especially in light of the CCP's notorious secrecy. Yet, short of any new information from the CCP archives, this concession does not change my analysis, given that in each case all five criteria were demonstrated using available data,

demonstrating the role of the intervening variable (ideology) in the relationship between the independent (state interest) and dependent (foreign policy behavior) variables.

A skeptic may question my conclusion by arguing that the Confucian influence criteria outlined earlier may not necessarily be unique to Confucianism or China. They may contend that a Western country—one unaffected by Confucianism—could engage in foreign relations in a manner heavily influenced by personal relationships or with a minimization of military might in favor of psychological measures. I agree that some of these factors may be present in a non-Confucian state's foreign policy and, independently, each criterion is not inherently Confucian. However, the presence of multiple criteria across multiple cases would indicate a Confucian influence by eliminating the possibility of coincidence. Further, this chapter seeks only to understand China's foreign policy behavior and, thus, can only attest to the presence of these criteria in the context of modern China. Perhaps an avenue of future research would be to determine whether states without a Confucian legacy conduct a foreign policy in line with Confucianism.

This study argues that Confucianism is a cultural lens through which the Chinese perceive the international system and, consequently, how they approach their foreign policy imperatives. As such, when analysts or policymakers seek to understand Beijing's diplomatic behavior, they should keep this in mind. An issue that may seem trivial to, say, the United States, may hold additional significance for the Chinese because of concerns over domestic stability, for example. Or, China's reluctance to engage militarily over a particular issue should not be interpreted as weakness, but should be considered part of the Chinese diplomatic strategy of utilizing restraint and taking the

“long view” to achieve their goals. Such knowledge would help better inform policymakers’ understanding of the intent behind Chinese foreign policy behavior.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM IN PAKISTANI FOREIGN POLICY

### Introduction

Pakistan is often the subject of unflattering headlines. The Islamic Republic is routinely criticized by the West for supporting violent Islamic extremist groups as an instrument of its foreign policy. Unfortunately for Islamabad, controlling these terror groups is proving to be exceedingly difficult and many are now attacking the Pakistani government. Outside observers increasingly question whether the insurgency will result in a failed state. Complicating matters further, Pakistan is a nuclear power and securing its nuclear arsenal is essential. For example, A.Q. Khan, the Pakistani nuclear scientist accused of selling nuclear secrets, is viewed as a criminal by much of the international community for his illicit nuclear proliferation network, but in Pakistan, he is praised as a hero.<sup>87</sup>

Pakistan is a complicated place. Observers often find themselves wondering why Islamabad makes its policy choices. Scholars have written countless articles and books to better understand Pakistan's behavior.<sup>88</sup> Much of this research falls in line with Realism by emphasizing the balance of power calculations of the Pakistani Army, often at the expense of exploring the country's Islamic identity. That said, there are some authors who take a more Constructivist approach by taking Pakistan's Islamic origins into

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<sup>87</sup> Economist, "A hero at home, a villain abroad: The nuclear network of A.Q. Khan," 19 June 2008, para. 14.

<sup>88</sup> To name a few modern selections: Stephen Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Brookings Institution, Washington D.C.: 2004); Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (Yale University Press, New Haven: 2009); Stephen Krasner, "Talking Tough to Pakistan: How to End Islamabad's Defiance," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2013.

consideration.<sup>89</sup> These scholars, however, tend to analyze the general influence of Islam in Pakistani domestic politics. Other than examining its ties to Islamic terrorist proxy groups, the existing literature does not spend as much time examining the role of Islam in Islamabad's foreign policy calculus.<sup>90</sup>

This chapter tries to fill this void and tests whether Realist Constructivism can shed light not only Pakistan's ties to militant proxy groups, but also its broader foreign policy. I agree with the Realist argument that Pakistan's foreign relations can be characterized as the pursuit of Pakistani national interest. However, I also believe that by incorporating Constructivism and viewing Pakistan's behavior through an Islamic lens I can provide a deeper understanding of the resultant foreign policy. If Pakistani foreign policy is the dependent variable and pursuit of interests is the independent variable, I measure whether Islam—functioning as a Constructivist ideology—is an intervening variable. To prove this point, I will assess Pakistan's foreign relations from a Constructivist perspective and then from a Realist perspective. Subsequently, I will evaluate the two theories to determine whether any gaps exist that might be better explained by Realist Constructivism. I would note that evidence of ideology influencing foreign policy behavior does not indicate that ideology in fact caused the behavior; instead, it simply suggests ideology plays an intervening role that is worth examining in order to better understand that behavior.

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<sup>89</sup> Some notable examples include: Iftikhar Malik, *Islam, Nationalism, and the West: Issues of Identity in Pakistan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc, 1999); Ziaul Haque, "Pakistan and Islamic Ideology," *Pakistan: The Roots of Dictatorship*, ed. Hassan Gardezi and Jamil Rashid (London: Zed Press, 1983); Abbas Rashid, "Pakistan: The Ideological Dimension," *Islam, Politics, and the State*, ed. Khan.

<sup>90</sup> One exception is S. A. M. Pasha's *Islam in Pakistan's Foreign Policy*, which I discuss at length in a later section of the paper.

I begin by outlining existing literature on Islam and politics. Next, I outline key criteria that, if present in the data, serve as an indicator of Islamic influence, proving an intervening relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Subsequently, I discuss the methodology for the two case studies to be examined:

Pakistan's relationship with the United States and with Saudi Arabia. Finally, I present the results of this analysis and provide concluding remarks.

### **Politics and Islam**

There is a broad literature base that examines the origins of Islam and Islamic politics. Many scholars break down Islamic theological tenets to highlight the inherent entanglement of Islam and politics. These authors tend to view Islam as being a “religiopolitical movement,” where the religion plays a crucial role for both the state and society.<sup>91</sup> In going back the origins of Islam, its “simple” message of “justice, freedom, and social equality” allowed the religion to expand so quickly.<sup>92</sup>

Rather than solely dealing with spiritual concerns, Islam's popularity was in part due to its ability to speak to worldly issues like poverty and equality. Because of this, Islam is easily incorporated into the political realm because its core precepts deal with concepts that normally fall under the purview of a political entity. As a result, an important part of being Muslim means not only internalizing the faith, but also outwardly expressing it. Given the importance of outward expression, communities of those with

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<sup>91</sup> John L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998), p. 3.

<sup>92</sup> Mohammad Asghar Khan, “Introduction,” *Islam, Politics, and the State* (London: Zed Books, 1985), p. 1.

similar behaviors tend to form societies who enshrine their religiously derived preferences in the form of laws.<sup>93</sup> Bernard Lewis explained this concept when he said:

For Muslims, the state was God's state, the army God's army, and, of course, the enemy was God's enemy. Of more practical importance, the law was God's law, and in principle there could be no other. The question of separating the church and state did not arise, since there was no Church, as an autonomous institution, to be separated. Church and state were one and the same.<sup>94</sup>

One of the major reasons for this Islamic perception of church and state is that Muhammad, the first Muslim politician, wielded both religious and secular political authority. Thus, in worshipping Muhammad, Muslims extol his spiritual and political acts, making the two fields less distinct. Furthermore, Muslims attach great importance to the Islamic caliphate because it was a polity established by the Prophet himself.<sup>95</sup>

Another vein of literature on Islam and politics explores pre-modern Muslim politics and history. More specifically, these writings deal with the rise and fall of the Islamic caliphate, the prominence of which essentially serves as a barometer for Islamic influence throughout the world. Islam continued to spread, under the aegis of the Islamic caliphate, until about the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>96</sup> The caliphate is presented as the first manifestation of an Islamic political entity. However, soon after the death of Muhammad, conflict within the caliphate became more widespread, leading to the eventual fragmentation into different sects. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore the issue too deeply, the conflict within Islam signifies that, in the words of

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<sup>93</sup> C. A. O. Van Nieuwenhuijze, "Islamism: A Defiant Utopianism," *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, Vol. 35, Issue 1, April 1995, p. 2.

<sup>94</sup> Bernard Lewis, "Muslims Christians, and Jews: The Dream of Coexistence," *New York Review of Books*, 26 March 1992.

<sup>95</sup> Iftikhar Malik, *Islam, Nationalism, and the West: Issues of Identity in Pakistan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc, 1999), p. 101.

<sup>96</sup> Ziaul Haque, "Pakistan and Islamic Ideology," *Pakistan: The Roots of Dictatorship*, ed. Hassan Gardezi and Jamil Rashid (London: Zed Press, 1983), p. 367-369.

one scholar, “Islamic ideology ... is amenable to very different interpretations.”<sup>97</sup>

Islam’s susceptibility to interpretation carries over into politics, creating a potential for internal conflict.

## **Islam and Pakistani Politics**

### *Pre-Statehood*

In much of the literature detailing Islam and politics, Pakistan is a common case study used to demonstrate the relationship in the modern era. As such, academics have written extensively on the establishment of the Pakistani state, which was founded as a homeland for Muslims. One Pakistani author encapsulates well the role of Islam in Pakistani society:

The mind of the Pakistani intellectual has often been agitated by considerations of the question of our national identity. But since the traumatic events of 1871, this self-questioning has assumed the proportions of a compelling necessity ... If we let go the ideology of Islam, we cannot hold together as a nation by any other means ... If the Arabs, the Turks, the Iranians, God forbid, give up Islam, the Arabs yet remain Arabs, the Turks remain Turks, the Iranians remain Iranians, but what do we remain if we give up Islam?<sup>98</sup>

As this quotation suggests, Islam is considered essential to Pakistan’s identity. Literature that deals with this topic tends to focus on the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his vision for an Islamic state in South Asia. As Jinnah said, “Islam was not only a set of rituals, traditions and spiritual doctrine. Islam is a code for every Muslim, which regulated his life and his conduct – all aspects.”<sup>99</sup> Only an Islamic state, in accordance with Muslim principles, he believed, was qualified to regulate the life of a Muslim.

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<sup>97</sup> Haque, p. 368.

<sup>98</sup> Quoted in Ashok Behuria, “The Islamist Impulse Haunting Pakistan,” *Strategic Analysis*, 35: 1, 11 January 2011, p. 14.

<sup>99</sup> Abbas Rashid, “Pakistan: The Ideological Dimension,” *Islam, Politics, and the State*, ed. Khan, p. 79-80.

Before Pakistan became a state in 1947, religion was used to foster a sense of identity and community in light of concerns by leaders in the Indian Muslim community that they would be politically, economically, and socially marginalized by the Indian Hindu majority.<sup>100</sup> As independence from Britain became a reality, politicians and religious figures who advocated for a separate Muslim state sought to deepen the Indian Muslim's connection to Islam.<sup>101</sup> By whipping up emotions over religion, a religion deeply enmeshed with politics, Pakistan advocates created a capacity for the Indian Muslims to demand a separate Muslim state.

Thus, a sense of Islamic nationalism was instilled upon the Muslims of the subcontinent, fostering a desire for a separate state. This new state promised an Islamic “system” with more equitable economic and social structures.<sup>102</sup> Such concepts clearly harkened back to the idealized early days of the Islamic caliphate when it was first established by the Prophet Muhammad, as detailed in the previous section of this chapter.

