

# Status Seekers

Chinese and Russian Responses  
to U.S. Primacy

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Since the end of the Cold War, scholars and foreign policy analysts have debated the type of world order that the United States should strive to create—a hegemonic system, a multilateral institutional system, or a great power concert.<sup>1</sup> Initially, a major issue was whether attempts to maintain U.S. primacy would stimulate counterbalancing from other states.<sup>2</sup> But since the 2003 Iraq War, a new consideration has emerged—how to persuade other states to cooperate with U.S. global governance.<sup>3</sup> States that do not oppose efforts by the United States to maintain stability may nonetheless decline to follow its leadership. This is a matter for concern because although the United States can act alone, it cannot succeed on such issues as controlling terrorism, curbing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), rebuilding failed states, or maintaining economic stability without help from other states.

Among the states whose support is critical are China and Russia. China, which in modern times has never been accorded great power status, has expe-

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The authors are grateful to the anonymous reviewers for helpful suggestions. They also thank Colin Elman, Yoshiko Herrera, David Kang, Christopher Layne, Richard Ned Lebow, and Richard Rosecrance for comments and discussion.

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1. For an influential argument in favor of multilateralism, see G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001). For key primacist arguments, see William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 5–41; and Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008). On creating an "encompassing coalition" of great powers, see Richard Rosecrance, ed., *The New Great Power Coalition: Toward a World Concert of Nations* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

2. See, for example, Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), pp. 5–51; Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), pp. 5–41; G. John Ikenberry, ed., *America Unrivaled: The Future of the Balance of Power* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002); and T.V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, and Michel Fortmann, ed., *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004).

3. For the argument that other states have responded to U.S. unilateralism by engaging in "soft balancing," see T.V. Paul, "Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 46–71; Robert A. Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 7–45; Stephen M. Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), pp. 126–131, 141–142; Josef Joffe, *Überpower: The Imperial Temptation of America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), pp. 51–63; and Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States' Unipolar Moment," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 7–41.

rienced impressive economic growth and is rapidly rising in the international system. China's ascendance creates expectations of an uncertain power transition in the Asia-Pacific region and potentially in world politics, one that could be accompanied by dangerous competition. Then there is Russia, a former superpower and (after a decade of post-Soviet retrenchment complicated by gross internal mismanagement) most recently a resurgent power because of a rise in energy prices, a power that has not yet found a place in world politics. Obtaining cooperation from China and Russia is more complex and difficult because they are outsiders from the liberal Western community, with differing values and interests.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, as a long-standing democracy, rising power India is more susceptible to appeals to common values, especially since the 2006 nuclear agreement with the United States recognized India's status as a nuclear power.<sup>5</sup> With China and Russia, the problem is how to obtain their cooperation with U.S. global governance if they cannot be integrated into the West.

The United States needs Chinese and Russian assistance to curb proliferation of WMD, control terrorism, maintain stable energy supplies, and stabilize Eurasia. China and Russia have permanent seats on the United Nations (UN) Security Council, allowing them to veto resolutions authorizing intervention or sanctions against would-be proliferators or aggressors. China and Russia also have political ties with Iran and North Korea that could make them useful intermediaries. Because of its economic aid and geographic proximity, China is an essential interlocutor with North Korea; Russia is a major arms supplier and economic partner with Iran. Russia has thousands of nuclear weapons and tons of nuclear materials, both coveted by rogue states and terrorist groups. As the second-largest oil exporter and the holder of the world's largest gas reserves, Russia can affect global energy supplies and prices. Russia could provide help as a transit route for U.S. military supplies and source of intelligence for the U.S. effort to stabilize Afghanistan. As the dominant power in Central Asia, Russia can assist in maintaining stability in this energy-rich region, an area that is increasingly important to China as well. The United States needs to work with China to stabilize security relationships in the Asia-Pacific region,

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4. For theoretical works that treat China and Russia as separate from the Western security community, see Rosecrance, *The New Great Power Coalition*; Robert Jervis, "Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 96, No. 1 (March 2002), pp. 1-14; and Henry R. Nau, *At Home Abroad: Identity and Power in American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002).

5. C. Raja Mohan, "India and the Balance of Power," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (July/August 2006), pp. 17-32.

head off regional rivalries, and prevent dangerous conflict resulting from a North Korean implosion.

Scholars have debated whether future Chinese and Russian foreign policies will contribute to global stability.<sup>6</sup> Both states have been reluctant to agree to tough sanctions on North Korea and Iran to stop their nuclear programs.<sup>7</sup> As China's consumption of energy has grown, Beijing has been actively competing for control of energy resources around the world, sometimes in rogue states such as Burma, Iran, and Sudan.<sup>8</sup> China has used the growing wealth of its economy to modernize its military, increasing its ability to coerce Taiwan or seize disputed territory in the East and South China Seas.<sup>9</sup> Russia has been trying to exert influence over the post-Soviet space by such means as cutting off the supply of oil and gas,<sup>10</sup> and most dramatically, its August 2008 incursion

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6. For useful overviews of debates on China's rise, see Avery Goldstein, "Great Expectations: Interpreting China's Arrival," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Winter 1997/98), pp. 36–73; Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Spring 2003), pp. 5–56; Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.–China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?" *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Fall 2005), pp. 7–45; and Thomas J. Christensen, "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and U.S. Policy toward East Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 81–126. For optimistic assessments of the implications of China's rise for trade, security, and collaboration in Asia, see David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Winter 2004/05), pp. 64–99; and David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). For a theoretical justification for the strategy of preemptive containment of China, see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), chap. 10. On Russia's foreign policy since the end of the Cold War, see James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy toward Russia after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003); Bobo Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2003); Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006); and Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009). For a pessimistic prognosis concerning Russian cooperation with the West, see Dmitri Trenin, "Russia Leaves the West," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (July/August 2006), pp. 87–96.

7. On China's reluctance to impose sanctions, see Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Andrew Small, "China's New Dictatorship Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (January/February 2008), pp. 38–56.

8. David Zweig and Bi Jianhai, "China's Global Hunt for Energy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 5 (September/October 2005), pp. 25–38.

9. Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2009* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, March 2009), p. 1, [http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/China\\_Military\\_Power\\_Report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Power_Report_2009.pdf). China's relations with Taiwan have improved significantly since the election of the Kuomintang chairman, Ma Ying-jeou, as president on March 22, 2008, as illustrated by a historic November 2008 agreement whereby China and Taiwan agreed to direct shipping and air service across the Taiwan Strait for the first time in more than half a century. Edward Wong, "China and Taiwan Expand Accords," *New York Times*, November 5, 2008.

10. For an in-depth analysis of the "energy superpower" strategy, see Marshall I. Goldman, *Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

into Georgia followed by recognition of the breakaway republics Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>11</sup> Both China and Russia have sold arms to objectionable regimes such as Burma, Iran, Syria, and Venezuela.<sup>12</sup>

Securing Chinese and Russian cooperation requires understanding the objectives and logic of their grand strategies and devising effective policies to achieve that goal. In what follows, we demonstrate that despite apparent shifts and turns, Chinese and Russian foreign policies since the end of the Cold War have been motivated by a consistent objective—to restore both countries' great power status. We argue that China and Russia will be more likely to participate in global governance if the United States can find ways to recognize their distinctive status and identities.

States' concerns about their relative status have been largely overlooked by the dominant theoretical approaches of neorealism and liberalism.<sup>13</sup> Neorealism focuses on material components of power, whereas liberalism is oriented around norms, institutions, and economic interdependence. These approaches have limited utility for persuading China and Russia to cooperate because neither country needs economic or security assistance from the West, and they do not subscribe to Western liberal democratic norms.

For insights into the role of status in international politics, we draw on social identity theory (SIT), which explores how social groups strive to achieve a positively distinctive identity.<sup>14</sup> When a group's identity is no longer favorable, it may pursue one of several strategies: social mobility, social competition, or

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11. For a contemporary journalistic account of the Georgian crisis, see Helene Cooper, C.J. Chivers, and Clifford J. Levy, "How a Spat Became a Showdown: As Georgia and Russia Headed for a Clash, the U.S. Missed the Signals," *New York Times*, August 18, 2008. See also "Briefing: Russia and Georgia," *Economist*, August 16, 2008, pp. 24–26.

12. Lt. Gen. Michael D. Maples, director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Annual Threat Assessment, statement before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, 111th Cong., 1st sess., March 10, 2009, [http://www.dia.mil/publicaffairs/Testimonies/statement\\_31.pdf](http://www.dia.mil/publicaffairs/Testimonies/statement_31.pdf); and Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), pp. 64–67.

13. For discussion of the role of status concerns, see Randall L. Schweller, "Realism and the Present Great Power System: Growth and Positional Conflict over Scarce Resources," in Ethan B. Kapstein and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies after the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 28–68; and William C. Wohlforth, "Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War," *World Politics*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 28–57.

14. For seminal works on social identity theory, see Henri Tajfel, "The Psychological Structure of Intergroup Relations," in Tajfel, ed., *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic, 1978), pp. 27–98; and Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel, eds., *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1979), pp. 33–47. For applications of social identity theory to international relations, see Jonathan Mercer, "Anarchy and Identity," *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (Spring 1995), pp. 229–252; Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, "Shortcut to Greatness: The New Thinking and the Revolution in Soviet Foreign Policy," *International Organization*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Winter 2003),

social creativity. Social mobility emulates the values and practices of the higher-status group with the goal of gaining admission into elite clubs. Social competition tries to equal or surpass the dominant group in the area on which its claims to superior status rest. Finally, social creativity reframes a negative attribute as positive or stresses achievement in a different domain. Applied to international relations, SIT suggests that states may improve their status by joining elite clubs, trying to best the dominant states, or achieving preeminence outside the arena of geopolitical competition.<sup>15</sup>

We apply a theoretical framework based on SIT to case studies of changes in Chinese and Russian grand strategy since the end of the Cold War as a plausibility probe.<sup>16</sup> Our study indicates that China and Russia initially sought great power status through partial acceptance of Western capitalist norms but were denied integration into elite Western clubs. Both states turned to more competitive policies but did not enhance their relative standing. Rather than adjust to the U.S.-led liberal democratic system, China and Russia sought to develop new, more positive images by contributing to global governance while maintaining distinctive identities. China has been remarkably successful in changing other states' perceptions of its identity, whereas Russia's cooperation was largely taken for granted. Russia's foreign policy is currently in a transitional phase with some elements of social competition.

