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CAN REGIONALISM PROVIDE STABILIZATION TO CENTRAL ASIA AND THUS AFGHANISTAN?

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University of Plymouth

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by

Richard Alexander Good

A thesis submitted to Plymouth University in
partial fulfilment for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

Spring 2019

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This research was undertaken in an effort to make sense out of the anarchical situation that has plagued Central Asia and Afghanistan for far too many years. This research is an effort to see if stability is indeed possible, in order to make the ultimate sacrifice paid by so many, worthwhile. I am so very thankful for the guidance of Dr. Fotios Moustakis and Dr. Simon Murden and for the endless support of my wife Karen H. Good, Esq, JD, MA, BSc (Hons). I dedicate this work to my Son, Austin Thomas Alexander Good.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Master of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or at another establishment.

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Signed R.A.GOOD_____

Date _May 8, 2019_____

ABSTRACT

Can Regionalism Provide Stabilization to Central Asia and thus Afghanistan? Richard

Alexander Good

This research was undertaken as there is a gap in the current academic realm, in which Central Asia and Afghanistan were heavily referenced, but none which went a step further and critically analyzed a new regionalism which would tie Afghanistan and Central Asia together bilaterally and multilaterally, whilst also deciphering through analysis, theory, and practice, the most suitable type of regionalism to be employed to achieve stability in Central Asia and thus Afghanistan.

There is much discussion on regionalism as a standalone product and theory, and little on the formulation of a new regional body, one which can provide the framework for a unique type of forum which is necessary for Central Asia. Inclusiveness, openness, non-judgmentalism, and building links through trade, security, and development across the board where the main issues to be researched in order to find a more perfect union for the region, one which could offer hope, change, and a radical departure from the failed techniques of the status quo, following the ASEAN method. The methodology employed in the research included the case study method and historical analysis. These forms of research in themselves provide a solid foundation to answer the research questions in order to formulate the most likely form of regionalism needed to be employed to accomplish stability in Central Asia, including proposing the radical notion of strong man politics or illiberal regionalism.

The results were that cooperation on many levels from the grassroots up to the highest echelons of government were necessary for cooperation between Central Asian states. Key areas of common concern were identified, and cooperation based upon these has the probability to spur further cooperation and integration needed to work towards a regionalist model with the goal of stabilizing and growing prosperity and development in Central Asia and Afghanistan, the implications of which are self-evident and self-proving.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Analytical Framework, Methodology, and Chapter Outline

The aim of this research into Central Asia, the region's economic progress, security situation, and the effects of wider regionalism is to critically examine the internal and international relations of the region in order to put forward a better model for constructive development of the region, seen through a broader perspective as a whole and not just as individual nation states. The research into development of the Central Asian region is necessary in order to identify key goals and needs for Central Asia's post-Afghan war future, and to attempt to devise a regional scheme for stability, based upon mutual goals and considerations of neighbouring and distant states. In order to accomplish this research, the study will focus on the case study of the politics and relations of the Central Asian states and their client state relations (Russia, China, USA, Pakistan) taken as a whole with a top down view focusing on Central Asia and the statecraft of that region. That is to say, the case study will focus on Central Asia and Afghanistan in order to ascertain which model of regionalism is most suitable.

It can be said that Afghanistan should be viewed through a specific scope within the Central Asia region, as it is an inherently unstable state, which threatens the stability of its neighbours through trickle down effects of having a non-functioning state. It can also be said that if Afghanistan becomes the foci of regional efforts then its potential stability could be a transformative event for the region at large and could help the region keep outside influence at bay. It should also be noted that these states have competing interests and agendas and if common ground is not identified, the states of Central Asia can work against each other and themselves, stalling progress in economics and security and another implosion of the regions civil society, as well as an extremist resurgence. I put forth, that the latter is not something any of these states wish to see come to fruition

as instability is a plague which could strike any state at any time. It would be far more constructive to find common needs and goals and to cooperate to see mutual success. According to *The Diplomat*, most conversation in Central Asia in geopolitics surrounds the influence of Russia and China in parallel with economic and cooperation reforms in Central Asia¹. The author, a senior fellow in the Russia and Eurasia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace also infers that Central Asian leaders like to tend to focus on terrorism and transitional crime as distractors for domestic politics. This provides a conduit to introduce the concept of strong man politics, which are seeing something of resurgence in Central Asia and which may indeed provide a 'third choice' for the region². This concept is not without flaw, as the concept itself is subject to rapid change, however, it does offer a potential additional option to analyse which may be a complimentary extreme for the region based on the research conducted.