### *Post-Statehood*

Despite the religious foundation on which Pakistan was established, the government in Islamabad was not, as one would expect in a traditional Islamic state, Sharia-based and run by a council of religious clerics. Instead, Jinnah used Islamic symbols to inspire Pakistani nationalism based on religion and created a government that more closely resembled a liberal democracy.<sup>103</sup> This led to an inherent conflict within Pakistani society between those seeking a modernized, moderate state and those who

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<sup>100</sup> Haque, p. 372-373.

<sup>101</sup> S. A. M. Pasha, *Islam in Pakistan's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi, Global Media Productions: 2005), p. 14-15.

<sup>102</sup> Haque, p. 374-375.

<sup>103</sup> Behuria, p. 14; Haque, p. 374-375; Pasha, p. 14-15.

desired a traditional Sharia based system.<sup>104</sup> Though some debate exists over how pervasive of a role Jinnah envisioned religion playing in Pakistani politics, he died before clearly articulating a solution, leaving behind these conflicting mindsets in Pakistani society.<sup>105</sup>

### *The Zia ul-Haq Years*

A key event in advancing Pakistan's political relationship with Islam was the rule of military leader Zia ul-Haq (1977-1988). Zia's strong personal faith influenced his policies and, subsequently, Islamist tendencies began to appear throughout Pakistani policy.<sup>106</sup> Although using Islam to encourage nationalism was not a new concept in Pakistan, scholars argue that Zia is largely responsible for facilitating the Islamization of Pakistani society.<sup>107</sup> When Zia came to power in 1977, he perceived himself as a "soldier of Islam" with a mandate to end the socialist and secular policies of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, from whom Zia seized power.<sup>108</sup> Not only that, but because Zia obtained power in a coup and was not democratically elected, presenting a strong Islamic character and vision for the state allowed Zia to gain legitimacy in the eyes of domestic audiences.<sup>109</sup>

For example, elements of Sharia were enforced in Pakistani law, including mandatory prayer during office hours for Pakistani businesses and requiring women to wear hijabs (headscarves). Moreover, Zia altered the education system to more closely adhere to Islamic principles and revitalized state organizations relating to Islam, such as

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<sup>104</sup> Behuria, p. 14.

<sup>105</sup> Behuria, p. 14.

<sup>106</sup> Behuria, p. 14.

<sup>107</sup> To name a few, articles on this topic include: Nasim Jawed, *Islam's Political Culture: Religion and Politics in Predivided Pakistan* (Austin, University of Texas Press: 1999), p. 49; Sharif Shuja, "Pakistan: Islam, Radicalism and the Army," *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. 24, No. 2, June 2007; Vali Nasr, "Military Rule, Islamism and Democracy in Pakistan," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 2, Spring 2004; Pasha, p. 121.

<sup>108</sup> Nasr, p. 196; Pasha, p. 121.

<sup>109</sup> Pasha, p. 153-154.

the Council of Islamic Ideology.<sup>110</sup> As one commentator stated, the “Zia period witnessed the Islamization of laws, public policy, and popular culture, producing a unique case of systematic propagation of Islamism from above.”<sup>111</sup>

While Zia’s Islamization policies had a major impact on Pakistani society, nowhere was this more strongly felt than in the military. Prior to Zia, the culture of the army was heavily influenced by its formal colonial patron, the British, which entailed a secular focus on military strategy. However, during Zia’s rule, this was deliberately changed and Islam played a dominant role in the army’s culture. One way this was achieved was by recruiting numerous members from the prominent Islamist political group that backed Zia, Jamaat i-Islami, who also instilled Muslim values on previously non-religious recruits through mosques located in the military barracks.<sup>112</sup>

It was also under Zia that the United States closely engaged with the Pakistanis to fund and equip the Afghan mujahedeen against the Soviet invasion. These fighters, which were predominantly Afghan Pashtuns, were based out of Pashtun populated areas within Pakistan. It was here that Zia arranged for not only material support, but ideological as well. Religious clerics and madrasas (religious schools) were established in the Pashtun areas along the border with Afghanistan to instill a form of Islamism that Zia believe he would be able to leverage in the future. This set the stage for the rise of the Taliban, who were radicalized Afghan Pashtuns educated at Zia’s madrasas and took over Afghanistan in the mid-1990s. Pakistan backed the Taliban in an effort to install a government friendly with Islamabad in Kabul. By doing so, however, a strong current of Islamic extremism gained a foothold not only in Afghanistan, but parts of Pakistan as

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<sup>110</sup> Pasha, p. 154.

<sup>111</sup> Nasr, p. 196.

<sup>112</sup> Pasha, p. 156-157.

well, leading to the eventual formation of the Pakistani Taliban that is currently waging an insurgency against the government.<sup>113</sup>

*Musharraf's Confrontation with Islamists*

In recent years, a broad body of literature has been produced focusing on the Islamist insurgency waged by the Pakistani Taliban against Islamabad. To explain the roots of the current tensions between the Islamists and the Pakistani government, discussions tend to start with the Zia years and then discuss Pervez Musharraf's rule, which began in the late 1990s. In 1988, after Zia died in a plane crash, military rule ended and Pakistani society moved toward democracy and secularization, at the expense of the military and Islamist elements that had gripped the country for the past decade. Pakistan, in the subsequent years, was led by the civilian governments of Nawaz Sharif, Benazir Bhutto, and Sharif again. Although Sharif was brought into power by the military, he realized the political benefits of distancing himself from them, while Bhutto was wary of the military in large part because they executed her father, Zulfikar.<sup>114</sup> Subsequently, tensions arose between the military and its Islamist allies and the secular civilian government.

In 1999, these tensions came to a head when Musharraf came to power after ejecting Sharif in a military coup. After September 11, 2001, the Americans invaded Afghanistan and dislodged the Taliban, an ally of Pakistan. The long-standing Pakistani strategy of backing Islamic extremist proxy groups in Afghanistan to further foreign policy goals suddenly became much more difficult to maintain.<sup>115</sup> While Islamabad maintained ties with a few of these Islamist groups, Musharraf severed relations with the

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<sup>113</sup> Pasha, p. 143-145.

<sup>114</sup> Shuja, p. 29-30; Nasr, p. 198-199.

<sup>115</sup> Shuja, p. 29.

majority.<sup>116</sup> In 2007, tensions between the military and the Islamists, however, came to a head when Musharraf ordered the Pakistani military to storm the notoriously hardline Red Mosque, which was barricaded by Islamists in defiance of government. According to one scholar, this event is significant because Pakistan had historically acquiesced to the Islamists in order to prevent instability, but Musharraf decided to change this policy. The military viewed extremism as a “strategic tool akin to a weapons system” and, now that Musharraf had largely reduced the Islamic ideology from the military, this particular “tool” ceased to be of use.<sup>117</sup> Additionally, unlike Zia, both Musharraf and the civilian government were more openly secular, meaning Islamabad lacked the religious credentials to control the Islamist militants.<sup>118</sup> Thus, the Red Mosque incident catalyzed radical Islamist forces, triggering a backlash against the Pakistani state.<sup>119</sup>

The outcome was a violent insurgency that, at first glance, appears to be a battle between secularized modernists and Islamic radicals. The truth, however, is not so black and white. As one scholar argues, while the majority of Pakistanis are moderate, they tend to sympathize with some Pakistani extremists’ stance against what they perceive as the victimization of Muslims by the United States.<sup>120</sup> However, after their presumed involvement in the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, Islamabad has made a more concerted effort to combat Islamic militants in their strongholds in the tribal areas of western Pakistan. Bhutto’s death also led to the election of her husband, Asif Ali Zardari in the elections that followed Musharraf stepping down from power.<sup>121</sup> This is generally

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<sup>116</sup> Nasr, p. 201-202.

<sup>117</sup> Nasr, p. 201-202.

<sup>118</sup> Nasr, p. 207-208.

<sup>119</sup> Jones, p. 9; Nasr, p. 199.

<sup>120</sup> Jones, p. 13.

<sup>121</sup> Jones, p. 36-37.

the scenario Pakistan confronts today, with a moderate civilian government confronted by an Islamic insurgency.

### **Historical Examples of Islam in Pakistani Foreign Policy**

As mentioned earlier, this is not the first study to touch on the role of Islam in Pakistan's foreign policy. The scholar S. A. M. Pasha focused on this issue at length in his book *Islam in Pakistan's Foreign Policy*, where he argues that Islam has played a role in the foreign policy of each Pakistani leader and it at times may be used as a tool to achieve certain objectives or as an ideological driver for action. In other words, Pasha also argued for the role of a Constructivist ideology playing the role of an intervening variable that explains the reasons behind Pakistani foreign policy behavior. His analysis, however, stops in the 1990s. While my writing is differentiated by its focus on contemporary Pakistani international relations, there is value in outlining some of Pasha's key findings.

After attaining independence, Pakistan sought to establish close relations with other Muslim countries, like Iran and Turkey, and expressed vocal support for Muslim causes worldwide, like the Palestinian issue. This was based on the fact that Pakistan, as a Muslim homeland, believed that it was ideologically impelled to support Islamic causes around this globe.<sup>122</sup> This soon evolved into Islamabad trying to use its Islamic identity as a means of leveraging influence over other Muslim countries. However, this strategy was dashed after Pakistani's clashed with the Egyptians over the Suez crisis because Islamabad had pre-existing anti-Communist ties with the West and, thus, could not openly support Cairo. Islamabad was criticized by other Muslim states because of their lack of support, weakening its attempts to seek influence at the Muslim World

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<sup>122</sup> Pasha, p. 226.

Congress.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, the Egyptian leader Gamal Nasser's Pan-Arab ideology ultimately relegated Pakistan's efforts to establish a worldwide Islamic identity over which Pakistan would dominate.<sup>124</sup>

After Pakistan was split and Bangladesh became an independent state in 1971, Pasha argues that Islamabad sought to portray itself as an Islamic martyr suffering at the hands of outside power in an effort to gain sympathy and support from the Muslim world. While Bangladesh remained independent, Pakistan, under Zulfikar Bhutto, was successful to an extent and leveraged its Islamic ideology to receive economic support from the oil-wealthy Gulf countries, like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, in return for Pakistani military assistance.<sup>125</sup>

As touched on earlier, soon after Zia took over Pakistan, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. American aid notwithstanding, Zia garnered support from Muslims around the world in repelling the Soviets – via the Afghan mujahedeen – by articulating Islamic ideals regarding the obligation of the *umma*, or Islamic community, to defend the Afghan Muslims who were under attack. Zia did the same thing against the Indians over the Kashmir dispute. By invoking Islamic principles, Islamabad was able to motivate Islamic extremist groups to carry out Pakistani foreign policy objectives. In doing so, Pasha assesses that Zia encouraged a steady stream of Islamist extremists in both Afghanistan and Kashmir. Additionally, the religious argumentation strengthened Islamabad's economic and military relationship with the Gulf States.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Pasha, p. 226.

<sup>124</sup> Pasha, p. 51-52.

<sup>125</sup> Pasha, p. 227-228

<sup>126</sup> Pasha, p. 230-231.