Our case studies suggest that the desire for greater status may motivate rising powers to take on more responsibility for maintaining world order. For this outcome to occur, the dominant power, the United States, must offer recognition of the rising state's more positive identity and status. Overall U.S. predominance allows the United States to recognize other countries' achievements and contributions in the area of global governance without detracting from its own status. Use of status incentives should receive greater consideration as a tool of global governance.

We begin by discussing the basic propositions of SIT, showing why groups are motivated to achieve positive distinctiveness. We then elaborate and conceptualize the SIT typology of identity management strategies, providing applications to international relations. This theoretical framework is then used to explain major shifts in Chinese and Russian grand strategy since the end of the Cold War, and especially the adoption of more cooperative policies. The

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pp. 77–109; and Anne L. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

15. Tajfel and Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict."

16. Harry Eckstein, "Case Studies and Theory in Political Science," in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science*, Vol. 7 (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), pp. 79–138.

conclusion identifies contributions of SIT to understanding otherwise puzzling Chinese and Russian behavior.

### *Identity, Status, and Power*

Social identity theory posits that people derive part of their identity from membership in various social groups—nation, ethnicity, religion, political party, gender, or occupation. Because membership reflects back on the self, people want their group to have a positive identity.<sup>17</sup> People compare their group's achievements and qualities to a reference group, one that is equal or slightly superior.<sup>18</sup> The propensity toward upward comparison is found in the choice of reference groups in international relations, where the Chinese compare their achievements to those of Japan, the United States, and Russia;<sup>19</sup> Indians look at China;<sup>20</sup> and Russians judge their accomplishments relative to those of the United States.<sup>21</sup>

Groups strive for positive distinctiveness—to be not only different but better.<sup>22</sup> Evidence for this motive is provided by minimal group experiments where, based on trivial factors such as preference for the art of Wassily Kandinsky versus Paul Klee, groups discriminate in favor of the in-group.<sup>23</sup> In the minimal group experiments, the groups were equal in status and power to control for alternative explanations for group rivalries.<sup>24</sup> But SIT researchers continue to find in-group bias in settings where there are marked disparities in status or power, whether based on occupation,<sup>25</sup> military rank,<sup>26</sup> gender,<sup>27</sup> or

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17. Tajfel, "The Psychological Structure of Intergroup Relations," pp. 63–64; and Tajfel and Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," p. 40.

18. Rupert Brown and Gabi Haeger, "'Compared to What?' Comparison Choice in an International Context," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 1999), pp. 31–42.

19. David M. Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 22.

20. Somini Sengupta, "India and China Become Friendlier Rivals," *New York Times*, November 21, 2006.

21. Bobo Lo, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Reality, Illusion, and Mythmaking* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 8, 23.

22. Tajfel, "The Psychological Structure of Intergroup Relations," pp. 83–86.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 77–86. For a review, see Marilyn B. Brewer, "In-Group Bias in the Minimal Intergroup Situation: A Cognitive-Motivational Analysis," *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 86, No. 2 (March 1979), pp. 307–324.

24. Jacques E.C. Hymans, "Applying Social Identity Theory to the Study of International Politics: A Caution and an Agenda," paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 24–27, 2002, p. 11.

25. Richard Y. Bourhis and Peter Hill, "Intergroup Perceptions in British Higher Education: A Field Study," in Henri Tajfel, ed., *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 423–468.

26. Jennifer G. Boldry and Deborah A. Kashy, "Intergroup Perception in Naturally Occurring Groups of Differential Status: A Social Relations Perspective," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 77, No. 6 (December 1999), pp. 1200–1212.

27. Peter R. Grant, "Ethnocentrism between Groups of Unequal Power in Response to Perceived

region (Northern vs. Southern Italians,<sup>28</sup> French vs. British Canadians,<sup>29</sup> East vs. West Germans<sup>30</sup>).

Status is based on a group's standing on some trait valued by society.<sup>31</sup> Status is a positional good, meaning that one group's status can improve only if another's declines.<sup>32</sup> SIT introduces an important modification to this prevailing zero-sum conception of status by pointing out that groups have multiple traits on which to be evaluated, so that comparisons among them need not be competitive. The availability of multidimensional comparisons underlies social creativity, as is discussed below.

Realists regard a state's position in the international status hierarchy as based on military power, especially as demonstrated in war. A further implication of realism is that the concentration of power helps to determine a state's foreign policy.<sup>33</sup> Against this notion, the English School has pointed out that having the recognized status of great power with "certain special rights and duties" has always required approval from the other great powers and other states in the international community.<sup>34</sup> Having superior military capabilities does not necessarily bring with it superior status, acceptance, or respect. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union engaged in a futile effort to win global status through military competition and geopolitical expansion, but the United States was unwilling to recognize the Soviet Union as an equal.<sup>35</sup> Status-seeking actions can be largely symbolic and aimed at influencing others' perceptions, as distinguished from the search for raw material power. For example, hosting the Olympic Games has traditionally been an indicator of rising power status, as illustrated by Russian President Vladimir Putin's re-

Threat to Social Identity and Valued Resources," *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July 1992), pp. 348–370.

28. Dora Capozza, Emiliana Bonaldo, and Alba Di Maggio, "Problems of Identity and Social Conflict: Research on Ethnic Groups in Italy," in Tajfel, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*, pp. 299–325.

29. Ad F.M. Van Knippenberg, "Intergroup Differences in Group Perceptions," in Henri Tajfel, ed., *The Social Dimension: European Developments in Social Psychology*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 565–566.

30. Amélie Mummendey, Thomas Kessler, Andreas Klink, and Rosemarie Mielke, "Strategies to Cope with Negative Social Identity: Predictions by Social Identity Theory and Relative Deprivation Theory," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (February 1999), pp. 229–245.

31. Ad van Knippenberg and Naomi Ellemers, "Strategies in Intergroup Relations," in Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams, eds., *Group Motivation: Social Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), pp. 20–21.

32. On positional goods, see Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 27–28.

33. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 30–33.

34. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 202.

35. William C. Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions during the Cold War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 146, 177–178.

mark that being awarded the 2014 Winter Olympics was a “judgment of our country,” and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s tearful exclamation that Rio de Janeiro’s selection meant that Brazil had gone from being a second-class to a first-class country and was now beginning to “receive the respect we deserve.”<sup>36</sup>

International institutions are often hierarchical in their structure and functions and in that manner embody the status hierarchy. The UN Security Council was built on the premise of great power management of the system, and the permanent five members reflect the distribution of power at the end of World War II. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are also hierarchical in their rights and functioning, as exemplified by the weighted voting structure. Consequently, international institutions are often arenas in which states contend for status. For example, smaller states expend great effort and financial resources to win election to one of the nonpermanent memberships in the Security Council.<sup>37</sup> Formal diplomatic protocol, including state visits or summits, is a traditional means of indicating a state’s relative status.

Indirect evidence of concern for status is provided by a state’s disproportionate reaction to perceived humiliations. Displays of anger are often intended to restore status or dignity,<sup>38</sup> as in the violent and emotional protests among Chinese youth against the May 1999 accidental U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.<sup>39</sup> States may try to demonstrate their importance by engaging in obstructionist behavior, acting as spoilers.

Status seeking is prompted by unfavorable comparisons to a reference group, stimulating the desire to improve one’s position. The group may want to pursue an identity management strategy to achieve a more positive, distinctive identity.<sup>40</sup>

### *In Search of Status: Identity Management Strategies*

A group that wants to improve its standing may try to pass into a higher-status group, compete with the dominant group, or achieve preeminence in a differ-

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36. Quoted in Max Delany and Kevin O’Flynn, “As Sochi Gets Olympics, a Gold Medal for Putin,” *International Herald Tribune*, July 5, 2007; and Alexei Barrionuevo, “Dancing into the Evening, Brazil Celebrates Its Arrival on the World Stage,” *New York Times*, October 4, 2009.

37. David M. Malone, “Eyes on the Prize: The Quest for Nonpermanent Seats on the UN Security Council,” *Global Governance*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (January–March 2000), pp. 3–24.

38. Philip Shaver, Judith Schwartz, Donald Kirson, and Cary O’Connor, “Emotion Knowledge: Further Exploration of a Prototype Approach,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 52, No. 6 (June 1987), p. 1078.

39. Peter Hays Gries, “Tears of Rage: Chinese Nationalist Reactions to the Belgrade Embassy Bombing,” *China Journal*, No. 46 (July 2001), pp. 25–43.

40. Tajfel and Turner, “An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict,” pp. 40, 43.

ent domain. The choice of one type of strategy over another depends on the openness of the status hierarchy as well as the values of the group. States have also pursued varying strategies for attaining status, depending on the permeability of elite clubs as well as the similarity of their values with the established powers.

#### SOCIAL MOBILITY

If the boundaries of higher-status groups are permeable, a lower-status group may conform to the norms of an elite group to gain acceptance, pursuing a strategy of social mobility.<sup>41</sup> Just as individuals imitate the social norms and lifestyle of the upper class to be accepted into elite social clubs,<sup>42</sup> so states may adopt the political and economic norms of the dominant powers to be admitted to more prestigious institutions or clubs.

Social mobility has been the strategy pursued by states in two waves of democratization since World War II. After the end of the postwar occupation, West Germany and Japan sought admission to the “civilized states” by renouncing offensive military force and accepting liberal democracy. West Germany chose to transcend its nationalist identity through European integration, whereas Japan pursued membership in the IMF, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.<sup>43</sup> Since the end of the Cold War, Eastern and Central European states have adopted liberal democratic reforms and capitalism to be admitted into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), organizations that symbolize identity as part of the West.<sup>44</sup> After being admitted into elite clubs, states may continue to pursue status but within the context of the club’s rules, as illustrated by Poland’s and the Czech Republic’s efforts to achieve a prominent role within the EU relative to more long-standing members such as France.<sup>45</sup>

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41. Tajfel, “The Psychological Structure of Intergroup Relations,” pp. 93–94; and Naomi Ellemers, Ad van Knippenberg, and Henk Wilke, “The Influence of Permeability of Group Boundaries and Stability of Group Status on Strategies of Individual Mobility and Social Change,” *British Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (September 1990), pp. 233–246.