Although there exist many studies on the state of affairs individually in Afghanistan, it's neighbour Pakistan, and the other key Central Asian states, there is to date currently little research, which fully and purposely ties together the national interests of the nations of Central Asia for the purposes of creating a regional solution to regional volatility. The research question is thus; can a new wave of regionalism fit a realist future for Central Asia. This work will focus a great deal on security theory through both security community theory, and through neo-realist eyes as a power game in the unpredictable international system. Regionalism and all the associated theory which surrounds the topic shall be the main devise to be explored alongside non judgmentalism, and strong man theory in regards to Afghanistan and Central Asia. The need for a study in depth on regionalism and the new concept of a regional model incorporating Pakistan, as well as other key neighbours with shared interests, is fundamental to the long-term stability of Afghanistan and the region at large. Because

¹ <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/paul-stronski-on-central-asias-big-questions/>

² <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/22/a-perfect-storm-in-central-asia/>

the stability of Central Asia is linked to global security, particularly militant Islamic movements, an unstable and fragile Central Asia poses a direct threat to world security. This is due to the close nexus of the regional states: semi-porous borders and common threats have ripple effects across the Pakistani, Chinese, Turkmen, Tajik, Iranian, and Uzbek borders into and out of Afghanistan.

Conversely, any progress in inter-state relations that can be made with bordering states in key areas such as the economy, development and security provide a more solid footing for the central government, and in theory project the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Kabul regime, thus helping abate or defeat or compromise with the Taliban movement at the grass roots level.

As there is currently no totally inclusive, concrete international organization or strategy, which provides a comprehensive mechanism to cooperate on transnational issues and national stability in Central Asia, It may be a likely possibility that the Kabul central government, will not likely survive without a foreign security presence. This is due to a weak central government, poor representation in the provinces, lack of trust, corruption and perceived or actual weakness and dependency on western security and money. As such, it is imperative that these areas of weakness be addressed head on, by the government directly and also in concert with neighbouring governments, ideally through a regional body which can direct and oversee actions, preserve sovereignty and regulate as well as provide checks and balances to multilateral power in the region. If Central Asia is viewed as a whole then the stability needed in Afghanistan can also be seen as necessary across the board, and indeed, the regional states do fear fallout from Afghanistan and seek to prevent it in order to either bolster their own security or to prevent such anarchy from spreading to their own sovereign territory. By linking the region, and creating and encouraging ties, regionalism can aid in the structuring and future development of the region on a great variety of matters.

Historically Afghanistan has been linked intrinsically to Pakistan, as the people, the politics, and the outside influences share a commonality, which binds the two states. The two are seemingly linked and their mutual fates intertwined and inseparable, much like the ethnic and linguistic as well as religious ties the two states share. This new reality of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations (AF-PAK) must be explored and the mutual power harnessed for good, in order to find the correct pathway to a new international organization for Central Asia. AF-PAK relations can be seen as a pivotal for wider central Asian Relations. This is because the interaction between Afghanistan and Pakistan reflects what the other states see. There are vested interests, risks and gains, common to the entire region and to explore these regional issues, AF-PAK must be analysed to its full extent.

Looking to other regional bodies around the world, such as the European Union (EU) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) provides a strong basis for belief in a development plan sanctioned by and implemented by a supranational body or association to help bring stability and prosperity to Central Asia. It is paramount to the thesis that acceptability to the region be understood. This allows a pathway to a regional organization in Central Asia.

Much has been written on regional bodies and the United Nations (UN), but little relevant work has been published regarding a modern, totally inclusive, workable, regional solution for Central Asia, which would aid Afghanistan via aiding the entire region through common interest. The theory exists and will be incorporated with effective strategic modelling drawn from research in order to amalgamate predictive analytics with a workable model based on common themes and goals revealed in research.