Pasha ends his study by discussing Benazir Bhutto's presidency and her relationship with Islam. On the one hand, she continued to express solidarity for Muslim causes, such as the plight of the Palestinians. On the other hand, she also pushed for women's rights at Islamic conferences, offering a more moderate vision of Islam and experiencing deterioration in relations with conservative Gulf States like Saudi Arabia.<sup>127</sup>

### **Indicators of an Islamic Foreign Policy**

As the foregoing literature review indicates, there is a connection between Islam and Pakistani politics. In order to measure whether this connection extends into Pakistan's contemporary foreign policy, indicators must be defined of what exactly an Islamic Pakistani foreign policy would look like.

One indicator of an Islamic foreign policy is expressing solidarity with fellow Muslim populations. As discussed in the previous section, soon after its independence, Pakistani leaders identified with and sought to support Muslim causes around the globe. For example, in Indonesia, Islamabad vociferously defended Indonesian Muslims against heavy-handed Dutch policies.<sup>128</sup> Because Pakistan perceives itself as a homeland for Muslims, it feels a sense of loyalty to the *umma* – the Islamic community – regardless of their location.

A second indicator of an Islamic foreign policy is acting in concordance with Islamic principles. For example, Zia argued that it was the duty of all Muslim nations to defend the *umma* in Afghanistan, which was then under attack by the Soviets in Afghanistan. In stating his case for intervention, Zia invoked Islamic ideals of collective

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<sup>127</sup> Pasha, p. 232-233.

<sup>128</sup> Pasha, 226-227.

defense against an invading non-Muslim force.<sup>129</sup> Similarly, in 1971 when Pakistan was being split into Pakistan and Bangladesh, Pakistani leader Zulfikhar Bhutto, in an effort to solicit assistance from its allies, portrayed the state as a martyr at the hands of outside interference.<sup>130</sup>

A third and final indicator of an Islamic foreign policy would be an alliance with other Muslim states. As touched on in the literature review, Pakistan had close ties with the Muslim Arab states in the Gulf, despite having a different nationality. It is apparent that much of this is due to the common Islamic heritage and Pakistan's identity as a homeland for Muslims.

### **Methodology**

The cases I examine for this study are Pakistan's relationships with the United States and Saudi Arabia. Each is discussed in their modern context, which is defined in the case study. Examining U.S. and Saudi Arabian relations with Pakistan encapsulates the concern of many states' foreign policies: managing a relationship with a dominant power that has opposing interests and engaging with a historical ally. Given the different types of engagement required for such scenarios, these case studies provide an opportunity to examine a broad range of activity.

The reader may be curious as to why India was not selected for a case study, given their close and violent history with Pakistan. Due to the constraints of this chapter, I deliberately avoided using Indo-Pakistani relations as a case study because of the size and complexity of the issue. The sheer multitude of topics requiring discussion would

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<sup>129</sup> Pasha, p. 230-231.

<sup>130</sup> Pasha, p. 227-228.

take away from my focus on the role of Islam in Pakistani foreign policy. Future researchers, however, may find merit in performing such an examination.

The technique used to measure whether Islam influences modern Pakistani foreign policy is process tracing. In each case study, I look back at series of events (i.e., Pakistani diplomatic behavior) within a defined period of time. Rather than scrutinize every aspect of the Saudi-Pakistani or U.S.-Pakistani relationships, I chose simply to focus on the more prominent issues. I acknowledge that Islamabad and Washington are technically allies, as are Islamabad and Riyadh. However, the relationship with the United States is not always positive and can, at times, be adversarial. As such, there are substantial differences involved in Islamabad's engagement with Washington and Riyadh to provide a broad cross section of activity to examine.

### **Case Study One: U.S.-Pakistani Relations**

As referenced earlier, the United States and Pakistan have a complicated relationship. During the Cold War, the two were technically allies against the Soviet Union, in large part because Pakistan's Islamic ideology made it incompatible with communism.<sup>131</sup> The relationship was tempered, however, after Pakistan grew closer with China and Washington backed the Indians in the Sino-Indian War in the early 1960's. In 1977, Zia took power in a coup, prompting Washington to levy sanctions against Pakistan, which soured relations. The relationship was so poor that in 1979, the Pakistani government permitted mobs to burn the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. However, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reversed this dynamic, resulting in renewed U.S.-Pakistani cooperation against the Soviets. The relationship again stagnated during the 1990s in light of Islamabad's acquisition of nuclear weapons, making the more

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<sup>131</sup> Cohen, 302.

economically dynamic India the favored partner.<sup>132</sup> This brief overview highlights a general pattern of engagement and withdrawal between the United States and Pakistan.

After the September 11, 2001 attacks, U.S.-Pakistani relations entered a period of engagement, marking the beginning of my first case study. In the context of this chapter, I define contemporary U.S.-Pakistani relations as beginning after September 2001, when the United States invaded Afghanistan to pursue al-Qaeda. In this case study, I describe critical events between the two countries and detail Pakistan's responses to be later examined in the analysis section.

In light of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Washington pressed Islamabad to withdraw its support for the Taliban in Afghanistan and become a key U.S. ally in the Global War on Terror. Given that Pakistan had been an essential component in the creation of the Taliban as means for exerting influence in Afghanistan, this sudden cutting of ties was not an easy choice.<sup>133</sup> Islamabad was also requested to aid the United States in rooting out al-Qaeda elements from within Pakistan, especially its tribal areas in the northwest regions of the county. In response, Washington provided the Pakistanis roughly \$1 billion in grants and an additional \$1 billion of debt was forgiven, not to mention an additional \$3 billion of aid to be distributed over the course five years.<sup>134</sup>

However, Pakistan did not fully cut off ties with Islamic extremists in the Afghan-Pakistan border region, which adversely impacted the American war in Afghanistan and the broader relationship between the United States and Pakistan.<sup>135</sup> Former chairman of

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<sup>132</sup> Cohen, p. 302-304.

<sup>133</sup> Naeem Ahmed, "Re-Defining U.S.-Pakistan Relations," *Dialogue (Pakistan)*, Vol. 7, Issue 3, September 2012, p. 3-5.

<sup>134</sup> Touqir Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement: The War on Terrorism and Beyond* (DIANE Publishing, 2009), p. 5-6.

<sup>135</sup> Husain Haqqani, "Breaking Up Is Not Hard to Do: Why the U.S.-Pakistani Alliance Isn't Worth the Trouble," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2013, para. 24-26.

the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, clearly articulates this point in 2011 when he testified to Congress that the Haqqani network—an Islamic militant group first formed in the 1980s by the Pakistanis to combat Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—is an “arm” of Pakistani intelligence and responsible for attacks against U.S. forces.<sup>136</sup> In that same testimony, Admiral Mullen underscores Washington’s perspective on Islamabad’s strategy when he says, “In choosing to use violent extremism as an instrument of policy, the government of Pakistan . . . jeopardizes not only the prospect of our strategic partnership but Pakistan’s opportunity to be a respected nation with a legitimate regional influence.”<sup>137</sup>

Yet, despite Washington’s unambiguous stance on this issue, Islamabad apparently does not trust the Americans to keep their regional security interests in mind. As a result, to this day, Pakistan retains its links to Islamic militants.<sup>138</sup> Pakistan views groups like the Haqqani network as strategic assets for exerting influence throughout the region and as long as these groups avoid targeting the Pakistani state, Islamabad seems willing to maintain ties. In 2012, this point was made apparent when a senior Haqqani network commander publicly acknowledged a peace deal the group maintains with the Pakistani military.<sup>139</sup>

A consequence of Pakistan’s links to violent extremist groups is that many in Washington are calling for an end to U.S. aid to Pakistan. Such rhetoric is likely intended to threaten more than indicate an actual change in policy, as evidenced by the recent announcement that Washington will resume its \$1.5 billion of assistance to

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<sup>136</sup> Adam Levine, “Pakistan supports Haqqani network, Admiral Mullen tells Congress,” CNN.com, 23 September, 2011, para. 1-2.

<sup>137</sup> Haqqani, para. 26.

<sup>138</sup> Ahmed, p. 8-10.

<sup>139</sup> Ahmed, p. 9.

Pakistan that was put on hold after the 2011 nadir in U.S.-Pakistani relations.<sup>140</sup>

Nonetheless, a pattern begins to emerge: as Pakistan takes action against Islamic extremists in the Afghan-Pakistan border region, U.S. aid continues to flow, and vice-versa. Given that Pakistan's economy can be somewhat unstable, American aid, exceeding \$15 billion in the decades following September 11, is an important incentive for Islamabad to cooperate with the United States on counter-terror issues.<sup>141</sup>

Pakistan's inconsistent counter-terror efforts have prompted the Americans to take matters into their own hands, in the form of drone strikes and cross-border raids. Washington argues that its drone strikes are used against specific terrorist targets that threaten the United States and/or American lives.<sup>142</sup> Groups like the Taliban and al-Qaeda—with the former threatening U.S. troops in Afghanistan and the latter threatening Americans around the globe—are taking refuge in the tribal regions of northwest Pakistan. As such, Washington is determined to eliminate this safe haven with the use of drones, given that the Pakistani military has a limited reach in some of these areas.<sup>143</sup>

Islamabad, however, argues that drone strikes infringe on its sovereignty and kill civilians. Moreover, drone strikes are unpopular amongst the Pakistani population, which in turn pressures Islamabad to speak out against these strikes, resulting in some Pakistani military leaders threatening to shoot down American drones.<sup>144</sup> In November 2011, disagreements between the two over sovereignty issues came to a head when a cross-border NATO airstrike resulted in the death of 24 Pakistani soldiers. In response,

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<sup>140</sup> Thom Shanker, "Aid to Pakistan to Resume as Tension With U.S. Eases," NY Times Online, 19 October 2013, para. 1-2.

<sup>141</sup> Ahmed, p. 7.

<sup>142</sup> Greg Miller, "Brennan speech is first Obama acknowledgement of use of armed drones," Washing Post Online, 30 April 2012, para. 1-2.

<sup>143</sup> Ahmed, p. 11.

<sup>144</sup> Haqqani, para. 33; Declan Walsh and Ismail Khan, "Pakistani Party Votes to Block NATO Supply Lines if Drone Strikes Persist," NY Times Online, 04 November 2013, para. 1-4.

Pakistan closed logistics routes used by the U.S. military to resupply its forces in Afghanistan.<sup>145</sup> Tensions continued to simmer as Pakistan boycotted a conference on Afghanistan's future and publicly renounced Washington's account of the strike because it implied the Pakistanis were partly at fault.<sup>146</sup> Islamabad kept the supply lines closed through mid-2012, until Washington apologized—albeit indirectly—for the drone strike. During this shut down, Washington was forced to establish expensive supply chain alternatives through Central Asia, costing the United States an additional 100 million dollars per month.<sup>147</sup>

In large part, Islamabad's harsh reaction to the November 2011 airstrike is because it occurred just months after U.S. Special Forces killed Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan. This event was perceived as an embarrassment to the Pakistani government because Islamabad was portrayed as either colluding with Bin Laden or being too incompetent to know where he was located.<sup>148</sup> Pakistan was angered by the American cross-border raid and even sentenced to prison a Pakistani doctor who reportedly helped the United States locate Bin Laden.<sup>149</sup> These events were subsequently followed by a deterioration of U.S.-Pakistani relations.