42. Murray Milner Jr., *Status and Sacredness: A General Theory of Status Relations and an Analysis of Indian Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 35–36.

43. Reinhard Wolf, “Between Revisionism and Normalcy: Germany’s Foreign Policy Identity in the 20th Century,” in Saori N. Katada, Hanns W. Maull, and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *Global Governance: Germany and Japan in the International System* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 18–19; and Yoshiko Kojima, “Japan’s Policy Change in Multi-Layered International Economic Relations,” in *ibid.*, pp. 144–145.

44. Judith G. Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe: The Power of Norms and Incentives* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004).

45. See, for example, the rivalry between France and the Czech Republic as successive presidents of the European Union. Steven Erlanger, “Impairing Europe, Gibe by Gibe,” *New York Times*, Feb-

Indicators of a social mobility strategy include a state's emulation of the institutions, values, or ideology of the dominant states. The state's leaders may adopt the goal of joining a more elite organization or club as proof of higher status.

#### SOCIAL COMPETITION

If elite group boundaries are impermeable to new members, the lower-status group may strive for equal or superior status through a strategy of social competition. To illustrate, Japan turned to imperialism in the 1930s after the failure of the Meiji-era social mobility strategy of emulating the values and institutions of Western powers. Despite its economic and military successes, Japan was not regarded as a true member of the great power club, an exclusion made clear to the Japanese by the Paris Peace Conference's rejection of a resolution against racism that was proposed by China and Japan.<sup>46</sup>

Groups may also turn to competition when they regard the higher-status group's position as illegitimate or unstable.<sup>47</sup> For example, India challenged the validity of the norms underlying the nuclear nonproliferation regime, with its arbitrary distinction between nuclear and nonnuclear states based solely on whether they had nuclear weapons in 1967 when the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty was signed, culminating in India's nuclear test in 1998. The Indian nuclear test was a "declaration that the present status hierarchy in the international system was no longer acceptable and needed to be modified by accommodating India."<sup>48</sup>

Social competition aims to equal or outdo the dominant group in the area on which its claim to superior status rests.<sup>49</sup> In international relations, where status is in large part based on military and economic power, social competition often entails traditional geopolitical rivalry, such as competition over spheres of influence or arms racing. For example, Wilhelmine Germany competed with Britain in the size of its battleship fleet, and sought colonies and spheres of influence to attain its "place in the sun."<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the Soviet

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ruary 14, 2009; and Steven Erlanger and Nicholas Kulish, "Sarkozy and Merkel, Often at Odds, Try to Shape European Unity," *New York Times*, March 31, 2009.

46. Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007), pp. 15–18, 21.

47. J. Turner and R. Brown, "Social Status, Cognitive Alternatives, and Intergroup Relations," in Tajfel, *Differentiation between Social Groups*, pp. 201–234.

48. Baldev Raj Nayar and T.V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major-Power Status* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 173–175, 181, 211–214, 224, 227–231, at p. 231.

49. John C. Turner, "Social Comparison and Social Identity: Some Prospects for Intergroup Behavior," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1975), pp. 5–34.

50. Robert J. Art, *The Influence of Foreign Policy on Seapower: New Weapons and Weltpolitik in*

Union invested enormous resources in the nuclear arms race with the United States to achieve recognition as a political-military equal.<sup>51</sup>

Indicators of social competition include arms racing, rivalry over spheres of influence, military demonstrations aimed at one-upmanship, or military intervention against a smaller power, so long as the purpose is to influence others' perceptions rather than attain security or power. Social competition may also be manifested in spoiler behavior, as in Russia's opposition in the 1990s to U.S. intervention in the Balkans and Iraq,<sup>52</sup> as well as its efforts since 2005 to eliminate the U.S. military presence in Central Asia, despite having an interest in U.S. defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan.<sup>53</sup> As Richard Pipes writes, "When the Kremlin says 'no' to Western initiatives, Russians feel that they are indeed a world power."<sup>54</sup>

#### SOCIAL CREATIVITY

When the status hierarchy is perceived as legitimate or stable, groups may seek prestige in a different area altogether, exercising social creativity. This may be done by (1) reevaluating the meaning of a negative characteristic, or (2) finding a new dimension on which their group is superior.<sup>55</sup> A supposedly negative attribute is reevaluated as positive in the African American 1960s slogan "Black is beautiful." An example from international politics is China's reinterpretation of Confucianism, viewed by Mao Zedong as feudal, as part of Beijing's "soft power."<sup>56</sup> The tactic of identifying a different dimension is illustrated by the Eurasianism strand of Russian intellectual thought, a school that celebrates Russia's collectivism, spiritualism, traditionalism, and Orthodox Christianity in contrast to the West's spiritually impoverished individualism and materialism.<sup>57</sup>

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*Wilhelminian Germany* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1973), pp. 23–24, 36–37; and Wolf, "Between Revisionism and Normalcy," pp. 12–13.

51. Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance*; and Larson and Shevchenko, "Shortcut to Greatness," pp. 93–95.

52. Lo, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era*, pp. 89–90, 142.

53. Mark Kramer, "Russian Policy toward the Commonwealth of Independent States: Recent Trends and Future Prospects," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 55, No. 6 (November/December 2008), pp. 5–6; and Clifford J. Levy, "At the Crossroad of Empires, a Mouse Struts," *New York Times*, July 26, 2009.

54. Richard Pipes, "Craving to Be a Great Power," *Moscow Times*, July 15, 2009, Johnson's Russia List, 2009-#133.

55. Gérard Lemaire, "Social Differentiation and Social Originality," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (March 1974), pp. 17–52.

56. Peter Hays Gries, "Identity and Conflict in Sino-American Relations," in Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, eds., *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 325.

57. Dmitry Shlapentokh, "Dugin Eurasianism: A Window on the Minds of the Russian Elite or an Intellectual Ploy?" *Studies in East European Thought*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (September 2007), pp. 215–236.

In international relations, social creativity entails achieving prestige on a different dimension, such as promoting new norms or a developmental model. In contrast to social mobility, the state will underscore how its policy is unique. For example, during the height of the Cold War, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru achieved preeminence as leader of the Nonaligned Movement and proponent of disarmament and anticolonialism.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev tried to achieve greatness for the Soviet Union as the moral and political leader of a new international order shaped on principles of the New Thinking such as mutual security, nonoffensive defense, and the Common European Home.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast to social competition, social creativity does not try to change the hierarchy of status in the international system but rather tries to achieve preeminence on a different ranking system. For example, French President Charles de Gaulle pursued a social creativity strategy of emphasizing France's grandeur and independence from the United States, but he did not challenge the bipolar order.<sup>60</sup> In contrast, Adolf Hitler's principal goal was world domination under a "Great German Empire," and promoting new racist criteria for international prestige was secondary.<sup>61</sup>

For a social creativity strategy to succeed, the lower-status group's proposed criteria for status must be recognized as valid and worthwhile by the dominant group. Status cannot be attained unilaterally.<sup>62</sup> Although status is positional, two social groups may be able to attain positive status at the same time so long as there are multiple criteria. With more than one way to attain status, two groups may be superior but in different areas.<sup>63</sup> State A can claim to be better on dimension X while acknowledging that State B is stronger on dimension Y. Groups may acknowledge others' achievements, thereby showing social cooperation.<sup>64</sup> Social cooperation is illustrated by U.S.-EU relations, where Europeans take pride in their generous social welfare benefits, cosmopolitanism, and social safety nets, while the United States emphasizes its military power, global reach, and international competitiveness.<sup>65</sup>

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58. Nayar and Paul, *India in the World Order*, pp. 135–144.

59. Larson and Shevchenko, "Shortcut to Greatness."

60. Stanley Hoffmann, *Decline or Renewal? France since the 1930s* (New York: Viking, 1974), pp. 94, 191, 217, 337.

61. Wolf, "Between Revisionism and Normalcy," pp. 16–17.

62. Tajfel, "The Psychological Structure of Intergroup Relations," p. 96.

63. Amélie Mummendey and Hans-Joachim Schreiber, "'Different' Just Means 'Better': Some Obvious and Some Hidden Pathways to In-group Favouritism," *British Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (November 1984), pp. 363–368.

64. Van Knippenberg, "Intergroup Differences in Group Perceptions," p. 575.

65. Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Vintage, 2004), p. 120.

If the higher-status group refuses to acknowledge the other's social creativity efforts, the lower-status group will react competitively,<sup>66</sup> and possibly take offensive action. People often react angrily and impulsively over injuries to honor, dignity, or respect.<sup>67</sup> A higher-status group is more likely to be generous about accepting the out-group's achievements if it regards its own superior position as legitimate and secure.<sup>68</sup>

Indicators that a state is pursuing social creativity include advocacy of new international norms, regimes, institutions, or a developmental model. In contrast to social mobility, the essence of social creativity is the attempt to stake out a distinctive position, emphasizing the state's unique values or contributions. Often social creativity is accompanied by high-profile diplomacy, with charismatic leaders who take a prominent role on the world stage, such as de Gaulle, Nehru, or Gorbachev.

#### SUMMARY

Strategies of social mobility, social competition, and social creativity are ideal types, and elements of all three may be found in a particular country's foreign policy. Nevertheless, the strategies have different goals and tactics, so that dominance of a particular identity management strategy alters the state's entire foreign policy. Social mobility entails emulating the values and practices of the established powers to attain integration into elite clubs. Social competition, however, tries to supplant the dominant power on the geopolitical dimensions of status. Social creativity seeks a favorable position on a different ranking system, while highlighting the state's uniqueness and differences from the dominant powers. The choice of strategy depends on the state's perceptions of the permeability of elite clubs and the legitimacy and stability of the status hierarchy, factors that can be influenced by the behavior of the dominant powers, in this case, the United States and its allies.