In a multi-polar world and in an increasingly polarized and unstable region, one which borders and encompasses the former 'Islamic state', an organization which includes all the regional states of Central Asia must be formed to contain problems, fight terror and crime and support the statehood of all the nations and the citizens of central Asia, in order to unite for progress. The literature indicates that regionalism in its most general and smallest forms can exist in Central Asia. In fact, in terms of hierarchy, more inclusive forms of regionalism have sprouted in recent years, but none have gone that extra step to form a totally inclusive model. The 'why' to this equation must be solved in order to see how a model can be developed and put into place.

The theory of neo-realism, which at its essence states that nations will do whatever they need to ensure their own survival, self-interest and goals are met, combined with structuralism, essentially can be interpreted to mean states can and will cooperate together in a pragmatic manor to accomplish their own goals via a community, is the main theme that is a constant throughout my research methodology and is the basis for my hypothesis and research questions. The rationale for such a theory is that it is pervasive in the literature and can be found prevalently throughout much of the established discourse in regionalism and Central Asia. Such theory is heavily present in the landmark works on security studies in Afghanistan and Pakistan by Barnett³, and is the strongest grounded theory available to apply to Afghanistan and the region for regional cooperation. A use of this theory in combination with a taxonomy and hierarchy of possible solutions will be analysed and discussed with regards to social science modelling in order to identify strong and weak points in regionalism so far in order to better answer the 'why' question. This taxonomy will also better predictably model the future of the region with a workable regional model being

³ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, 'Governing Anarchy: A Research Agenda for the Study of Security Communities', *Ethics and International Affairs*, 10 (1996), 64–100.

developed to account for the regional dichotomy between anarchy and regional and international organizations.

Despite numerous studies which examine a variety of theories for stabilization including security community theory, democratic peace theory and hegemonic power and balancing, to name a few, there is a void of academic work on the specific topic of Afghan-central Asian relations focused on regional organizations as the end game of regional stability. That is not to say that there is not published debate on regionalism and Central Asia. Quite the contrary, as there are many works on this fundamental subject, as evidenced by the literature review. The issue is that the niche topic of comprehensively examining an international organization's taxonomy and deciphering how various modes of international organizations could fit in Central Asia have not been exhausted. It is necessary to find the common factors that make regionalism work, and to apply these through the taxonomy to a functional model for Central Asia. The concept of total regional inclusiveness has been little examined, as has finding the channels to acceptable International Organizations in Central Asia, the 'why' and 'how' are what deserve real analysis, and only through examination of all the factors, international relations, and regional issues can the research hypothesis be answered.

My hypothesis is based upon this visible gap in this sphere of strategic studies. My hypothesis is that without a new regional community, the Afghan state will collapse. It is a recognized fact that Afghanistan is weak; therefore enduring stability is a widely identified problem that Afghanistan and Central Asia will have after the main part of NATO forces leave Afghanistan. Using a study of both 'old' and 'new' regionalism, the future of Central Asia can be plotted in an attempt to use institutionalism to prevent a re-lapse into failed state status for Afghanistan and thus also avoiding destabilization of wider Central Asia. When examining the situation in Central Asia, economic dependence, market stagnation, lack of productivity, as well as transit and customs

barriers it becomes clear with traditional modern idealism advocated by Sir Alfred Zimmerman, Maynard Keynes, and Lester B. Pearson, that if Central Asia can culture a regional policy with other states which reflects what Central Asia needs, then economic growth and security may be achievable, this is in line with realist theory in that the self interest of the states can be fulfilled and in turn growth and security will be the by-products⁴

Although idealist international relations theory can clash with realism, it can also be seen that both power and national interest can be harnessed alongside international legalism, and thus it is possible to examine the two theories side by side for the purpose of identifying national goals and needs in order to answer the research questions. The reason for this being that institutional liberalism and realism both are utilitarian and both rational, which is a logical fit for this project's goals. This theoretical adaptation is the exact same model that Robert Keohane follows in much of his own discourse on international relations theory. Keohane is a realist; however he is pragmatic and explores multiple avenues in his analysis of international relations. This allows the research to not be skewed and prejudiced to only one inflexible point of view.