Pakistan's relationship with Abdul Qadeer Khan—who sold nuclear technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea—is another sore point in U.S.-Pakistani relations. In 2004, Khan publicly confessed to running an illegal nuclear proliferation network, though his behavior was suspected by the U.S. well before he came forward seeking a pardon from

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<sup>145</sup> Haqqani, para. 32.

<sup>146</sup> Karen DeYoung and Richard Leiby, "Pakistan agrees to open supply lines after U.S. apology," Washington Post Online, 03 July 2012, para. 28-30.

<sup>147</sup> DeYoung, para. 1-5.

<sup>148</sup> Chris Allbritton and Rebecca Conway, "Analysis: In Pakistan, embarrassed silence on killing," Reuters, 02 May 2011, para. 5-9.

<sup>149</sup> Shanker, para. 9.

the Pakistani government.<sup>150</sup> The point of contention here for Washington is that after Khan came forwards, the Americans were not allowed access to Khan. This led some observers to believe his actions were sanctioned by certain members of the Pakistani government who fear being named should Khan be interviewed by outside sources.<sup>151</sup> After his public admission of guilt, Khan received the relatively light punishment of being placed under house arrest and was later released in 2009. In large part, this may be due to the fact that many Pakistanis regard Khan as a national hero for helping Pakistan become a nuclear power – a process in which he played a major role as a nuclear scientist.<sup>152</sup>

As of this writing, many of the previously discussed issues remain problem areas in U.S.-Pakistani relations. In early November 2013, Islamabad was deliberating whether to again close U.S. military supply lines unless Washington halts drone strikes on Pakistani soil.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and U.S. President Barak Obama very recently met in Washington to discuss, among other things, drone strikes, cooperation against terrorism, and U.S. financial aid for Pakistan.<sup>154</sup> Pakistan's inconsistent commitment to combating extremism impacts Washington's willingness to provide aid to Pakistan. At the same time, U.S. drone strikes and cross-border raids seem to make the Pakistani's less willing to cooperate against these terrorists.

### **Case Study Two: Saudi-Pakistani Relations**

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<sup>150</sup> Ahmed, p. 12.

<sup>151</sup> Salman Masood and David E. Sanger, "Pakistan Frees Nuclear Dealer in Snub to U.S.," NY Times Online, 06 February 2009, para. 16

<sup>152</sup> Masood, para. 1-4.

<sup>153</sup> Walsh, para. 1-3.

<sup>154</sup> Mark Felsenthal, "Pakistan prime minister urges Obama to end drone strikes," Reuters, 23 October 2013, para 1-2.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia maintain a deep-rooted alliance that extends back even before Pakistani independence. Many South Asian Muslims, who later became Pakistanis, had been visiting Saudi Arabia for the Hajj for years and Saudi leaders previously donated money to Jinnah's Muslim League in what was then British India.<sup>155</sup> In large part, the common Islamic identity and culture provides a foundation for the political, security, and economic ties between Riyadh and Islamabad – ties that have remained steadfast over the years. In the words of the late Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, "Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are one country; they are more than friends and more than brothers."<sup>156</sup>

A key moment in the relationship between the two occurred in 1967, when a bilateral defense treaty was signed between Riyadh and Islamabad, committing Pakistan to provide military and technical support in return for Saudi economic and political support. Notably, for example, this treaty led to the Pakistanis modernizing the Saudi air force – both civilian and military.<sup>157</sup> In fact, members of the Pakistani air force engaged in combat missions against the Israelis in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Riyadh returned the favor in Pakistan's 1971 war with India, providing military and economic support as well as holding out on acknowledging Bangladesh's independence until Islamabad approved.<sup>158</sup> And, as some observers argue, it was during this time period that the Saudis

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<sup>155</sup> Naveed Ahmad, "Pakistan-Saudi Relations," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 1982, p. 51.

<sup>156</sup> Mehmood Ul-Hassan Khan, "Pakistan Saudi Arabia Bilateral Relations: A Research Study," *Defence Journal*, 01 June 2012, p. 77.

<sup>157</sup> Ahmad, p. 52-53.

<sup>158</sup> Christopher Clary and Mara Karlin, "The Pak-Saudi Nuke, and How to Stop it," *American Interest*, 01 July 2012, p. 27.

first invested in the Pakistani nuclear program in return for Saudi Arabia being under Pakistan's security umbrella.<sup>159</sup>

In the 1980s, Saudi-Pakistan relations accelerated under Zia, whose religiosity provided him justification for more closely aligning with Saudi Arabia.<sup>160</sup> Riyadh was fearful of post-Revolutionary Iran and sought Pakistani military support, with some estimates indicating up to 20,000 Pakistan soldiers were present in Saudi Arabia during this period.<sup>161</sup> Also, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, along with the United States, provided extensive financing to Pakistani efforts to train and equip the Afghan mujahedeen.<sup>162</sup> Further to military financing, Riyadh also played a key role in establishing many of the Wahhabi madrasas built throughout the Afghan-Pakistan border region, which ended up providing the ideological inspiration for the Taliban.<sup>163</sup>

The preceding background sets the stage for what I define as the contemporary era of Saudi and Pakistani relations, which, in the context of this chapter, begins with Musharraf's coup in 1999. One key area of their relationship is security. Pakistan continues to provide support to the Saudi military through the direct provision of manpower and technology. As stated by Saudi government advisor Nawaf Obeid, "We gave money and [the Pakistanis] dealt with it as they saw fit ... There's no documentation, but there is an implicit understanding that ... on security and military issues, Pakistan would be there for Saudi Arabia."<sup>164</sup> For example, in 2009, fighting broke out between the Saudis and the Houthis, an ethnic group primarily located along

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<sup>159</sup> Bruce Riedel, "Saudi Arabia: Nervously Watching Pakistan," Brookings Institute, Opinion, 28 January 2008, para. 6.

<sup>160</sup> Ahmad, p. 54.

<sup>161</sup> Clary, p. 27-28.

<sup>162</sup> Clary, p. 27-28.

<sup>163</sup> Jessica Stern, "Pakistan's Jihad Culture," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 6, November/December 2000, p. 119.

<sup>164</sup> Quoted in Clary, p. 29.

the Yemeni-Saudi border in the southwestern areas of the Arabian Peninsula. As in 1967, Pakistan again provided direct military assistance to the Saudi forces.<sup>165</sup>

In response to military support provided to Riyadh, Islamabad receives economic support from the Saudis. Both victims of Islamic terrorism, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan jointly combat terrorism. In particular, Riyadh is aiding the Pakistani military in its fight against extremists in the Afghan-Pakistan tribal regions through the purchase military equipment, such as helicopters, for example.<sup>166</sup>

However, a more controversial military investment is Riyadh's involvement in Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. In addition to Saudi support in the 1970s, Riyadh also indirectly encouraged Islamabad to test its nuclear weapons in 1998 by offering to provide oil subsidies to Pakistan, mitigating the pressure imposed by U.S. sanctions at the time.<sup>167</sup> Moreover, in 2003, after a Saudi delegation visited Pakistan, reports emerged indicating that an agreement was reached where Pakistan would provide the Saudis with a nuclear weapon if Riyadh were threatened by another nuclear power.<sup>168</sup> Bruce Riedel, a long-time advisor to the White House on South Asian affairs, asserts that, assuming the aforementioned reports are accurate, "it is likely the two have practiced the deployment of Pakistani warheads to Saudi Arabia for use with Saudi delivery systems." He goes on to say that "Saudi Arabia's ... missiles, now increasingly obsolete, are also widely assumed to be a possible delivery system for Pakistani warheads in a crisis."<sup>169</sup> As of this writing, press reporting indicates that the Saudis essentially ordered nuclear weapons to

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<sup>165</sup> Mehmood ul-Hassan Khan, "Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Joint Naval Exercises," *Defence Journal*, February 2013, p. 27.

<sup>166</sup> Noor ul-Haq, "Pak-Saudi Relations (1999-2011)," IPRI Factfile, p. 78-79.

<sup>167</sup> Clary, p. 28.

<sup>168</sup> Riedel, para.7; Mark Urban, "Saudi nuclear weapons 'on order' from Pakistan," *BBC News Online*, 06 November 2013 para 20-21.

<sup>169</sup> Riedel, para. 8.

be made in Pakistan that are ready to be delivered to Saudi Arabia upon request.<sup>170</sup> In the words of a former Israeli military intelligence official, Amos Yadlin, “the Saudis ... already paid for the bomb, they will go to Pakistan and bring what they need to bring.”<sup>171</sup>

Political ties between Riyadh and Islamabad are extensive as well. Historically, the Saudis retained close relationships with all Pakistani governments, whether they are democratically elected civilian government or military regimes. In large part, Saudi Arabia seeks to preserve stability in Pakistan in an effort to maintain influence. Riyadh often acts as a mediator during Pakistan political turmoil. For example, when Musharraf removed Nawaz Sharif from power in 1999, Riyadh lobbied for Sharif to not be executed but exiled to Saudi Arabia.<sup>172</sup> Then, in 2009, Riyadh played a key role in convincing Musharraf to step down as a military leader and allow for the election of a civilian government.<sup>173</sup> Further, the Saudis stepped in and threatened that relations between the two countries would suffer if the civilian government acted on threats to take legal action against Musharraf.<sup>174</sup>

Economic ties are prevalent as well. Riyadh is heavily invested in the Pakistani economy and foreign direct investment totals in the hundreds of millions annually.<sup>175</sup> In addition to official aid, Saudi religious institutions and businesses are heavily invested in Pakistan. For example, the Saudis are the primary contributors for Pakistan’s madrasa education system.<sup>176</sup> And, regarding business investments, one of the largest Saudi

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<sup>170</sup> Urban, para. 1.

<sup>171</sup> Urban, para. 1-3.

<sup>172</sup> Riedel, para. 7.

<sup>173</sup> Daily Times, “Saudis come to Musharraf’s rescue,” 02 September 2009, para. 3-4.

<sup>174</sup> Daily Times, “Saudis come to Musharraf’s rescue,” para. 1-3.

<sup>175</sup> Ul-Haq, p. 83.

<sup>176</sup> Riedel, para. 2.

construction companies, Al-Qarnain Group, recently committed to invest over one billion dollars over the next few years.<sup>177</sup>

Another notable area of the Saudi-Pakistani relationship is the large numbers of Pakistani nationals who work and live in Saudi Arabia. Given the fairly small size of the Saudi population, Riyadh heavily relies on Pakistani immigrants for cheap labor in support of Saudi economic development. Recent estimates put the number of Pakistanis living in Saudi Arabia at 1.5 million. For Pakistan's part, these laborers also help the Pakistani economy with remittances that are estimated around \$3.7 billion per year.<sup>178</sup>

### **Analysis of Case Studies**

To begin, I will review the ideological indicators and assess whether they are present in Pakistan's relations with the United States and Saudi Arabia. As a reminder, the criteria for an Islamic foreign policy are: expressing solidarity with Muslim causes around the world; invoking Islamic principles to justify foreign policy decisions; and, a close alliance with other Muslim states. In doing so, I seek to explain Pakistani behavior from the viewpoint of a Constructivist. Subsequently, I review the same foreign relations highlights and argue the issue from the Realist perspective. Then, I will jointly evaluate the two theories' assessments, determining whether any gaps exist and whether the Realist Constructivism hybrid is better suited to explain Pakistani foreign policy.