Based on this discussion of SIT, we may now develop theoretical expectations for Chinese and Russian foreign policy following the end of the Cold War. China and Russia had to forge new identities in an international system dominated by the United States. Emphasizing the "end of history" and the tri-

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66. Tajfel, "The Psychological Structure of Intergroup Relations," pp. 96–97; and Rupert J. Brown and Gordon F. Ross, "The Battle for Acceptance: An Investigation into the Dynamics of Intergroup Behavior," in Tajfel, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*, pp. 155–178.

67. Diane M. Mackie, Thierry Devos, and Eliot R. Smith, "Intergroup Emotions: Explaining Offensive Action Tendencies in an Intergroup Context," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 79, No. 4 (October 2000), pp. 602–616.

68. Itesh Sachdev and Richard Y. Bourhis, "Power and Status Differentials in Minority and Majority Intergroup Relations," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (January 1991), pp. 1–24.

umph of democratic values, the United States encouraged former communist states to become liberal democracies with market economies. Unless China and Russia emulated Western liberal values, values at odds with their collectivist and statist traditions, SIT would predict that both states would be denied admission into the great power club. Frustration with the lack of permeability of elite institutions would encourage both states to turn to competitive and assertive behavior, complaining of Western “double standards.” If they regarded the U.S. position at the top of the status hierarchy as stable and legitimate, both states would be prone to exercise social creativity, such as finding value in previously unappreciated aspects of their national traditions or promoting alternative norms. Whether their efforts at social creativity endured would depend on the willingness of the United States and other Western powers to accord increased recognition and respect.

### *Beijing’s and Moscow’s Search for Status and Identity*

After the end of the Cold War, China and Russia experienced major threats to their identities as great powers. China’s crackdown on protesters at Tiananmen Square placed China on “the wrong side of history” in the eyes of the West, and Russia’s continuing political and economic instability fueled fears that the country had not yet made a break with its Soviet past. Frustrated with conditionality and Western-imposed barriers to social mobility, China and Russia adopted social competition strategies, but China’s premature assertiveness aroused fears in East Asia, and Russia’s diplomatic balancing was anachronistic and ineffective in a globalized, unipolar world.

#### CHINA’S MILITARY ASSERTIVENESS

Since the 1978 economic reforms opening up China to trade and foreign investment under Deng Xiaoping, Chinese elites have aimed to achieve social mobility into the ranks of the great powers and equality of status with them through economic modernization and growth, overcoming a “century of shame and humiliation.”<sup>69</sup> China’s economic growth in the reform era has been nothing short of astonishing, averaging close to 10 percent per year,<sup>70</sup> but its progress toward improved political status was less successful.

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69. Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China’s Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2000), pp. 98–99; and Samuel S. Kim, “China’s Path to Great Power Status in the Globalization Era,” *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 52–53.

70. According to the World Bank, China’s gross domestic product has been growing at an average rate of 9.7 percent since the late 1970s. See World Bank, “China and the World Bank,” <http://go.worldbank.org/V6EKS2650>.

In the late 1980s, China faced internal and external legitimacy crises. When the Chinese regime brutally suppressed peaceful demonstrators at Tiananmen Square in June 1989, the United States organized Western political and economic sanctions, including suspension of military cooperation and arms sales and the postponement of loans from international financial institutions. With the peaceful collapse of successive communist regimes in Eastern Europe in the autumn of 1989, China's rulers who had only recently been regarded as reformers were now perceived as trying to hold back the inevitable forces of freedom and democracy.<sup>71</sup> In contrast, after 1987 Taiwan became more democratic, allowing Taiwanese nationalism to emerge as an important factor in Taiwan's politics for the first time. Previously unheard-of demands for Taiwan's independence, combined with U.S. support for democratic Taiwan, threatened China's plans for peaceful reunification—the key to domestic legitimacy for successive generations of Chinese leaders.<sup>72</sup>

Emboldened by a resurgence in China's economic growth (since 1992/93) and by the end of China's post-Tiananmen isolation, Jiang Zemin and his followers rather awkwardly modified Deng Xiaoping's traditionally cautious foreign policy by attempting to translate China's economic strength into increased political clout in the Asia-Pacific, engaging in social competition.<sup>73</sup> This more forward policy backfired by reinforcing perceptions of an emerging China "threat" to the region.

In February 1995, China was discovered to have occupied Mischief Reef, part of the Philippine claim area in the oil-rich and strategically located Spratly Islands.<sup>74</sup> Concern about China's ambitions was heightened by the regime's military exercises and missile tests in the Taiwan Strait from July 1995 to March 1996.<sup>75</sup> The Chinese were reacting to the May 1995 decision by Presi-

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71. Harry Harding, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China since 1972* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1992), pp. 248–249; and James Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Vintage, 1998), pp. 195–198, 205, 227.

72. H. Lyman Miller and Liu Xiaohong, "The Foreign Policy Outlook of China's 'Third Generation' Elite," in David M. Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 140–141; John W. Garver, *Face Off: China, the United States, and Taiwan's Democratization* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 4–5, 17–23; and Wang Jisi, "China's Changing Role in Asia," in Kokobun Roysei and Jisi, eds., *The Rise of China and a Changing East Asia Order* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2004), p. 14.

73. Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 46–47.

74. Michael Leifer, "Chinese Economic Reform and Security Policy: The South China Sea Connection," *Survival*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Summer 1995), pp. 44–59.

75. Robert S. Ross, "The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation: Coercion, Credibility, and the Use of Force," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Fall 2000), pp. 87–123.

dent Bill Clinton to grant Taiwan President Lee Deng-hui a visa to visit Cornell University, thereby encouraging Taiwan's search for "greater international space." The Chinese regarded the U.S. visa decision as a slap in the face to Jiang, who had offered a relatively conciliatory policy toward Taiwan. People's Liberation Army (PLA) officers and civilian hawks in China demanded a strong military response.<sup>76</sup> In the wake of the crisis, Premier Li Peng crowed that Americans "have come to realize the importance of China."<sup>77</sup>

China's military demonstration caused a backlash, as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) rejected Beijing's sovereignty claims in the South China Sea,<sup>78</sup> the United States dispatched two aircraft carrier battle-groups to the area near Taiwan,<sup>79</sup> and the United States and Japan strengthened their alliance guidelines, including collaboration on a theater missile defense system covering the East China Sea (and possibly Taiwan).<sup>80</sup> Chinese elites eventually came to realize that social competition with the United States in the Asia-Pacific fed into the "China threat" theory, increasing the risk that a coalition of states would try to contain China's rise.<sup>81</sup>

#### RUSSIA'S COMPETITIVE MULTIPOLAR DIPLOMACY

Following the end of the Cold War, Russia faced enormous problems in creating new political and economic institutions, yet was unwilling to relinquish its claims to great power status.<sup>82</sup> Despite having inherited the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons and permanent membership in the UN Security Council, Russia was not invited to join elite Western institutions. Consequently, Russia adopted a social competition strategy of forming diplomatic coalitions to restrain U.S. power and enhance Russia's global status.

After the demise of the Soviet Union, both the value and distinctiveness of Russia's identity were threatened. Russia suffered profound internal and external identity crises, exacerbated by the difficulty of adjusting to the rapid decline in its status and loss of its position as a superpower.<sup>83</sup> Historically,

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76. Michael D. Swaine, "Chinese Decision-making Regarding Taiwan, 1979-2000," in Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, pp. 319-324; and Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail Its Peaceful Rise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 188-189.

77. See Li Peng's comments in the *Financial Times*, June 11, 1996, in FBIS-China, June 11, 1996, pp. 1-2, quoted in Ross, "The 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," p. 118.

78. Allen S. Whiting, "ASEAN Eyes China: The Security Dimension," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (April 1997), p. 319.

79. Ross, "The 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation," pp. 109-110.

80. Michael Yahuda, "The Limits of Economic Interdependence: Sino-Japanese Relations," in Johnston and Ross, *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, p. 167.

81. Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge*, pp. 47-48, 116-117.

82. Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 21-22.

83. Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002); and Dmitri Trenin, *The End of Eurasia: Russia*

Russia's relative backwardness, unsettled identity, and sense of not really belonging to the West have led to an obsession with international status and great power standing, as denoted by the word *derzhavnost*, referring to a preoccupation with great power status regardless of whether Russia has the military and economic wherewithal.<sup>84</sup> Although different schools of thought—Marxists, statist, Westernizers, and Eurasianists—disagreed on Russia's foreign policy orientation,<sup>85</sup> there was one point on which they and the Russian people agreed: despite its temporary weakness, Russia was destined to be a great power, not just a "normal state."<sup>86</sup> Equally important was the question of Russia's status in its relationship with the United States. Equality with the United States and U.S. appreciation of Russia have always been key ingredients of domestic legitimacy for both Soviet and post-Soviet rulers.<sup>87</sup>

In the early 1990s, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and other Russian liberals aspired to be admitted to Western clubs such as GATT, the IMF, the Group of Seven (G-7), and even NATO as a sign that Russia had "arrived" into the community of Western liberal democracies, a higher-status group.<sup>88</sup> The Clinton administration, however, was unwilling to admit Russia into elite Western clubs before its political and economic liberalization was complete.<sup>89</sup> Russian elites believed that Russia, in a different category from Central and Eastern European states, should be welcomed into Western institutions without having to meet external conditions.<sup>90</sup>

A critical factor in Russia's political evolution was the U.S. decision in early 1994 to enlarge NATO to include former members of the Warsaw Pact. Even pro-Western liberals worried that exclusion of Russia from the emerging all-European security system based on NATO would lead to its marginalization as

*on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002).

84. Robert Legvold, "Russian Foreign Policy during Periods of Great State Transformation," in Legvold, ed., *Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-first Century and the Shadow of the Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 114.

85. For the different schools of thought, see Margot Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," in Neil Malcolm, Alex Pravda, Roy Allison, and Light, eds., *Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 33–100; and Lo, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era*, pp. 40–65.

86. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*, pp. 54–60.