Reflecting on past incarnations of regionalism and regional development (a regionalism case study), lessons learned in Europe, Africa and elsewhere in Asia, have the potential to be an aid to identifying the key factors of successful regionalism, and may help to classify international organizations as part of a hierarchy, in order to find out what level of integration would be appropriate for Afghanistan and Central Asia. Although it can be argued that the international system is anarchical in its nature⁵, especially with the coming power vacuum which a post occupational Afghanistan will and is creating in the region, realist thinking and institution building can go hand-in-

⁴ Donald Markwell, *John Maynard Keynes and International Relations: Economic Paths to War and Peace*, (Oxford, 2006), 3

⁵ Bull, Hedley, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, (London, 1979).

hand in order to identify factors that feed the self-interest of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, China, and Iran and that of the regional powers and even the United States, India, and Russia.

1.1 Methodology

For this research undertaking many methodological methods were considered. However, the most suited for this particular type of social science research were narrowed down to one method.

1) Case study method of primary research with historical analysis,

These research methods are, on their own, powerful means of measuring and critically assessing situations, common themes and recurring data patterns. With these methods combined though, the ability to better analyse events, politics and motives as well as beliefs and commitment to change is exponentially increased and even allows for predictive indications, all to better process the raw data and information for detailed analysis, to better contribute to the field and ‘fill the gap’ in the area of my research.

During this research, these two methodologies will be co-dependant. As such, it is necessary to justify their purpose and usefulness to this research and to strategic studies and international relations theory in general.

1.1.1 Case Study Method

The case study is a single in-depth examination of an event, or group (in this case: Operation Enduring Freedom, The Soviet War in Afghanistan and The Taliban, as well as the foreign policies and Afghan specific policies of Afghanistan’s neighbours, especially Pakistan, China, Iran, and Uzbekistan. The aim of the case study is to find

factors relevant to the context.⁶ Case studies are used as an explanatory device to dig deep to find common factors to be applied to socio-political modelling in order to construct a regional organization. In order to identify these key underpinning factors, the root causes of events, or beliefs and actions of nation-states and people or groups, in order to better understand the motives and rationale for such action.⁷ These motives are all unique to the situations they belong in, however, the role international and regional organizations have played in response belies a common approach to a situation which can be reflected upon and fine-tuned for better targeted, acceptable regionalism in Central Asia. This research will primarily be following a joint perspective and retrospective approach. The joint perspective is an analysis of events/group behaviour fitting within defined areas of interest of critical importance to regionalism research on Afghanistan and Central Asia, as the events develop on a daily basis. The retrospective analysis will be seen when historical trends, factors and studies fit within the same pre-defined core areas of study for this research undertaking. Having the amalgamation of the two bands of study method will enrich the output and will allow for simplified identification of key common factors necessary to modelling, so that a qualitative model can be proposed based upon research findings and graphical interpolation of data uncovered.

Rather than being inflexible and rigid like a pure statistic or mathematical study, the social science compatible case study allows various phenomena to be looked at through a perspective of defined theory. The factors are then compared to the hypothesis and analysed through the research questions within the defined parameters of study of

⁶ Baxter, P., and S. Jack, 'Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers', *The Qualitative Report* 13/4 (2008), 544-559.

⁷ Jon Shepard and Robert W. Greene, *Sociology and You*, (Ohio, 2003), A-22. Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. (4th ed, California, 2009).

utmost relevance to finding the end goal of a regional solution to stability in Central Asia, by considering all factors both in a vacuum and together.⁸

The flexibility of the case study innately allows for the facilitation of comparisons of data to hypothesis, which is ideal for this type of research project. The flexible nature of the case study method allows data to be collected, events deconstructed and analysed, and theories to why and how to be produced. The ‘why’ and ‘how’ can then be compared against all data to check for a common thread over time and throughout the research to identify patterns which allows events to be predicted and in this thesis allows for common factors to be fit into a social science model in order to find the answers to the research questions.⁹ When this social science model is applied then a model for a new regional organization fitting within the taxonomy can be proposed. Of course, pure comparison is flawed as it merely examines the surface facts, however, if common themes are identified and distilled then by applying the commonalities of both realist and idealist liberal theory to the boiled down universal factors that may be omnipresent in all case studies then the theory can explain how to adapt from the shortcomings or successes and how to build a better regional model.