Islamabad's continued support to Islamic extremists, such as the previously mentioned Haqqani network in the Afghan-Pakistan border region, are indicative of the first indicator – solidarity with Muslim causes. Pakistan seems to be willing to let relations with the United States decline rather than sever ties with these militants.

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<sup>177</sup> Daily Times, "Saudi Arabia to invest \$400m to \$1bn in Pakistan," 19 November 2012, para. 1-2.

<sup>178</sup> ARY News, "Govt to take Saudi-Pak relationship to new heights, says Nawaz," 11 July 2013, para. 4.

Furthermore, Islamabad's continued public statements decrying American drone strikes may also be evidence of this first indicator because the drone strikes are often portrayed in the media as causing the deaths of innocent Muslims. As a result, Islamabad's policy of pushing back against the use of these drones—which culminated in the 2011 shut down of U.S. military resupply routes—may be caused by the perceived need to defend Muslims. In addition, Islamabad's reluctance to allow American access to the nuclear proliferator A.Q. Khan could be another manifestation of Pakistan's diplomatic behavior emphasizing the protection of Muslims.

This first indicator may also be a key driver behind the closeness between Pakistan and certain Arab states in the Middle East. In particular, a desire to support Muslim causes may explain Pakistan's military and technical support to Saudi Arabia, which, as the custodian of Islam's two holiest sites, holds an important place in the minds of most Muslims. Additionally, the rumored 2003 agreement where Islamabad agreed to place Saudi Arabia under its nuclear umbrella would also be evidence of Pakistan defending fellow Muslims. Separately, Islamabad's willingness to work with the Saudis to combat terrorism—which threatens the lives of innocent Muslims—may be evidence of Pakistan's foreign policy being influenced by the desire to protect Muslim causes.

The second indicator of an Islamic foreign policy is invoking Islamic principles to drive Pakistani behavior. Admittedly, the case study detailing Pakistan's relationship with the United States does not reflect any apparent expression of Islamic principles by Islamabad. However, this may explain the constant ebb and flow of U.S.-Pakistani relations: because it cannot invoke these principles for engaging with the United States,

the Islamic Republic's must continue to keep Washington at arms length, despite the large amount of American aid.

Similarly, the second case study does not provide examples the Pakistani's vocalizing Islamic jurisprudence to justify engaging with the Saudis, though the common religious heritage is invoked as a reason for engagement.

One explanation as to why Pakistan's foreign policy does not heavily draw from Islamic principles is that today's leaders in Islamabad are simply less religious. Pakistani politics moved away from Zia's Islamist policies after his death in favor of a more secular approach, which is fueling the flames between Islamic extremists and Islamabad. Musharraf was well known to be a secularist, both personally and politically. The former general purged the military of several prominent Islamist generals and it was widely known that he drank alcohol.<sup>179</sup> In addition, Zardari was not inclined to leverage Islamic principles to justify his policies, which is unsurprising given his history as a wealthy businessman who spent much time in the West and was regarded as a high-society playboy in his youth.<sup>180</sup>

In applying the third indicator to the U.S.-Pakistani relationship, Islamabad's preference for alliances with other Islamic states may be why the Pakistani's do not seem to fully trust Washington. The influence of Pakistan's Islamic ideology sheds a contextual light on the underlying tension in the relationship. Because Washington is of a different religious and ideological worldview, Islamabad is reluctant to deliver on

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<sup>179</sup> Simon Henderson, "The Problem With Pakistan's Military," *The Weekly Standard*, 01 June 2011, para 5.

<sup>180</sup> Jane Perlez, "From Prison to Zenith of Politics in Pakistan," *NY Times Online*, 11 March 2008, para 30-31.

American demands to cut ties with Islamic groups like the Haqqani network, which does happen to share the common bond of Islam.

The third indicator is readily apparent in the uniquely close relationship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and the long standing political, military, and economic ties that were detailed at length in the second case study. The third indicator could also explain Pakistan's support to the Saudis during the 2009 conflict with the Houthis. Furthermore, the inclination to align with Islamic states would also explain why the Pakistani's have permitted the Saudi's to invest in Pakistani nuclear weapons and, assuming the recent reports are true, purchase a Pakistani nuclear weapon.

The above analysis represents a Constructivist assessment of Pakistan's relationship with the United States and Saudi Arabia. A Realist would respond to this and argue that, rather than being driven by ideology, these foreign policy decisions were motivated by pragmatic balance of power calculations. Pakistan's behavior matches Realist expectations because Islamabad pursued policies that are motivated by its best interest.

Pakistan's relationship with the United States is in line with Realist expectations. Islamabad is willing to collaborate with Washington, in large part, because of the substantial amount of aid provided by the Americans. Pakistan's interest in maximizing economic and military power justifies this engagement. And any ebb and flow in this relationship is a result of shifting priorities. Islamabad's continued ties with militant Islamic groups are the result of a pragmatic national interest. Islamabad believes it must rely on these groups as regional proxies to advance its influence throughout the region. As a result of this balance of power calculation to maintain these links, Islamabad is

willing to let its relationship with the United States cool. In a similar vein, Pakistan has chosen to let relations with the United States deteriorate over its response to American drone strikes and the handling of A.Q. Khan. In particular, Islamabad condemns U.S. drone strikes within Pakistan and ignores American calls to bring Khan to international courts because it is in Islamabad's best interest to do so. In particular, Islamabad is keenly interested in maintaining support from the Pakistani population. So, Pakistan pragmatically concludes that it must go against American wishes, despite its desire to receive aid from Washington, because it is more vital for the Pakistan government to maintain popular support.

Pakistan's close relationship with Saudi Arabia makes sense in balance of power terms. Cooperation between the two seems largely driven by pragmatic worldly interests, such as financial support from Riyadh. Saudi Arabia, which is economically wealthy but short on manpower and military strength, is willing to engage with Pakistan, which has a large population and military but is in need of financial support. Additionally, given the geographic distance between the two, it is unlikely one will become a threat to the other. This explains Islamabad's willingness to support Riyadh militarily, such as in the Saudi conflict with the Houthis and with the nuclear issue, as well as by sending Pakistani citizens to Saudi Arabia as workers. A Realist would argue that this is simply a symbiotic relationship conducted in accordance with both parties' national interests.

Despite having some of the Islamic ideological indicators present in Pakistan's relations with the United States and Saudi Arabia, the Constructivist assessment failed to differentiate itself from Realist expectations in the sense that it always arrived at what are ultimately Realist conclusions – Pakistan consistently acted in accordance with its best

interest. However, while the Realist assessment correctly characterizes Islamabad's decisions as being motivated by the pursuit of power, it fails to fully account for the role of ideology and how it impacts foreign policy. So, when both theories are jointly used, Constructivism helps explain how a country arrived at Realist ends by shedding light on the role of ideology in Pakistani foreign policy.

So, in the context of this case study, because of the demonstrated presence of some of the indicators of an Islamic foreign policy, ideology appears to function as an intervening variable, between the independent variable of national interest and the dependent variable of Pakistani foreign policy behavior. In Pakistan's case, this intervening role for ideology is manifest as a justification or narrative for Islamabad's foreign policy. For example, this helps explain why the closeness of the relationship with Riyadh and the hot-and-cold relationship with Washington. The former can be easily justified by its Islamic ideology, making close ties more natural. The latter, however, does not easily fit into any Islamic narrative, barring some kind of external crisis, and therefore is prone to fluctuations.

## **Conclusion**

After analyzing the case studies, it is apparent that Islam influences Pakistani foreign policy. While its behavior falls within the Realist worldview—that is, making pragmatic choices in line with balance of power considerations that best serve Pakistani interests—there is a role for Constructivism in helping to explain the behavior. Islam, functioning as the Constructivist ideology, is often used to justify Islamabad's Realist foreign policies, confirming its role as an intervening variable. My research suggests that this may be the Pakistani “style” of foreign policy, where Islamabad pursues its worldly

interests and uses Islam as a tool to create a narrative for those ends. For example, Islamabad may be more inclined to leverage religion to curry domestic favor or justify relationships with other Muslim communities or states. As discussed in the methodology section, by examining Pakistan's relations with the United States and Saudi Arabia, two very different countries necessitating very different styles of engagement, the cases present a broad range of diplomatic behavior to examine, which enhances confidence in my assessment. I concede that these cases studies may have incomplete data; it is difficult to completely understand the calculus behind a government's diplomatic decision-making. Yet, short of any new information from Pakistani policymakers regarding their decision-making thought processes, this concession does not alter the conclusions I've made in this analysis.

In sum, this chapter finds that Islam is an influential dynamic in contemporary Pakistani foreign policy. It is constantly invoked by Islamabad to justify or create a narrative for Pakistan's pragmatic international relations. It is important for analysts or policymakers to keep in mind Pakistan's foreign policy "style" and to recognize that Islam is often used in support of its *realpolitik*-derived foreign policy objectives. By clarifying the role of ideology, Realist Constructivism highlights the intent behind Pakistan's behavior. As a self-described homeland for Muslims, Pakistan has a tendency to sympathize with Muslim causes and will invoke Islamic ideals to create an ideological narrative, like defending the *umma*, to justify its actions. Observers would be wise to remember this dynamic when studying Pakistan's international relations to avoid assuming that the presence of ideology implies irrationality in its foreign policy.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THE INFLUENCE OF KHOMEINI'S SHIA ISLAM IN IRANIAN FOREIGN POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Many observers in the West are trying to predict what the 2013 election of Hassan Rouhani as the Iranian president holds for the future of Iran's international relations. In the United States, some are heartened by the fact that Rouhani is a moderate and are hoping this will translate into an increased willingness for cooperation, which contrasts with outgoing hardliner President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's more bellicose rhetoric and policies.<sup>181</sup> Nonetheless, in light of the uncertainty over whether Rouhani's election signifies a policy shift in Tehran or more of the same, Washington maintains an aggressive sanctions regime leveled against the Islamic Republic.<sup>182</sup> This is, in part, due to the opaque nature of the Iranian policy-making process, which makes its intent difficult to decipher. As controversy surrounding Iran's potential acquisition of nuclear weapons and its involvement in regional conflicts continue, highlighting its capability to threaten others, the question of whether there is intent to act as a threat especially crucial.

In attempting to explain Tehran's foreign policy behavior, some Western observers emphasize the influential role of revolutionary Shia Islam within the Iranian government. They believe that Iran's religion or ideology skews their perception of the international system, causing them to be irrational actors.<sup>183</sup> Such arguments tend to make assumptions about there being an objective notion of national interest that must be

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<sup>181</sup> Ben Brumfield, "Goodbye, Ahmadinejad; hello, Rouhani," CNN online, 17 June 2013, para. 6, 30.

<sup>182</sup> Carla Ann Robbins, "Is the United States Ready to Make a Deal with Iran?" Bloomberg BusinessWeek, 18 June 2013, para 3-4.

<sup>183</sup> Eric S. Edelman, Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr, et al., "The Dangers of a Nuclear Iran," Foreign Affairs, January/February 2011, para. 19.

followed for a state to qualify as rational. Fueling this concern is Tehran's frequent use of extreme religious rhetoric in public statements regarding various global affairs.