87. Leon Aron, "The United States and Russia: Ideologies, Policies, and Relations," *Russian Outlook* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, Summer 2006), [http://www.aei.org/docLib/20060629\\_20281ROSummer06\\_g.pdf](http://www.aei.org/docLib/20060629_20281ROSummer06_g.pdf).

88. See, for example, "After the Disintegration of the Soviet Union: Russia in the New World" (Moscow: Center of International Studies, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, February 1992). On NATO membership as a long-term goal of Russian foreign policy, see *Diplomaticheskii Vestnik* (Moscow), No. 1 (January 15, 1992), p. 13.

89. Angela E. Stent, "America and Russia: Paradoxes of Partnership," in Alexander J. Motyl, Blair A. Ruble, and Lilia Shevtsova, eds., *Russia's Engagement with the West: Transformation and Integration in the Twenty-first Century* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2005), p. 265.

90. Light, "Foreign Policy Thinking," p. 85.

a peripheral country.<sup>91</sup> This concern appeared to be warranted when NATO bombed Bosnian Serb positions in the spring of 1994, an area of historic Russian interest, without consulting Russia.<sup>92</sup> Russian President Boris Yeltsin's press secretary, Vyacheslav Kostikov, announced that Russia's romantic embrace of the West was over, and that Russia increasingly saw itself as a great power with strategic interests different from those of the United States and Europe.<sup>93</sup>

Russian elites believed that the West had failed to accord Russia the status and role to which it was entitled, leaving it marginalized and isolated from real decisionmaking power. Widespread dissatisfaction led to Kozyrev's replacement as foreign minister by Yevgeny Primakov.<sup>94</sup> From 1996 to 1999, Primakov pursued "multipolar" diplomacy aimed at restoring Russia's importance through diplomatic counteralliances—a strategy of social competition.<sup>95</sup> Primakov promised that Russian foreign policy would reflect his country's "status as a great power" and that Russia would seek an "equal, mutually beneficial partnership" with the West.<sup>96</sup> But Russia was too weak and financially dependent on the West to challenge U.S. actions, particularly given that the Clinton administration was prepared to act unilaterally.

In 1997, to mitigate the humiliation of NATO's enlargement, Clinton granted Yeltsin political (but not economic) membership in the G-7. "As we push Ol' Boris to do the right but hard thing on NATO," Clinton explained, "I want him to feel the warm, beckoning glow of doors that are opening to other institutions where he's welcome."<sup>97</sup> Yeltsin claimed that his "tough stance on the eastern expansion of NATO . . . played a role in gaining us this new status [G-8 membership]."<sup>98</sup> That Yeltsin would accept membership in an informal club as compensation for the expansion of an implicitly anti-Russian alliance dramatizes how much importance the Russian president placed on status.

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91. Andrei Kortunov, "The U.S. and Russia: A Virtual Partnership," *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (October–December 1996), p. 345; and Andrew J. Pierre and Dmitri Trenin, "Developing NATO-Russian Relations," *Survival*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Spring 1997), pp. 8–9.

92. Allen C. Lynch, "The Realism of Russia's Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (January 2001), pp. 14–17.

93. Cited in *RFE/RL Daily Report*, April 11, 1994.

94. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy*, pp. 83–84; and Trenin, *The End of Eurasia*, pp. 273–275.

95. See A. Pushkov, "'The Primakov Doctrine' and a New European Order," *International Affairs* (Moscow), Vol. 44, No. 2 (April 1998), p. 12; and A. Pushkov, "Russia and the New World Order," *International Affairs* (Moscow), Vol. 46, No. 6 (December 2000), pp. 5–6.

96. Quoted in Leon Aron, "The Foreign Policy Doctrine of Postcommunist Russia and Its Domestic Context," in Michael Mandelbaum, ed., *The New Russian Foreign Policy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999), pp. 29–30.

97. Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Random House, 2002), p. 124; quoted in *ibid.*, p. 237.

98. Boris Yeltsin, *Midnight Diaries* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2000), p. 131.

Primakov tried to mediate on Iraq and Kosovo to establish Russia's centrality and obstruct U.S. military action,<sup>99</sup> but such efforts only highlighted Russia's extreme financial-economic vulnerability and its high degree of economic dependence on the West. One day Moscow would be lambasting the West for its policy toward Iraq, making not-so-subtle references to its nuclear might; the next day it would be thankfully accepting Western emergency food assistance.<sup>100</sup>

NATO's bombing of Serbia in the spring of 1999 was a turning point for Russian elites and foreign policy specialists, convincing them that Russia no longer mattered to the West and that the United States, for all its rhetoric about a cooperative world order, was making geopolitical gains at Russia's expense. The United States used NATO to bypass the UN Security Council, where Russia had a veto, demonstrating complete disregard for Russia's vehement objections.<sup>101</sup> When he learned of the bombing, Primakov ordered his plane, which was headed toward the United States, to turn around in mid-air.<sup>102</sup> The Russian military sent 200 Russian peacekeepers to capture the airport in Priština before NATO troops arrived, risking a dangerous military clash between U.S. and Russian soldiers. Moderate Vladimir Lukin commented that this would show the West that "it cannot treat Russia like some lackey."<sup>103</sup> After protesting, Russia ultimately accepted Western policies on NATO enlargement, Iraq, and Kosovo, becoming an unwilling partner of the West.<sup>104</sup>

At the end of the 1990s, as Lawrence Freedman observed, Russia had become "preoccupied with a great power status" to which it could no longer lay claim.<sup>105</sup> Russia not only was viewed by the majority of Western elites as an economic "basket case" mired in corruption and powerless to control its organized crime—as one pundit put it, "Zaire with permafrost"—but it also faced the risk of falling out of the ranks of "civilized" countries because of its actions

99. Lo, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era*, pp. 89–90, 107–108, 142, at p. 89.

100. Richard Paddock, "Russia Shelves Rhetoric to Accept U.S. Food Aid," *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 1998.

101. Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 94–95. For Russian elites' reaction to Kosovo, see, for example, A. Torkunov, "International Relations in the Post-Kosovo Context," *International Affairs* (Moscow), Vol. 46, No. 1 (February 2000), pp. 74–81.

102. Goldgeier and McFaul, *Power and Purpose*, pp. 249, 253, 256, 259–260.

103. Quoted in Lo, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era*, p. 55; and Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, pp. 342–347.

104. Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, *Strategiya dlya Rosii: Povestka Dnya dlya Prezidenta-2000* [The strategy for Russia: The agenda for the president-2000] (Moscow: Vagrius, 2000), chap. 2.

105. Lawrence Freedman, "The New Great Power Politics," in Alexei G. Arbatov, Karl Kaiser, and Robert Legvold, eds., *Russia and the West: The 21st Century Security Environment* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), p. 34.

in Chechnya.<sup>106</sup> The prestigious Russian think tank Council on Foreign and Defense Policy recommended that Russia focus on a narrow range of important national interests and concentrate on domestic economic development, instead of pretending to be a great power without having adequate internal resources (what the authors ridiculed as “virtual greatness”).<sup>107</sup>

### *The Turn to Social Creativity*

Realizing that U.S. hegemony was secure, China and Russia decided to seek status by identifying areas outside the geopolitical paradigm, where they could assume prominent roles. China promoted a new identity as a responsible great power. Meanwhile Russia tried to establish a strategic partnership with the United States.

#### CHINA’S RESPONSIBLE POWER STRATEGY AND “PEACEFUL RISE”

Chinese leaders settled on a social creativity strategy of striving for recognition in a new domain—as a responsible great power.<sup>108</sup> Status requires acceptance from others, and Chinese elites realized that they had to alter their behavior to win recognition from the West. By the mid-1990s, Chinese foreign policy analysts had recognized that previous optimistic expectations about the emergence of multipolarity were wildly off the mark, concluding that “the superpower is more super, and the many great powers are less great.”<sup>109</sup>

In 1996, as part of what Jiang called “great power diplomacy,” Beijing began to foster “strategic partnerships” with other major powers such as France, Russia, and the United States—that were not directed against any state. The bilateral partnerships illustrated China’s much-touted New Security Concept, which argues that security should be based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, and cooperation as opposed to outmoded Cold War alliances and military blocs.<sup>110</sup> The New Security Concept allows China to claim prestige as a norms entrepreneur.

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106. The term “Zaire with permafrost” appeared in an essay by journalist Jeffrey Tayler, “Russia Is Finished,” *Atlantic Monthly*, May 2001, pp. 35–52. In April 2000, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe voted to strip Russia of its voting rights and suspend its membership in the Council of Europe because of human rights violations in Chechnya, the first such suspension in fifty years. J.L. Black, *Vladimir Putin and the New World Order: Looking East, Looking West?* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), pp. 42–45.

107. Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, *Strategiya dlya Rosii*.

108. Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge*, chap. 6; and Yunling Zhang and Shiping Tang, “China’s Regional Strategy,” in David Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 48–68.

109. Yong Deng, “Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U.S. Global Strategy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 3 (Fall 2001), pp. 346–347.

110. Miller and Xiaohong, “The Foreign Policy Outlook of China’s ‘Third Generation’ Elite,” p. 144; and Gill, *Rising Star*, pp. 58–63.

The New Security Concept also furnished a rationale for China's increased participation in multilateral institutions such as the ASEAN Regional Forum.<sup>111</sup> The Chinese began to take a leadership role in creating new multilateral organizations. In 1996 the Chinese took the initiative in establishing the Shanghai Five, comprising China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan, to demarcate borders and carry out confidence-building measures. In 2001, with the addition of Uzbekistan, the group evolved into the more institutionalized Shanghai Cooperation Organization and adopted the goal of combating terrorism, extremism, and separatism.<sup>112</sup> China signed numerous arms control treaties, abandoning its previous position that arms control was a cynical ploy aimed at the have-not nations.<sup>113</sup> In 1996 Beijing signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty largely out of concern for China's stature and image as a responsible power, although PLA officers and defense industry representatives argued that China's nuclear arsenal needed additional testing.<sup>114</sup>

China's emerging identity as a "responsible great power" was strengthened in the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98, when Beijing won praise for not devaluing its currency and for offering financial assistance to bail out the economies of neighboring countries.<sup>115</sup> After the crisis, China helped to create ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea) to stabilize the regional financial system.<sup>116</sup> In 2002 Beijing committed to implementing a free trade agreement with ASEAN by 2010 to reassure China's neighbors that its economic growth is an opportunity rather than a threat to their economies. China's encouragement of regional economic cooperation is not primarily motivated by economic interests, because China agreed to open up its market to exports from the weaker ASEAN countries long before they are required to offer China comparable access.<sup>117</sup> China's economic openness and its negative trade balance with ASEAN contrast favorably with Japan's trade surplus with the region. Japan failed to encourage the formation of multilateral institutions when it was the leading economy in the region.<sup>118</sup>

Although China might appear to be following the prescriptions of liberal

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111. Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia," pp. 68–69.