A case study is an empirical research devise. That is, an overarching case study can compare many factors and many different studies of empirical or hard evidence consisting of interviews, papers, archives and policy papers as well as journals to reach the same end goal.¹⁰ Journals, papers and policy publications will be examined in depth in the literature review and throughout the thesis. The case study, as will be the focus of the second chapter, can be used to view the subject (for example: Weak central governance) with the object (economic dependence theory, institutionalism, neo-realism) to find a result and to draw conclusions in a scientific manor. What is flexible

⁸ Thomas, Gary, *How to Do Your Case Study: A Guide for Students and Researchers* (Los Angeles, 2011).

¹⁰ Thomas.

about a case study is that it allows the study of ‘falsifiability’ as proposed by Karl Popper.¹¹ This scientific method demonstrates that if a generalist statement is made such as ‘Iran cannot work with Afghanistan’, then by finding one outlier to that assertion, it disproves it completely. For example, ‘Iran is building roads in Afghanistan’, thus shows us that the general assertion is incorrect and that flexibility exists. This will be especially pertinent in my research as I must show that the ability and potential for cooperation exists in Central Asia. India, Pakistan, Iran, China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan will be examined. We already know that the United States and Europe can cooperate in Central Asia, as their self-interest and international relations theory and practice demands they must. Thus there will be no need to examine the relations of these non-regional nations. Case studies can also be said to be flexible and an aid by remaining ‘holistic’ allowing events to be viewed in relation to one another and in relation to the ‘big picture’.¹²

Furthermore, in this type of research based scenario, the case study method is a strong method specifically for asking ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, to find answers and themes for events in which the researcher has little control (such as the situation in Central Asia), especially when the research has real life applicability due to its contemporaneous nature.¹³

Now that the overwhelming strengths and positives of the case study have been established it bears mentioning that some minor negatives of the case study method are that, although hypothesis can be generated there is little ability to test them scientifically. Case studies may also lack statistical validity and do not allow generalizations to be made, according to some authority.¹⁴ However, it might be stated that in a series of case studies revolving around a common theme, generalisations may

¹¹ Karl R. Popper and Paul Arthur Schilpp, *The Philosophy of Karl Popper* (La Salle, IL: 1974).

¹² Evert Gummesson, *Qualitative Methods in Management Research* (Newbury Park, CA., 1991), 76.

¹³ Yin, 1.

¹⁴ Hägg, Ingemund, and Gunnar Hedlund, *Case Studies’ in Social Science Research*, (Brussels, 1978), 7-13.

become apparent more easily than in a single study. It has also been suggested that the case study has a bias toward verification, that is, the case study might be used to merely verify and justify the authors' hypothesis.¹⁵ However, I contend that with that pointed out, caution can be taken against such a result. Combined with the other levels of methodological research in this particular research study, and examined in totality, a fair representation should be found, this is supported by John Walton, 'case studies are likely to produce the best theory.'¹⁶

1.1.2 Historical Analysis

The historical analysis method is a method which both augments the case study to find the best model of regionalism in Central Asia and also seeks to make sense of the past through the critical analysis of evidence left behind. In social sciences written documents and accounts are the most popular evidence to be examined. Historical analysis is important in political research as it allows a background to be established to which more modern or contemporaneous data can then be compared and contrasted, to produce a strong substantive analysis of the research subject.¹⁷

Historical analysis is based upon the synthesis and analysis of primary sources in a historical context to produce a historiography. Historical analysis has been criticized as it is based mainly on the testimony of others and not first-hand knowledge. However, it has been countered that if numerous independent sources recant similar testimony the weight and validity is increased of such testimony. Also if it can be demonstrated that the witness has no reason for bias legitimacy is also increased. According to this rationale, a primary source is better than a secondary and a tertiary due to the principal

¹⁵ Bent Flyvbjerg, 'Five Misunderstandings About Case Study Research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12/2 (2006), 219-245.