Given the continued international attention on the Iranian government in light of its nuclear program and involvement in regional conflicts, it is important to better understand Iran's foreign policy and how it is affected by ideology. To do so, I will test whether Realist Constructivism can decipher the role of ideology and explain Iranian foreign policy behavior. In particular, I agree with the Realist argument that Iran's foreign relations can be characterized as the pursuit of Iranian national interest. At the same time, I also believe that by incorporating Constructivism and viewing Iran's behavior through the lens of revolutionary Shia Islam, I can attain a deeper understanding of the resultant foreign policy. If Iranian foreign policy is the dependent variable and pursuit of national interest is the independent variable, I seek to assess whether its unique brand of revolutionary Shia Islam—functioning as a Constructivist ideology—is an intervening variable. To prove this point, I will assess Pakistan's foreign relations from a Constructivist perspective and then from a Realist perspective. Subsequently, I will evaluate the two theories to determine whether any gaps exist that might be better explained by Realist Constructivism. I would note that evidence of ideology influencing foreign policy behavior does not indicate that ideology in fact caused the behavior; instead, it simply suggests ideology plays an intervening role that is worth examining in order to better understand that behavior.

I begin by reviewing existing literature on Shiism in Iran and its relationship with politics. Next, I outline key criteria that, if present in the data, serve as indicators of Shia Islamic influence, demonstrating an intervening relationship between the independent and

dependent variables. Subsequently, I discuss the methodology for the case study, which is an examination of six critical Iranian foreign policy issues, as outlined by scholar Mehran Kamrava: the situation in Iraq; Iran's relations with other states in the region; Washington's relations with Tehran as well as other countries in the region; the nuclear program; and, Iran's relationship with Hezbollah and Hamas.<sup>184</sup> Given the length constraints of this paper, I will focus on events in their contemporary context, which I define as beginning with the first Ahmadinejad presidential administration in 2005 to the present.

## **Literature Review**

### *Shiism and Politics*

The schism between Sunni and Shia Islam occurred after the death of the Prophet Mohammad. When determining who should lead the Islamic caliphate, the Sunnis called for a *shura*, or a council of leaders, to decide on a successor. The Shia, however, argued that Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, should take the throne. Both sides agreed to alternate rulers. Yet, when Muawiyah, a Sunni caliph, passed the caliphate to his son Yazid, he skipped Hussain, Ali's son and the Prophet's grandson. This prompted Hussain to challenge the claim, but Yazid's fighters killed him before he could do so. The Shia view Hussain as a martyr who died defending Islam and that the Sunnis are responsible for his death, which explains some of the perpetual animosity between the two sects.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Mehran Kamrava, "Iranian National-Security Debates: Factionalism and Lost Opportunities," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 14, No. 2, Summer 2007, p. 84.

<sup>185</sup> Imad Salamey and Zanoubia Othman, "Shia Revival and Welayat al-Faqih in the Making of Iranian Foreign Policy," *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, Vol. 12, No. 2, June 2011, p. 198-199.

The Shia choice of Ali as the true successor to the Prophet was largely due to their familial ties. This is a key distinction with the Sunnis: the Shia believe legitimate ruling power derives from religious authority granted by being a descendent of the Prophet.<sup>186</sup> As such, Shia leaders throughout history sustain their authority, by and large, through their traced lineage to the Twelve Imams, or the twelve spiritual and political successors to the Prophet. This view carries over today, with Shia viewing their Ayatollahs “*de facto* successors of the Twelfth Imam.”<sup>187</sup> Consequently, Ayatollahs are able to wield a significant amount of authority over their communities, which is clearly the case in Iran today.<sup>188</sup>

#### *Shiism In Iran After the 1979 Revolution*

Shiism became the dominant strand of Islam in Iran after being instituted by the Safavids in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, the Shia clerical establishment, as represented by the Ayatollahs, has a historical precedent for being closely involved in Iranian politics. It played critical roles in the anti-tobacco movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Constitutional Revolution in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and, most recently, the 1979 Islamic Revolution.<sup>189</sup>

However, in the decades before the revolution, Shiism in Iran did not dominate the political realm as it does today. Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi tried to downplay Shiism in favor of a more nationalist and secular agenda. Given the Shia view on rulers deriving legitimacy from lineage to the Prophet, the Shah probably felt he little other choice than to take this approach. In the 1960’s, in an effort to counter the influence of

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<sup>186</sup> George W. Braswell, “Iran and Islam,” *Theology Today*, January 1980, p. 527.

<sup>187</sup> Salamey and Othman, p. 199.

<sup>188</sup> Salamey and Othman, p. 199.

<sup>189</sup> Salamey and Othman, p. 200.

the Ayatollahs, he launched the White Revolution, which sought to replace traditional Shiism with a new variant. In this variant, the Shah tried to co-opt Shia religious symbols and claims to have had dreams where Allah spoke to him. In other words, he attempted to give himself religious legitimacy to enhance his political ruling authority and usurp the traditional role of the Ayatollahs.<sup>190</sup>

As the events of 1979 illustrate, this did not go well for the Shah. In the immediate aftermath of the White Revolution in the 1960s, intense rioting led by the Ayatollahs against the Shah led to thousands of Iranian deaths and the exile of Ayatollah Khomeini.<sup>191</sup> The Shah's rapid modernization efforts, coupled with his new take on Islam, alienated not only the Iranian religious establishment, but also much of the conservative segments of the public. This ultimately led to his fall in 1979 and the return of Ayatollah Khomeini, marking the reoccurrence of an Iranian ruler with the religious legitimacy in line with Shia perceptions of leadership.<sup>192</sup>

### *Shiism as an Iranian Ideology*

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini played a leading role in establishing and guiding post-revolutionary Iran. As one scholar puts it, "Other non-Western, revolutionary regimes eventually eschewed a rigidly ideological foreign policy ... But Iran's leaders have remained committed to Khomeini's worldview. The resilience of Iran's Islamist ideology in the country's foreign policy is striking."<sup>193</sup> His interpretation of Shia Islam, often referred to as Khomeinism, became the espoused ideology of the newly formed Islamic Republic, guiding both domestic and foreign policy.

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<sup>190</sup> Braswell, p. 527-528.

<sup>191</sup> Braswell, p. 529-530.

<sup>192</sup> Braswell, p. 530-531.

<sup>193</sup> Ray Takeyh, "All The Ayatollah's Men," National Interest, September/October 2012, p. 51.

Khomeini rejected secular ideas like nationalism and the concept of an international system comprised of individual nation-states because he believed they were ultimately Western conventions and an Islamic government was the only valid form of government. Khomeini argues, “Islam is not peculiar to a country, to several countries, a group, or even the Muslims. Islam has come for humanity.”<sup>194</sup> According to one academic, this concept—that Islam applies to the world’s population who should thus live under Islamic rule—directly informed Iranian foreign policy at the time, which Khomeini describes as “Neither East, nor West, but the Islamic Republic.”<sup>195</sup> Khomeini believed the United States, Israel (considered a puppet of the West), and the then-Soviet Union were “oppressor states” to be resisted by Iran in order to export the Islamic revolution to oppressed states in the Third World.<sup>196</sup> His ideology defined itself by its opposition to the West, which was portrayed as seeking to exploit and undermine Muslims around the world. This perpetual need to stand up to the West in the name of Islam is consistently invoked in both domestic and foreign policies.<sup>197</sup>

A central element of Khomeini’s brand of Shia Islam is the concept of *Velayat al-Faqih*, or guardianship of the Islamic jurists. Under this idea, the Supreme Leader was designated the head of the Shia community, consolidate political control in Iran under the Ayatollah’s clerical establishment. The Supreme Leader derived his authority from the fact that he alone was qualified to interpret and advise on matters relating to Islam, in both political and religious terms. As such, the Supreme Leaders was the ultimate

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<sup>194</sup> R. K. Ramazani, “Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran’s Foreign Policy,” *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 4, Autumn, 2004, p. 555.

<sup>195</sup> Ramazani, p. 555.

<sup>196</sup> Lubna Abid Ali, “Ideology and Pragmatism In South-West Asia: A Case Study of Iran,” *Regional Studies*, Vol. XXV, No. 4., Autumn, 2007, p. 39.

<sup>197</sup> Takeyh, p. 52.

decision-maker on domestic and foreign policy matters in Iran. Not only that, but as Iran exported its Islamic Revolution, the newly empowered Shia populations would also fall under control of the Supreme Leader of Iran in his role as head of the Shia community.<sup>198</sup>

Despite the death of Khomeini in 1989, his interpretation of revolutionary Shia Islam remains central to Tehran's domestic and foreign policy. One reason for this is that, unlike other ideological revolutions, such as Communism, Khomeini's ideology merged with the existing dominant religious trend. Granted, the Ayatollah's version was more "politicized and radicalized," but it was rooted in Shia Islam. As the scholar Ray Takeyh characterizes it, "It is, after all, much easier to be an ex-Marxist than an ex-Shiite. In one instance, renouncing one's faith is political defection; in the other, apostasy."<sup>199</sup> In other words, Khomeini's blended political and religious ideology is difficult for Iranians to break with because rejecting the political system is tantamount to rejecting one's religion, which helps explain why it has lingered even after his death.

### **Indicators of a Revolutionary Shia Foreign Policy**

As the above literature review indicates, there is a connection between Khomeini's Shia Islam and Iranian foreign policy. To measure the extent of this connection, it is necessary to define indicators of what a revolutionary Shia Islamic foreign policy would look like. The first indicator would be Iran's rejection of Western conventions in favor of charting an independent Islamic course. Essentially, this means that under Khomeini's ideology, Iran will reject outside influence or accommodation with Western states in favor of retaining autonomy. The second indicator would be exporting the Islamic revolution. After being established in Iran domestically after 1979, Khomeini

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<sup>198</sup> Salamy and Othman, p. 201.

<sup>199</sup> Takeyh, p. 51-52.

advocated spreading it to the rest of the world, asserting that Islam applies to everyone and the revolution should be proliferated. As such, this would take the form of Tehran attempting to set up additional Islamic Republics throughout the region in line with its ideological tenets.

The third indicator would be empowering Shia and/or oppressed Muslims. Given the concept of *Velayate al-Faqih*, the Supreme Leader is the head of the Shia community around the world. As such, Tehran's ruling clerical establishment feels responsible for assuring the well-being of what is a minority in the Sunni dominated Muslim world. And, along with that, the Ayatollah's also perceive it their duty to defend Muslims in general being oppressed by outside (read: Western) forces.

Admittedly, these concepts, like maintaining autonomy or fostering the creation of friendly states, are squarely in line with the pragmatic decision-making associated with Realism. However, much like in previous chapter about Pakistan, ideology in Tehran plays a critical role in creating a narrative and justifying its actions. Thus, by correctly recognizing the interplay between by Shia Islam and Iranian behavior, the intent behind Tehran's actions and rhetoric will be brought into sharper focus.