112. Gill, *Rising Star*, pp. 37–41.

113. Michael D. Swaine and Alastair Iain Johnston, "China and Arms Control Institutions," in Elizabeth Economy and Michel Oksenberg, eds., *China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999), pp. 100–101.

114. Bates Gill, "Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: The Dynamics of Chinese Nonproliferation and Arms Control," in Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, pp. 263–264.

115. Zhang and Tang, "China's Regional Strategy," p. 60 n. 7.

116. Shirk, *China*, pp. 118–120.

117. Alice D. Ba, "China and ASEAN: Renavigating Relations for a 21st-Century Asia," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (July/August 2003), pp. 638–643.

118. Samuels, *Securing Japan*, pp. 145–146.

institutionalism, Beijing does not subscribe to the prevailing Western norms of individualism, human rights, transparency, democracy promotion, or humanitarian intervention. Beijing adheres to traditional norms of sovereignty and nonintervention in other states' internal affairs. Liberal institutionalists argue that increasing economic interdependence pressures states to adhere to international rules and norms. China divides sovereignty rights into economic and political bundles, allowing intrusions into its sovereignty as embodied in the World Trade Organization rules and regulations while refusing to tolerate criticism of its human rights practices.<sup>119</sup> China does not accept the "Washington Consensus" on neoliberal economic principles endorsed by Western financial institutions such as the IMF, adhering instead to the "Beijing Consensus" that a country's economic and political policies should be adapted to national conditions. China provides "no strings attached" foreign assistance. And in contrast to the Western industrialized states, its commercial deals do not impose conditions such as transparency, accountability, environmental standards, or prevention of corruption.<sup>120</sup>

Building on the "Beijing Consensus" idea, since 2004 the Chinese government has made a deliberate effort to promote its "soft power" by emphasizing the appeal of the Chinese developmental model, generous foreign assistance, and benign foreign policy in diplomatic forays into the developing world.<sup>121</sup>

#### U.S. SUPPORT FOR CHINA'S RESPONSIBLE POWER IDENTITY

As discussed earlier, according to SIT, a social creativity strategy requires validation from the dominant power to succeed. The United States indicated that it would accord China a more prominent place in the world if it behaved responsibly. Immediately after the 1995–96 Taiwan Strait crisis caused by China's missile tests in the area, U.S. National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, who had earlier dismissed China as a "backlash" state, made his first visit to the country. While there, he stressed that China was a great nation and that the United States wanted China to help design the system governing the world in the twenty-first century. President Clinton exchanged formal state visits with Jiang in 1997 and 1998, a concession long sought by the Chinese as symbolizing the end of the post-Tiananmen Square ostracism, and agreed to a "constructive strategic partnership." At the 1998 summit in Shanghai, Clinton showed respect for China by stating publicly for the first time that the United

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119. Lai-Ha Chan, Pak K. Lee, and Gerald Chan, "Rethinking Global Governance: A China Model in the Making?" *Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (March 2008), pp. 7–8.

120. Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus* (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2004).

121. Chan, Lee, and Chan, "Rethinking Global Governance," p. 13.

States did not support Taiwan's independence; one China, one Taiwan; or Taiwan's membership in international organizations where statehood was a condition for membership—the “three nos.”<sup>122</sup>

The importance of U.S. acknowledgment of China's rise was revealed by the remarkably open and intense Chinese debate in the summer of 1999, after the accidental U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in May and other perceived U.S. humiliations of China sent relations into a tailspin.<sup>123</sup> The promise of a constructive strategic partnership with the United States enabled Jiang to garner enough domestic support to maintain the “peace and development” line through the assumption of power in 2002 by Hu Jintao and other fourth-generation Chinese leaders.<sup>124</sup>

Although President George W. Bush initially viewed China as a strategic competitor, China's assistance after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks contributed to a shift in U.S. policy. In the aftermath of the attacks, Beijing quickly seized an opportunity to repair ties with the United States and to act as a responsible global citizen by addressing Washington's new concerns about terrorism. China used its traditional close ties with Pakistan and the offer of economic and political assistance that would help prevent a coup to persuade long-standing ally Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf to cooperate with U.S. efforts in Afghanistan. China also cooperated in tracking terrorist financing, shared limited intelligence concerning Islamist extremist groups, and agreed to the establishment of a Federal Bureau of Investigation liaison office in Beijing.<sup>125</sup> Unlike Clinton, who did not meet with Jiang until his second term, during his first term Bush met with the Chinese leader several times (referring to Jiang as “the leader of a great nation” at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum meeting in Shanghai in October 2001) as well as with his successor Hu Jintao.<sup>126</sup> Beginning in 2003, China won appreciation for its role

122. Mann, *About Face*, pp. 342–343, 366–367.

123. These included U.S. sponsorship of a resolution at the UN Commission on Human Rights critical of China's human rights record, the Clinton administration's rejection of Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji's impressive list of painful (and secret) Chinese concessions on China's entry into the World Trade Organization followed by their leaking to the U.S. media, and the U.S. intervention in Kosovo. See David M. Lampton, *Same Bed, Different Dreams: Managing U.S.-China Relations, 1989–2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 55–62.

124. David M. Finkelstein, “China Reconsiders Its National Security: *The Great Peace and Development Debate of 1999*,” CME D0014464.A1/Final (Alexandria, Va.: CNA, 2000); and Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge*, p. 152.

125. David M. Lampton and Richard Daniel Ewing, “The U.S.-China Relationship Facing International Security Crises: Three Case Studies in Post-9/11 Bilateral Relations” (Washington, D.C.: Nixon Center, 2003), pp. 1–18.

126. Quoted in Yong Deng, *China's Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 125.

in organizing and hosting the six-party talks to restrain North Korea's nuclear ambitions.<sup>127</sup>

The line that China's rise will be "peaceful" was developed by Zheng Bijian, a leading Communist Party theorist and adviser to Hu Jintao. Zheng contrasted China's transcendence of traditional ways for great powers to emerge with the imperialism and aggression of pre-World War II Germany and Japan and the Cold War struggle for global domination between the Soviet Union and the United States, providing further evidence of China's "positive distinctiveness."<sup>128</sup> In response, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick affirmed that the United States wanted China to become "a responsible stakeholder" in the international system.<sup>129</sup> Washington played to China's status aspirations by accepting the Chinese proposal for "strategic dialogues" on a wide range of issues, including the Strategic Economic Dialogue between the U.S. secretary of the treasury and the Chinese vice premier as well as the Senior Dialogue, which is conducted by the U.S. deputy secretary of state.<sup>130</sup>

Against this backdrop of mutual recognition of status, there is little evidence that China is engaging in social competition with the United States. Some observers have suggested that China is using regional multilateral organizations to undermine U.S. influence and alliance systems in Asia.<sup>131</sup> On the other hand, these regional bodies are informal, consensus based, and impose no commitments. Most members also want to maintain good relations with the United States.<sup>132</sup> China has increased its defense budget by double digits over the past two decades, but its military acquisitions and spending levels do not indicate that it aspires to be a peer competitor with the United States. China's military acquisitions (submarines, fighter aircraft, and surface-to-air missiles) appear to be aimed at deterring Taiwan from declaring independence and at deterring,

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127. Anne Wu, "What China Whispers to North Korea," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Spring 2005), pp. 35–48.

128. For an important statement of the "peaceful rise" line, see Zheng Bijian, "China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 5 (September/October 2005), pp. 18–24. The Chinese leadership formally disavowed the term "peaceful rise" in 2004, but the term is still used by Chinese academics and government officials. See Shirik, *China*, pp. 108–109.

129. Robert B. Zoellick, "Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?" remarks to the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, New York City, New York, September 21, 2005, p. 1, [http://www.ncusr.org/files/2005Gala\\_RobertZoellick\\_Whither\\_China1.pdf](http://www.ncusr.org/files/2005Gala_RobertZoellick_Whither_China1.pdf).

130. Glenn Kessler, "U.S., China Agree to Regular Talks," *Washington Post*, April 8, 2005; and Thomas J. Christensen, "Shaping the Choices of a Rising China: Recent Lessons for the Obama Administration," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Summer 2009), pp. 89–104.

131. Robert G. Sutter, *China's Rise in Asia: Promises and Perils* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), pp. 82–83.