¹⁶ Flyvbjerg, 227.

¹⁷ Philip Gardner in Victor Jupp, *The Sage Dictionary of Social Research Methods* (London, 2006), 134-136.

of stories changing as they are re-told and injected with personal opinions and analysis over facts.¹⁸ This thesis makes use of all three types of sources, in particular, journals, policy papers and interviews. There exists a method (a six part test) to authenticate evidence and guarantee its value in the research study.¹⁹

- 1) When was the source produced?
- 2) Where was it produced?
- 3) By whom was it produced?
- 4) From what pre-existing material was it produced?
- 5) In what original form was it produced?
- 6) What is the evidential value of its contents?

Using the above test, a source can be rated as reliable or unreliable and thus its weight on the issue to be examined can be determined. Thus if a source is highly reliable and has much credible value, then an analysis of the source and lessons learned from it can contribute to the overall research study and aid in helping find answers to the research questions and affirm or disaffirm the hypothesis posed.

Once sources can be placed in context, or classified into different key topics, as per this research study, then the analysis can be extrapolated from the sources and can significantly aid in the research, accounting for bias due to personal opinions, heresy and political influence or agenda. This potential bias is actually a useful thing, as it helps explain the feelings regarding a particular situation or event at the time the source is produced, giving further insight. From the historical research method explanatory scope, statistical inferences and common themes can be found, all contributing to the

¹⁸ Torsten Thuren, *Kallkritik* (Stockholm, 1997).

¹⁹ Gilbert J. Garraghan and Jean Delanglez, *A Guide to Historical Method* (New York, 1946) 168.

research and complimenting and ideally affirming and supporting hypothesis and answers found through the other methods of research employed.²⁰

One of the main theoretical reasons which helps justify a historical analysis as part of the overall research is the accepted norm that ‘history repeats itself’ or the phenomena of historical recurrence. Because a historical analysis allows a researcher to pinpoint trends which occur over time, the ability to find a pattern of history leading to events over history is possible. History is the past, present and future, thus being able to identify historical trends makes it easier to draw conclusions, norms and try to prevent the causal chain from being reformed over and over again²¹, thus aiding in creating norms of international behaviour and interaction which can aid in the modelling of a regional cooperation agreement in Central Asia.

1.2 Chapter Outline

The literature review comprises the second chapter in its entirety. The third chapter discusses international relations of Central Asia, The fourth chapter critically examines regionalism and regional organizations in Central Asia past and present, Chapter five is the conclusion chapter that will introduce the new regional model, which can meet the needs of the Central Asian States as well as meet its own funding and legitimacy. The organization will be planned out and structured from its location, organs and powers in order to be directly applicable to Central Asia, drawing from the research generated in this thesis and from graphical interpretations of data presented in a social science methodology. The plans for the workable regional model, completely

²⁰ Garraghan and Delanglez, 19, 48, 85.

²¹ G.W. Trompf. *The Idea of Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to The Reformation*, University of California Press (Berkeley, 1979).

justified from the research will be presented which could then be directly applied to Central Asia.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In order to realize economic growth and stability, Central Asia must establish close cooperation and links with key regional powers and neighbouring States. The research I propose undertaking on Central Asia is different from the closest similar literature in existence, as my research will actively introduce a unique conceptual and theoretical model for stability. I will also set myself out from the current trend of bilateral cooperation in the field of post-conflict theory by looking at the cause and effect of the various types of solutions available, including realist and institutionalist self-interest based approaches which focus on varying levels of regional integration using a combination of partners and methods. Most other works in my field have been over-specific, analysing only parts of a solution to the decades-long conflict in Afghanistan. None have coherently and fully tied together the various factors on which stability and reconstruction rely in one realistic, applicable framework.