## **Methodology**

The cases I examine for this study are Iran's six major foreign policy priorities: the situation in Iraq; Iran's relations with other states in the region; Washington's relations with Tehran as well as other countries in the region; the nuclear program; and, Iran's relationship with Hezbollah and Hamas. Each is discussed in their modern context, which I define as the onset of the first Ahmadinejad presidency in 2005. Examining Iran's engagement with these issues encapsulates the concern of many states'

foreign policies: managing a relationship with a dominant power that has opposing interests, attempting to exert influence amongst one's neighbors, engaging with allies. Given the different types of engagement required for such scenarios, these case studies provide an opportunity to examine a broad range of activity.

As opposed to my previous two chapters, I chose to forgo analyzing the relations between Tehran and two other states in lieu of looking at Tehran's approach to its key fields of foreign policy interest. My reason for this alternative analytical method is that so many of Iran's relationships hinge on one or more of these aforementioned areas of interest. Therefore, my examination would end up focusing on the same issues from the context of different countries. Instead, I believe it more worthwhile to focus how Iran approaches these issues and then measure whether that approach has any trace of revolutionary Shia influence.

The technique used to measure whether Shia Islam influences modern Iranian foreign policy is process tracing. In the case study of Iran's handling of its international relations priorities, I look back at series of events (i.e., Iranian behavior) within a defined period of time. Rather than scrutinize every aspect of Iranian foreign policy, I chose simply to focus on the more prominent issues on which Tehran's attention is closely focused.

### **Case Study: Iran's Six Foreign Policy Priorities**

This next section discusses the six critical areas of Iranian foreign policy in their contemporary context, as were outlined above, with the first being Iran's approach to Iraq. Iran's relations with Iraq, with which it fought a costly eight-year war in the 1980's, dramatically changed after the Americans invaded and overthrew the Iraqi leader,

Saddam Hussein. Given the threat the Iraqis previously posed to Iran, Tehran's policy appears to be that of acquiring as much influence as possible in Iraq to ensure that it cannot again be a danger to Iran.<sup>200</sup>

Initially, this took the form of Iran cultivating and supporting Shia militias to fill the security vacuum created by the fall of Saddam. Tehran backed these armed groups to fuel the insurgency confronting U.S. forces in Iraq to signal Iran's displeasure with Washington's attempts to keep them removed from shaping a post-invasion Iraq.<sup>201</sup> This approach has evolved into Tehran's current "whole-of-government policy" towards Iraq, which entails political, economic, security, and religious aspects to make sure a Shia-dominated and Iran-friendly government holds power in Baghdad.<sup>202</sup> For example, Iran provides extensive financial support to Shia Islamic political parties to ensure Iranian influence in Iraqi politics.<sup>203</sup> Iran's desire to maintain influence in Iraq by empowering Iraqi Shia has become acutely apparent in their response to the early June 2014 territorial gains made by Sunni militants led by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Tehran quickly announced it would be providing military personnel and materiel to support the besieged Nouri al-Maliki government.<sup>204</sup> Clearly, Iran is willing to act decisively to further its interests in Iraq.

The second critical international relations issue is Iran's regional standing in the Middle East. Similar to the situation in Iraq, historical tensions between the Persians and Arabs colored Tehran's perspective towards the region. The Iranian's believe they have a

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<sup>200</sup> Kenneth Katzman, "Iran-Iraq Relations," Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, 13 August, 2010, p. 1.

<sup>201</sup> Rob Bongers, "Iran's foreign policy towards post-invasion Iraq," *Journal of Politics & International Studies*, Vol. 8, Winter 2012/2013, p. 125.

<sup>202</sup> Bongers, p. 153.

<sup>203</sup> Bongers, p. 153.

<sup>204</sup> Martin Chulov, "Iran sends troops into Iraq to aid fight against Isis militants," *The Guardian*, 14 June 2014, para. 1-3.

right to be involved in regional decision-making, though some factions within Iran disagree over whether this role should be multilateral or unilateral.<sup>205</sup> As one Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commander puts it, there can be no “changes to the region’s security architecture without taking into account Iran’s national interests.”<sup>206</sup> Some key policy-makers in Iran view the Islamic Republic as the “center of Islamic power” and seek the “Islamization” of the Middle East.<sup>207</sup> One way Iran pursues this is by outreach to Shia populations throughout the region, in places like Iraq, Lebanon, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia. Tehran leverages the Shia to pressure the host government into taking the Iranian perspective into their decision-making calculus.<sup>208</sup> Most recently, this policy is manifested by Tehran’s engagement and support of the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria and the Shia-dominated government in Iraq. Given Iran’s leverage over the two, Tehran is well positioned to demand a proverbial seat at the table in any diplomatic discussion over the future of these countries.

The third foreign policy area of focus for Tehran is the U.S.-Iranian relationship. The previous two of diplomatic areas of interest touched on Iran’s policy towards the United States: that is, to force Washington, the current key power broker in the Middle East, to incorporate Tehran’s wishes into the regional order. Iran encouraged sectarian violence in Iraq in response to American efforts to keep Iran out of post-invasion Iraq in an effort to force Washington to give Tehran a seat at the proverbial table in rebuilding Iraq. Now that the U.S. military has left Iraq, Tehran has forged an independent relationship with the Shia-dominated government in Baghdad to steer its policies in a

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<sup>205</sup> Kamrava, p. 93.

<sup>206</sup> Kamrava, p. 93.

<sup>207</sup> Kamrava, p. 94.

<sup>208</sup> Bruce Riedel, “Iran Seeks to Exploit Grievances of Saudi Arabian Shias,” *Al-Monitor*, 09 November 2012, para. 10.

favorable direction. Additionally, Iran frequently acts as a spoiler in U.S.-sponsored peace initiatives between the Israelis and Palestinians. Iran does so because it wants “to prevent the United States from creating ... what would be an Israel-centric Middle East order based on Iran’s prolonged isolation.”<sup>209</sup> In other words, Tehran’s policy is to confront the United States to ensure Tehran has a voice in regional affairs.

The fourth key foreign policy issue is Iran’s nuclear program. While Iran does not yet have a nuclear weapon and claims that its current nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only, many in the international community are concerned that enriched uranium resulting from this ostensibly peaceful program could be used to make a nuclear weapon.<sup>210</sup> This standoff between Iran and the international community has led to some highly restrictive economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic as well as threats of military strikes against Iranian nuclear facilities from Tel Aviv and, to a less extent, Washington.<sup>211</sup> Tehran refuses to shut down its nuclear program and argues that it is for peaceful purposes, claiming that nuclear technology is its legal right as a signatory member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).<sup>212</sup> One of the major reasons Iran remains resolute on this matter is that Tehran views it’s nuclear program as a point of national pride, signifying that Iranian science and technology are equal those of the Western world.<sup>213</sup> Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into the various scenarios that may take place if Iran gets a nuclear bomb, it is worth noting that multiple observers, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Executive Director Mohamed

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<sup>209</sup> Trita Parsi, *Treachorous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the U.S.*, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 261.

<sup>210</sup> Parsi, p. 261.

<sup>211</sup> Kamrava, p. 95-96.

<sup>212</sup> Parsi, p. 267.

<sup>213</sup> Parsi, p. 268-269.

El-Baradei, suggest that Iran will stop short of actually acquiring a bomb and will instead retain a breakout capability, or the ability to make a bomb on short notice if necessary.<sup>214</sup>

The fifth key area of Iranian foreign policy is Tehran's support for Hezbollah in Lebanon. According to one scholar, this issue receives support across Iran's disparate political factions because they see Hezbollah "as a legitimate organization that is rightfully engaged in a struggle for the protection of Lebanese Shiites and others from Israeli attacks."<sup>215</sup> Iran helped establish Hezbollah in early 1980's in response to the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, where the majority of Lebanese Shia reside. Iranian support for Hezbollah, which has often taken the form of military sales, is intended to create a Tehran-led "Axis of Resistance" to promote Iranian interests and curtail American and Israeli influence in the Middle East.<sup>216</sup> Beyond the military sales, Iran is ideologically linked with Hezbollah through the former's loyalty to the *Velayat al-Faqih*, which means it accepts the ultimate authority of the Iranian Supreme Leader.<sup>217</sup>

Lastly, the sixth area of importance for Iranian foreign policy is support for the Palestinian group, Hamas. While Iran also considers Hamas to be part of the "Axis of Resistance," the group is different than Hezbollah in that, being a Sunni movement, it is not ideologically linked to Iran, which limits Tehran's control.<sup>218</sup> Nonetheless, Iran's relationship with Hamas provides it with another lever to pressure Israel and to exert influence over the peace process. While some disagreement exists within the Iranian

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<sup>214</sup> Kenneth Waltz, "Why Iran Should Get the Bomb," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2012, para. 1-4.

<sup>215</sup> Kamrava, p. 92.

<sup>216</sup> Rafael D. Frankel, "Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah Out of a War with Iran," *The Washington Quarterly*, 35:4, Fall 2012, p. 53.

<sup>217</sup> Frankel, p. 54-55.

<sup>218</sup> Frankel, p. 58.

political establishment as to whether a two-state solution is acceptable, its ties to Hamas ensures that Tehran has a say in one of the central issues in the Middle East.<sup>219</sup>

### **Analysis of Case Study**

To begin, I review the ideological indicators and assess whether they are present in Iran's foreign policy behavior. In doing so, I seek to explain Iranian foreign relations from the viewpoint of a Constructivist. Subsequently, I review the same Iranian foreign relations and argue the issue from the Realist perspective. Then, I jointly evaluation the two theories' assessments, determining whether any gaps exist and whether the Realist Constructivism hybrid is better suited to explain Iran's foreign policy.

Tehran's policy towards Iraq displays all three indicators of a revolutionary Shia Islamic foreign policy, evidencing an ideological influence. It falls in line with Khomeinism because Iran is seeking autonomy from outside influence by pushing back against the United States to ensure a pro-American government doest not take root next door. Moreover, Iran sought to further its goal of exporting the Islamic revolution and empower Shia Islamic political groups in Iraq who are willing to take direction from the Supreme Leader.

Iran's foreign policy towards its regional neighbors also reflects all three indicators of revolutionary Shia Islam, demonstrating an ideological influence. By striving to autonomously influence events in the Middle East by "Islamizing" regional issues and empowering the Shia, Iran is acting according to Khomeinism: retaining autonomy in rejecting Western influence, exporting the Islamic Revolution, and supporting Shia and Islamic causes.

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<sup>219</sup> Kamrava, p. 92-93.

Much like the other two examples, Iran's relationship with the United States reflects an ideological influence. The first indicator—rejecting Western conventions in favor of an autonomous Islamic path—is evident in Tehran's engagement with Washington. Almost by definition, revolutionary Shia Islam calls for the elimination of Western culture and influence, which leads to an Iranian foreign policy countering U.S. influence in the Middle East.

Iran's possible pursuit of a nuclear weapon—or a breakout capability, which presents many of the same benefits and without the costs—is in line with the Islamic Republic's ideology and all three indicators are present. Tehran would be able to better resist pressure from outside powers to pursue an independent Islamic course. A nuclear weapon would also help Iran achieve its other ideological impulses, such as exporting the Islamic revolution and empowering Shia.

Iran's support for Hezbollah reflects a revolutionary Shia influence. The second indicator is present in that Iran exported the Islamic revolution to Lebanon in the form of Hezbollah. Additionally, the third indicator is present because Tehran empowered the then-downtrodden Lebanese Shia population, transforming them into a dominant force in Lebanon.