132. Rosemary Foot, "Chinese Strategies in a U.S.-Hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging," *International Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (January 2006), pp. 88–89.

delaying, or denying U.S. support for the island. China does not have global power projection capabilities, as indicated by its lack of aircraft carriers or long-range bombers.<sup>133</sup>

The need for social cooperation in dealing with rising powers is illustrated by tensions in Sino-Japanese relations despite burgeoning economic ties. China and Japan have never been great powers at the same time and have not learned to respect the other's status as an equal. Since the mid-1990s, Sino-Japanese relations have been embroiled over symbolic issues such as Japanese textbooks' treatment of Japan's World War II atrocities, whether Japanese leaders should issue a written apology, and Japanese politicians' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, where Japanese war criminals are interred. Chinese nationalism exploded with Japan's 2004–05 campaign for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. More than 40 million Chinese signed an online petition opposing Japan's application, citing its failure to atone for its World War II atrocities. In April 2005, news that the Japanese education ministry had approved a new revisionist textbook provoked violent protests against Japanese citizens and property across China. Chinese authorities initially made no attempt to control the disturbances, even though Japan was China's second-largest trading partner and a major source of foreign investment.<sup>134</sup>

In sum, China has increasingly taken on a more activist, constructive world role that includes increased support for multilateralism, a policy that has reassured other states, enhanced China's global role, and increased its relative status. Nevertheless, the United States must remain attentive to China's status concerns, because Beijing is increasingly sensitive about its relative position and role in international gatherings such as the newly important G-20 and to the U.S. naval presence in Chinese coastal waters, claiming the area as part of its sphere of influence.<sup>135</sup>

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133. David Shambaugh, "China's Military Modernization: Making Steady and Surprising Progress," in Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia, 2005–06: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty* (Seattle, Wash.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005), pp. 68–70, 95; Robert S. Ross, "China's Naval Nationalism: Sources, Prospects, and the U.S. Response," *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Fall 2009), pp. 46–81; and U.S. Department of Defense, *Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2009*. The April 2007 Council on Foreign Relations–sponsored Independent Task Force found that looking ahead as far as 2030, there is "no evidence to support the notion that China will become a peer military competitor of the United States." See Council on Foreign Relations, *U.S.-China Relations: An Affirmative Agenda, a Responsible Course* (Washington, D.C.: Council on Foreign Relations, 2007), <http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/ChinaTaskForce.pdf>.

134. Shirk, *China*, pp. 140–149, 153–155, 164–167, 173–174.

135. Kathrin Hille, "Beijing Urges U.S. to End Coastal Watch," *Financial Times*, August 28, 2009; and "China and the G-20: Taking the Summit by Strategy," *Economist*, April 11, 2009, p. 42.

PUTIN'S CREATIVE DIPLOMACY

Given the stunning decline in Russia's international standing in the 1990s, President Vladimir Putin's principal foreign policy goal was to restore Russia's great power status.<sup>136</sup> Putin's strategy exhibited social creativity in its efforts to achieve great power status through partnership with the United States.

In his 1999 programmatic statement, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," Putin stressed that "Russia was and will remain a great power." For the first time in 200–300 years, Russia was in danger of falling to the second or third level of states. To remove this threat, Putin asserted, Russians had to "strain all intellectual, physical, and moral forces of the nation."<sup>137</sup>

To deal with Russia's identity crisis, Putin combined czarist and Soviet symbols, adopting the czarist double-headed eagle as the national symbol and the Soviet national anthem (with new lyrics) while giving increased support to the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>138</sup> His positive reframing of what were previously viewed as negative characteristics is a social creativity tactic, designed to enhance national pride and self-esteem.

Terrorist attacks against the United States provided Putin with an extraordinary opportunity to reframe Russia's identity and to align with the United States, demonstrating that Russia was an indispensable player.<sup>139</sup> In his September 11, 2001, call to Bush (the first from a foreign leader), Putin expressed condolences and assured the U.S. president that Russia would not respond to the U.S. heightened state of alert. Bush and Putin declared their relationship a "strategic partnership." Russia's cooperation with the United States in the war on terror was valuable and extensive, including sharing political and military intelligence about international terrorists, allowing U.S. planes to fly over Russian territory, acquiescing to U.S. military bases in Central Asia, participating in international search and rescue missions, and providing increased assistance to an anti-Taliban force in Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance.<sup>140</sup> Russian cooperation cannot be explained away as adap-

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136. Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 65–68, 131; Stephen E. Hanson, "Russia: Strategic Partner or Evil Empire?" in Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia, 2004–05: Confronting Terrorism in the Pursuit of Power* (Seattle, Wash.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2004), pp. 163–198; and Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 23–24.

137. Vladimir Putin, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," *Irish Times*, December 31, 1999, <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/4009.html##4>.

138. Angela E. Stent, "Restoration and Revolution in Putin's Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 6 (August 2008), p. 1091.

139. Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 124–125, 128–129.

140. Russian President's statement, Kremlin, Moscow, September 24, 2001, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/speeches/2001/09/24/0002\\_type82912\\_138534.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/speeches/2001/09/24/0002_type82912_138534.shtml); and Leon Aron, "Russia's Choice," *Russian Outlook* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, January 2002), <http://www.aei.org/outlook/13639>.

tation to U.S. hegemony, because most Russian political elites had recommended to Putin that Russia remain passive or neutral in the U.S. war on terror. The Russian defense minister and chief of staff were strongly opposed to a U.S. military presence in Central Asia, part of Russia's traditional sphere of influence.<sup>141</sup>

In addition to accepting U.S. bases in Central Asia, Putin made several unilateral concessions indicating that the geopolitical rivalry between the United States and Russia was over,<sup>142</sup> evidence that he was following a social creativity strategy. He withdrew from a large Russian electronic intelligence-gathering and military base in Cuba and a naval base in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam. Putin reacted mildly to the U.S. withdrawal from the Antiballistic Missile treaty—one of the few remaining symbols of Russian equality—calling it a “mistake” because it would hurt arms control, not because it would damage Russian security. Putin adopted a softer position toward admission of the Baltic states to NATO. He accepted the creation of the NATO-Russia Council as a vehicle for cooperation, although it did not give Russia a vote. Finally, he accepted a strategic arms reduction treaty that allowed the United States to store dismantled warheads.<sup>143</sup>

In return, Putin expected Russia to be treated as an equal partner with the United States in reshaping international security regimes.<sup>144</sup> In a speech before the German Bundestag in late September 2001, Putin argued that existing security structures could not cope with new threats such as terrorism.<sup>145</sup> Putin believed that the only viable alternative was a concert of great powers, similar to the Concert of Europe.<sup>146</sup> Before the 2001 November U.S.-Russia summit, Putin

141. Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 117–118. According to Grigory Yavlinsky, of twenty-one members of Russia's political elite who were summoned to a secret meeting at the Kremlin, only two favored supporting the United States. See a transcript of his speech at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., January 31, 2002, <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/6061.txt>.

142. Dmitri Trenin, “Introduction: The Grand Redesign,” in Anatol Lieven and Trenin, eds., *Ambivalent Neighbors: The EU, NATO, and the Price of Membership* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), p. 2.

143. Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 75, 125; and David E. Sanger, “NATO Gives Russia a Formal Welcome,” *New York Times*, May 29, 2002.

144. Lilia Shevtsova, *Russia—Lost in Transition: The Yeltsin and Putin Legacies*, trans. Arch Tait (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007), p. 230; and Bobo Lo, *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), p. 170.

145. Vladimir Putin, Speech in the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany, Berlin, September 25, 2001, [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2001/09/25/0001\\_type82912type82914\\_138535.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2001/09/25/0001_type82912type82914_138535.shtml).

146. Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy*, p. 79; and Jeffrey Mankoff, “Russia and the West: Taking the Longer View,” *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Spring 2007), pp. 127, 129.

privately compared his relationship with Bush to that between Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill during World War II.<sup>147</sup>

#### THE SHORT-LIVED PARTNERSHIP AND RUSSIA'S NEW ASSERTIVENESS

The U.S.-Russian partnership did not last long, peaking in May 2002, largely because of differing understandings of the identity and status of the parties in the relationship. Although Putin expected to be treated as a partner, the Bush administration did not regard Russia as an equal, believing that Moscow had little choice but to accommodate U.S. policies in Eurasia.<sup>148</sup> Despite Bush's promise, the United States did not even graduate Russia from the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik amendment, which prevents permanent normal trading relations with a state that restricts emigration. The United States also took actions that indicated indifference to Russia's status concerns. These actions included the invasion of Iraq without the approval of the UN Security Council or consultation with Putin. The United States supported the "color" revolutions in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and Kyrgyzstan (2005), regime changes that were perceived as humiliating interference in Russia's backyard and even as models for destabilizing the Russian regime.<sup>149</sup> Increasing U.S. criticism of Putin's domestic policies, such as Vice President Dick Cheney's charge that the Russian government was seeking "to reverse the gains of the last decade,"<sup>150</sup> confirmed the perception of some Russian elites that the West could not tolerate a stronger, more self-confident Russia.<sup>151</sup>

As SIT would predict, the U.S. decision not to accord Russia greater recognition and respect provoked anger and an assertive reaction. Russian elites were more confident in claims to great power status given the increase in the price of oil during 2004–06 from \$35 per barrel to \$72 per barrel.<sup>152</sup> Resorting to time-honored military demonstrations, Russia resumed long-range strategic bomber flights, renewed annual military parades through Red Square, planted the Russian tricolor flag on the Arctic seabed, stationed Russian nu-

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147. Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, *Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of the Revolution* (New York: Scribner, 2005), p. 135.

148. Hanson, "Russia: Strategic Partner or Evil Empire?" p. 173.

149. Shevtsova, *Russia—Lost in Transition*, pp. 230, 237–238, 240; Lo, *Axis of Convenience*, p. 94; and Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy*, pp. 117, 119, 123.

150. Office of the Vice President, "Vice President's Remarks at the 2006 Vilnius Conference," Vilnius, Lithuania, May 4, 2006, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/05/print/20060504-1.html>.

151. Gail W. Lapidus, "Between Assertiveness and Insecurity: Russian Elite Attitudes and the Russia-Georgia Crisis," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (April–June 2007), p. 150.

152. Robert Legvold, "Introduction," in Legvold, *Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-first Century and the Shadow of the Past*, pp. 9–10.

clear submarines off the U.S. coast, and conducted multiple tests of new missiles.<sup>153</sup>

Putin fulminated against the U.S. lack of respect for Russia, as in December 2004 when he compared the United States to a “strict uncle in a pith helmet instructing others how to live their lives,”<sup>154</sup> and in 2006 when he referred to the United States as a wolf that “knows who to eat and is not about to listen to anyone.”<sup>155</sup> He complained plaintively that “partnership between such powers as Russia and the U.S. can be built only on terms of equality and mutual respect.”<sup>156</sup> Putin’s criticism of the United States peaked with his emotional and bellicose February 2007 Munich address, where he accused the United States of having “overstepped its national borders in every way,” as evidenced by the “economic, political, cultural, and educational policies it imposes on other nations.”<sup>157</sup>

Russia’s desire to proclaim its comeback on the world stage, avenging the humiliations of the 1990s, was encapsulated in the Russia-Georgia war.<sup>158</sup> In August 2008, Russia sent troops into Georgia to affirm its “privileged interests” in the post-Soviet space,<sup>159</sup> as well as to assert its claim to great power status.<sup>160</sup> Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili had given priority to gaining admission for Georgia in Euro-Atlantic structures and reasserting control over the breakaway provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Viewing Saakashvili as a model democratic reformer even after his November 2007 crackdown on the political opposition, the Bush administration encouraged his efforts to restore Georgian territorial integrity rather than acting as an honest broker in resolving the “frozen conflict.”<sup>161</sup> Late on August 7, Saakashvili launched an

153. Stent, “Restoration and Revolution in Putin’s Foreign Policy,” p. 1103.

154. Quoted in Shevtsova, *Russia—Lost in Transition*, p. 233.

155. Vladimir Putin, “Annual Address to the Federal Assembly,” Kremlin, Moscow, May 10, 2006, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/speeches/2006/05/10/1823\\_type70029type82912\\_105566.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/speeches/2006/05/10/1823_type70029type82912_105566.shtml).

156. *Ria Novosti*, June 27, 2006, Johnson’s Russia List, 2006-#146.

157. Vladimir Putin, “Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy,” Munich, February 10, 2007, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2007/02/10/0138\\_type82912type82914type82917type84779\\_118123.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82912type82914type82917type84779_118123.shtml).

158. James Sherr, “The Implications of the Russia-Georgia War for European Security,” in Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, eds., *The Guns of August 2008: Russia’s War in Georgia* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), pp. 204–207.

159. This was the term used by President Dmitri Medvedev in the aftermath of Russia’s war with Georgia. See President of Russia, “Interview Given by Dmitri Medvedev to Television Channels Channel One Rossiya, NTV,” August 31, 2008, [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/08/31/1850\\_type82912type82916\\_206003.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/08/31/1850_type82912type82916_206003.shtml).

160. Eugene Rumer and Angela Stent, “Russia and the West,” *Survival*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (April 2009), p. 94.

161. Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, “No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent U.S.-Georgian Relations,” *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Winter 2009), pp. 27–41.

artillery attack followed by a ground invasion of the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali. Russian troops occupied major areas of Georgia, and the Russian Air Force destroyed much of Georgia's military infrastructure. Putin felt that Russia's status as a great power was threatened. In February 2008, the West had recognized Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence without UN approval, although Serbia was a Russian client. About the same time, the United States decided to place an antiballistic missile system in Poland and the Czech Republic, and Ukraine and Georgia were offered eventual membership in NATO.<sup>162</sup> Particularly striking was Russia's defiant response to international criticism,<sup>163</sup> even in the face of foreign capital flight, causing the benchmark Russian Trading System index to lose 46 percent of its value between May and September 2008.<sup>164</sup>

Instead of accepting liberal values, Putin supports traditional Westphalian norms of sovereignty, nonintervention, and territoriality.<sup>165</sup> Increasing Western criticism of Russia's "retreat from democracy" infuriated Putin and led Moscow to advance the concept of "sovereign democracy," developed by Kremlin ideologist Vladislav Surkov. Sovereign democracy maintains that Russia will determine its own path to democracy, free from foreign interference or normative pressures. In other words, there is more than one definition of democracy, and Russia is following the way best suited to its history and culture.<sup>166</sup> Putin has endorsed a new high school history textbook that praises Joseph Stalin for being an effective manager, industrializing the country, and leading the country to victory in war, while ignoring the history of the gulag.<sup>167</sup> And yet, the Russian education ministry decided that excerpts from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* would be required reading for students, illustrating Putin's blending of different elements of Russia's history and culture to enhance national pride.<sup>168</sup>

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162. Vicken Cheterian, "The August 2008 War in Georgia: From Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (June 2009), pp. 155–170. The origin of the Russia-Georgia war is disputed, but Cheterian makes a persuasive case on the basis of contemporary evidence, military reasoning, and interviews that Georgia began the war. *Ibid.*, pp. 159–162.

163. Leon Aron, "The Georgia Watershed," *Russian Outlook* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, November 2008), <http://www.aei.org/outlook/28922>.

164. Andrew E. Kramer, "Russia Stock Market Fall Is Said to Imperil Oil Boom," *New York Times*, September 13, 2008; and Andrew E. Kramer, "Russia Halts Stock Trading as Indexes Decline," *New York Times*, September 18, 2008.

165. Pami Aalto, "Russia's Quest for International Society and the Prospects for Regional-Level International Societies," *International Relations*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (December 2007), p. 462.

166. Vladislav Surkov, "Sovereignty—Political Synonym of Competitiveness, February 7, 2006 Address to the Students of the United Russia Party Study Center," *Moskovskie Novosti*, No. 7 (March 3, 2006), pp. 10–11.

167. Leon Aron, "The Problematic Pages," *New Republic*, September 24, 2008, pp. 35–41.

168. Associated Press, "Russian Schools to Teach 'The Gulag Archipelago,'" *New York Times*, September 10, 2009.

Despite its incursion into Georgia, Russia has not returned to a full-fledged social competition strategy. Russia's emphasis on having a sphere of privileged interest might appear to reflect geopolitical motives. Nevertheless, Putin's goal is to restore both Russia's status as a global great power, one that is treated as an equal partner, and its position as a regional superpower, rather than compete with the United States for global preeminence.<sup>169</sup> Having predominant interests in nearby states is part of the identity of a great power, as in the U.S. Monroe Doctrine. A policy of geopolitical competition would entail forming a coalition of anti-American states such as Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela, while emphasizing relations with China and other Asian states, as advocated by Russian Eurasianists.<sup>170</sup> Consistent with social creativity, Russia pursues a high diplomatic profile, proposing a European security conference and hosting summits with the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.<sup>171</sup> The question is whether Russia can be induced to seek prestige by exercising more responsibility for global stability. Continued indifference to Russia's great power aspirations will encourage Russian elites' sense of injury and humiliation, possibly leading to further conflict, especially in the Caucasus.

### *Conclusion*

Our case study indicates that since the end of the Cold War, China and Russia have been more likely to contribute to global governance when they believed that doing so would enhance their prestige. Social identity theory illuminates several puzzles and anomalies in Chinese and Russian behavior that are difficult to explain from the standpoint of existing theoretical approaches.

SIT can explain changes in the grand strategies of China and Russia that are not linked to their relative material capabilities, contrary to realism. Realism leaves out the factor of a state's identity, its view of the state's appropriate role in the world. The Chinese have long perceived their country as progressing toward great power status, a goal based on China's size, culture, and history as the Middle Kingdom of Asia. Russia's sense of *derzhavnost* is based on the country's huge territorial expanse, former superpower status, abundant natu-

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169. Lo, *Axis of Convenience*, p. 170.

170. Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Russia's International Assertiveness: What Does It Mean for the West?" *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (March/April 2008), pp. 49–52.

171. President of Russia, "Speech at Meeting with German Political, Parliamentary, and Civic Leaders," Berlin, June 5, 2008, [http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2008/06/05/2203\\_type82912type82914type84779\\_202153.shtml](http://eng.kremlin.ru/speeches/2008/06/05/2203_type82912type82914type84779_202153.shtml); and "Quartet Defined by Differences," *Financial Times*, June 16, 2009.

ral resources, and intellectual talent. The role of identity and the desire for recognition are key elements of SIT. Both states changed their grand strategy in response to threats to their identities rather than changes in their relative power—China’s isolation after Tiananmen Square and the Taiwan Strait crisis, Russia’s image as a “basket case” in the late 1990s. In the mid-1990s, Beijing’s grand strategy shifted toward China becoming a responsible power, without any change in its relative power position. Similarly, Putin offered to cooperate with the United States in the war on terror, absent any shift in Russia’s capabilities.

Nor were changes in Chinese and Russian grand strategies simple adaptations to structural conditions or external circumstances. In each country, there was a range of opinion on foreign policy issues, and substantial domestic opposition to cooperating with the United States in China in 1999 and in Russia after the September 11 terrorist attacks. China and Russia did not have to adopt a social creativity strategy; they could have accepted a lower status or concentrated on domestic modernization.

Liberal institutionalism predicts that globalization and interdependence will cause rising states to appreciate the benefits of institutions where they will become socialized to the institutions’ norms and rules. But despite their participation in some international institutions, China and Russia reject the core liberal principle of intervention to protect individual rights. Both states have sought the benefits of globalization and economic integration without the accompanying political liberalization, selectively choosing which Western norms to adopt. SIT implies that major powers may not want to emulate the values of the established states, but instead may want to maintain distinctive identities.

Because it highlights the importance of face and dignity, SIT can illuminate why China and Russia have been motivated by a strong sense of grievance at past humiliations inflicted by external powers. This sense of injury has on occasion caused China and Russia to act against their economic interests. Examples include the Chinese regime’s 1995–96 provocative missile tests in the Taiwan Strait despite China’s extensive economic ties with the United States and Taiwan, violent Chinese protests against major trade partner Japan in the spring of 2005, and the Russian regime’s armed incursion into Georgia, which led to major losses in the Russian stock market. According to SIT, perceived insults to status evoke strong emotions that can override rational interests in improved economic ties or security considerations.

SIT provides a means of interpreting the efforts by rising powers such as China or Russia to seek preeminence in areas other than geopolitical might—by pursuing a strategy of social creativity. It explains why China has not tried

to convert its economic power into global power projection or an imposing nuclear arsenal. SIT allows for the possibility that power transitions may be accompanied by social cooperation, whereby the hegemon and rising powers recognize the other's necessary but constructive role in global governance.

The policy implications of SIT include greater emphasis on status-enhancing actions—for example, formal summits, strategic dialogues, and strategic partnerships—than on conventional prescriptions for containment, integration, or engagement. Because of their need for distinctive identities, rising states should be admitted to international institutions and informal coalitions without being subjected to ideological criteria. As the U.S. ability to achieve its goals unilaterally declines, the United States must learn how to treat China and Russia in ways other than as rivals or junior partners if it is to obtain their cooperation.