Iran's relations with Hamas demonstrate the first and third indicators of a revolutionary Shia Islamic foreign policy. That is, Iran is able to push back against Western influence and defend oppressed Muslims in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. By “Islamizing” the peace process through the empowerment of Hamas, an Islamist group, Iran can offer support to Palestinian Muslims and, in turn, ensure it is not excluded by Western powers in shaping the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The above analysis represents a Constructivist assessment of Iran's foreign policy across six key areas of focus. A Realist, however, would respond to this and argue that, rather than being driven by ideology, these foreign policy decisions were each motivated by pragmatic balance of power calculations. In other words, Iran's behavior is actually in line with Realist expectations because Iran pursued policies that are motivated by its best interest.

Regarding the first key foreign policy topic, Tehran's policies towards Iraq are driven by national interest because, rather than risk another adversarial relationship with the Iraqis as the Iranians experienced under Saddam, Iran's goal is to ensure Iraq will not again pose a threat to the Islamic Republic. And, the most pragmatic way of doing so is by ensuring a friendly Shia government, over which Tehran wields influence, rules in Baghdad. For the second key policy area, Iran's engagement with regional allies, as well as support for Shia populations in hostile Sunni-dominated countries, are in line with Realism. This is because it is clearly in Iran's best interest to strengthen friendly groups or states in the region because it ensures that Tehran will have a say in the regional order. Regarding the third key policy area, Tehran's adversarial relationship with Washington is pragmatic because, from Iran's perspective, the United States and its allies are standing in the way of Iran attaining great power status in the Middle East. Tehran calculates that the cost of this adversarial relationship is worth the benefit of guaranteeing itself a role as a regional power.

Fourth, from Iran's perspective, it is surrounded by enemies, with U.S. military forces in Afghanistan and stationed throughout the Gulf as well as hostile Sunni regimes throughout the Middle East. In addition, threats from the West and its allies about a

potential military strike against Iran's nuclear reactors only confirm for Tehran that it needs a nuclear deterrent. Thus, the Iranians believe pursuing a nuclear program is a vital interest and is worth the international condemnation and oppressive sanctions. Regarding the fifth policy topic, supporting Hezbollah is a pragmatic decision because it gives Tehran an ally in the Sunni-dominated Arab world as well as the ability to directly confront Israel without putting Iran in harms way. Lastly, the sixth key foreign policy topic for Iran also aligns with Realist expectations. By supporting Hamas, Iran gains a platform for exerting influence in the historically unfriendly Sunni Arab world, allowing it to derail Western or Sunni attempts to shape the Middle East order that do not factor in Tehran's preferences.

Despite having many of the ideological indicators present in Iran's foreign relations, the Constructivist assessment failed to differentiate itself from Realist expectations in the sense that it always arrived at what are ultimately Realist conclusions – namely, that Iran consistently acted in accordance with its national interest. However, while the Realist assessment correctly characterizes Tehran's decisions as being motivated by the pursuit of power, it fails to fully account for the role of ideology and how it impacts foreign policy. Therefore, when both theories are jointly used, Constructivism helps explain how a country arrived at Realist ends by elucidating the role of ideology in Iranian foreign policy.

So, in the context of this case study, because the demonstrated presence of many of many of the indicators of a revolutionary Shia Islamic foreign policy, ideology appears to function as an intervening variable, between the independent variable of national interest and the dependent variable of Iranian foreign policy behavior. In Iran's case, this

intervening role for ideology is manifest as a justification or narrative for Tehran's foreign policy. For example, though Tehran's links to Hezbollah and efforts to install a friendly government in Iraq are aimed at increasing allies in an unfriendly region—maneuvers clearly informed by balance of power calculations—the ideological narrative woven by Khomeini's brand of Shia Islam justifies these policies. Or, in that same vein, the ideological principle of rejecting outside influence creates a narrative for Tehran that allows it to resist U.S. advances in the Middle East.

### **Conclusion**

After analyzing the case studies, it is apparent that Khomeini's brand of revolutionary Shia Islam, even though it is not the driver, influences Iran's approach to its six key priorities of international relations. While Tehran's behavior falls within the Realist worldview—making pragmatic choices in line with balance of power considerations that best serve Iranian interests—there is a role for Constructivism in helping to explain the ideas behind its foreign policy, allowing us to better understand intent. Under Realism alone, all the extreme rhetoric and reference to revolutionary Islam make deciphering Iranian intent much more difficult. Realist Constructivism, however, clarifies the role of ideology by showing that it essentially justifies pragmatic behavior, which makes intent more easily understood. Khomeini's brand of Shia Islam is often used in this manner, to create a narrative or justify Tehran's Realist foreign policy behavior, confirming its role as an intervening variable.

As detailed in the methodology section, by focusing on Tehran's six foreign policy priorities, the case study demonstrated a range of behaviors with a variety of different actors, which enhances confidence in my assessments. I concede that the case

study may have incomplete data; it is difficult to completely understand the calculus behind a government's decision-making, especially in a place as closed off as Iran. Yet, short of any new information from Iranian policymakers detailing their thought processes, this concession does not alter the conclusions I've made in this analysis.

In sum, this chapter illustrates that Khomeini's brand of Shia Islam is highly influential in domestic and international Iranian politics. My research suggests that, contrary to some assessments of Tehran's rationality being clouded by its ideology, the Islamic Republic is in fact pursuing a Realist agenda. Ideology plays an intervening role on that agenda in that Tehran frequently invokes Shia Islamic principles as a way to justify or create a narrative for what is ultimately a pragmatic foreign policy. Observers should note this intervening role in order to avoid giving more credence to extreme ideological rhetoric, which is generally not in line with its behavior. Recognizing this makes the intent behind Iran's foreign policy much clearer. Rather than having to decipher the meaning of revolutionary Shia rhetoric, American policymakers should realize that Tehran is motivated by its self-interests.

## THESIS CONCLUSION

In the introduction to this thesis, I posed the question: How do we evaluate intent? Throughout the course of this paper, I sought to demonstrate that the Realist Constructivism hybrid is superior to either IR theory alone at explaining the intent behind a state's foreign policy by deciphering the role of ideology. In particular, I argue that the hybrid theory is helpful for understanding the behavior of potentially threatening states whose intentions are difficult to decipher due to some sort of cultural or religious divide.

To test my hypothesis, in each chapter I measured whether ideology influences a state's foreign policy behavior. In doing so, I compared the Constructivist and Realist explanations for a given state's foreign policy and highlighted any gaps left by the theories. If there were gaps, I then evaluated whether Realist Constructivism was better suited to explain them. The outcome in each case was that Constructivism failed to differentiate itself from Realist expectations in that the state's behavior was ultimately in line with their national interests. That said, even though Realism correctly characterizes state behavior as being motivated by the pursuit of power, the theory did not go far enough in being able to account for the role of ideology. Therefore, when both theories are jointly used—in the form of Realist Constructivism—the Constructivist supplement helps explain how that country arrived at Realist ends by clarifying the role of ideology in state foreign policy. Specifically, the hybrid theory concludes that ideology plays an intervening role in that it either influences how a state defines and pursues its interests or creates a narrative that justifies the state's behavior.

Chapter One measured whether Confucianism, or Chinese social and cultural norms, influences Chinese foreign policy behavior. Throughout the case studies

examining Chinese relations with the United States and Sudan, the indicators of a Confucian foreign policy were evident. So, even though Beijing's international relations were ultimately pragmatic, ideology played an intervening role in defining how the Chinese perceive and pursue their interests. Recognizing this will help observers understand Chinese intent and avoid misinterpreting what may at first appear to be aggressive behavior, but is simply a Chinese manner of approaching problems.

Chapter Two evaluated whether Islam influences Pakistani foreign policy behavior. In the case studies reviewing Pakistani relations with the United States and Saudi Arabia, the indicators of an Islamic foreign policy were demonstrated. Much like China, this chapter argued that Pakistan's foreign policy was by and large conducted pragmatically and in the pursuit of its self-interests. However, Pakistan's ideology distinguishes itself from that of China's in that Islamabad frequently uses it to justify or create a narrative for its international relations. As such, by recognizing that ideology plays an important intervening role in justifying those self-interests—rather than actually driving the policies—we can better estimate Pakistani intent.

Chapter Three measured whether Khomeini's brand of Shia Islam influenced Iranian foreign policy behavior. In the case study, six key areas of Iranian international relations were reviewed and Tehran's approach to these issues demonstrated an intervening role for ideology. As it turned out, much like in Pakistan's case, Iran's ideology is frequently used to justify or create a narrative for its pragmatic foreign policy. This should deemphasize the significance of extreme ideological rhetoric coming from Tehran, helping Western policymakers recognize Iranian intent is rooted in pragmatic concerns.

After reviewing each case study, it is apparent that China, Pakistan, and Iran's foreign policy behaviors are motivated by the pursuit of their self-interests. It also becomes apparent that ideology, in its intervening role, can play two different functions. First, it can help to explain how ideology affects perceptions of and approaches to national interest, explaining why particular decisions were made and how they were carried out, as is the case with China. Second, it plays a justificatory role by placing the behavior in the context of an ideological narrative, as is the case with Pakistan and Iran. In either function, by recognizing the actual role of ideology in a state's foreign policy, American policymakers can better understand the intent of that state.

This is important for when Washington is dealing with states that appear irrational due to the influence of some sort of ideology. By applying the Realist Constructivism lens to their foreign policy behavior, Washington can unravel the actual role of ideology. Rather than viewing it as a radicalizing force that leads to irrationality, American policymakers should look to see what ideology can explain about that state's actions. For example, it could shed light on how cultural factors are more prone to certain types of foreign policy behavior or that religious rhetoric is invoked to justify what is actually pragmatic conduct. Keeping these factors in mind will prevent Washington from being sidetracked by things like rhetoric, allowing them to accurately perceive a given state's intentions. As such, the United States will be able to more effectively allocate its limited resources against legitimate threats, rather than states whose ideological influence clouds perceptions of their intent, thereby reducing the potential for needless conflict.

Based on my conclusions and their implications, future areas of research could be states with different types of ideologies and whether they also impact foreign policy. For

example, it would be interesting to learn the role of Communism or nationalism in North Korean foreign policy. Moreover, the examination of a Western European liberal capitalist country would help expand my hypothesis beyond non-Western states with readily apparent religious or cultural influences, making it apply more globally in scope.

Realist Constructivism is more helpful than Realism alone for being able to correctly discern the role of ideology, preventing observers from assuming that an ideological influence necessitates irrational behavior. For example, when holding talks with Beijing about international economic agreements, recognizing how Confucian principles affect Chinese calculations of their national interest should elucidate some of the confusion in Washington over China's intentions behind those decisions. Or, in response to fiery rhetoric about exporting the Islamic Revolution, Washington should keep in mind that Tehran is probably trying to put policies that were rationally calculated into an ideological narrative in order to justify them. Having this clearer picture of intent is crucial for determining whether a state poses a threat or not. Being able to more accurately assess threats will prevent Washington from unnecessarily creating new enemies or leaving it exposed to countries that actually do mean it harm.

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