From the existing literature, I was able to determine the effect of regionalism as a central theory on reconstruction and nation building. As such, the literature is separated into three mutual categories of regionalism, AF-PAK/ international relations (IR) and security. None can exist alone. Each is mutually dependent on the other. There can be no regionalism without AF-PAK and other IR, and in turn, no IR without security. Regionalism is what ties them all together in the cyclic pattern of international and regional relations.

A common theme throughout much of the other works, which I have critically examined, is that regionalism is a tenet central to re-building fragmented and war-torn nations around the world. These other works criticize past incarnations of regionalism in a historical context without ever developing a formidable plan for a new regional framework that recognizes these past mistakes. The literature discusses the shortcomings of regionalism in regions such as the Balkans, but stops short of implementing a suggested plan to counter the failures of regional integration. Also absent is a working theory that if the right actors are involved in regionalism combined with wider aspects of state building, the outlook is positive in even the most conservative of mind-sets.

Works that have not discussed regionalism in any detail are major proponents of other methods of stabilization theory. Stabilization theory is the concept that certain factors such as education, jobs, or civil security can produce post conflict stability in nations given certain factors such as international assistance, acceptability, and cooperation from the government. For example, from the literature I have identified civic building, education, and industrial growth as factors that should be addressed to create a stable and more prosperous Afghanistan. However, these authors fail to recognize that these factors are co-dependent on security. This gap is what I will bridge which will set my work aside as unique and as furthering the field of knowledge on this subject matter. My research will not merely be a theoretical and politico-historical insight into Afghanistan, its stability and relations with its neighbours. I will accomplish something fundamentally different by making a major contribution to the field through my new model for regionalism.

My new model for regionalism incorporates varying levels of cooperation, with strong bonds formed through necessary multilateral relations targeting common areas of concern. This new regionalism is realized through a hierarchical study of varying levels

of integration and types of governance both on the local and supranational level. Using original research in addition to ideas and concepts extrapolated from past academic works, I will create a workable framework for a regional forum with defined goals and objectives that can benefit Afghanistan and the region. The stabilization of Afghanistan through this regional framework should be a top priority for not only the Afghan government but also, regional powers, The United States of America, and intergovernmental agencies.

2.1 Methods and Standards:

Prior to the literature review, my research question was: can a new wave of regionalism fit a realist future for Afghanistan and Central Asia? I sought to find a solution to the decades old war; be that solution diplomatic, with the aid of regional powers, economic, or even a negotiated settlement with belligerents. My hypothesis is that with dialogue, and by acting in their own self-interest, the selfish desire to accomplish each states own goals will aid in accomplishing mutual goals of interest to multiple states. As such, Afghanistan's neighbours can come together to solve the most pressing issues, such as counter narcotics. I also put forward that Pakistan and Afghanistan are intrinsically linked and should be regarded as indivisible, due to a shared, porous border, similar ethnic issues, and a cross-border insurgency. Lastly, although education and economic development are good indicators and catalysts of stability, they cannot be realized without security and a benign political establishment. My proposition for a regional solution for Central Asia is arguably unique. No other work I could locate in modern, recent, or historical context touched upon exactly the same specific proposal or methods of achieving such stability.

In order to complete this literature review, I selected a number of sources that provide an accurate and representative sample of the many works that discuss Afghanistan and its complexities. I critically examined the coverage of work that deals with aspects of Afghan stability and classified the issues into independent factors.

I took a sampling of sources from the wider pool of specific topic related papers and selected what stood out as the seminal pieces. Once the key documents, representative of a particular topic area, were selected I then classified them and tagged them by topic area into a number of categories. The classifications included regionalism, AF-PAK/IR, and security. Using these well-defined tags, I created a plan to analyse the data recovered from these documents. The data was recovered through standard note taking and then sorted through for important information, discussion points, and theories to be debunked or absorbed. I then compiled the data in a series of spreadsheets by category. Next, I critically examined and analysed the compiled information to identify patterns, common threads, and theories that could solve or guide my research question.

The documents I selected for this literature review are adequately representative of the larger field of academic literature on which my research on Afghanistan and Central Asia is focused. The literature I reviewed provides adequate coverage as defined by my established standards to source largely representative documents focused on tangible issues of my research. By utilizing a representative sampling of the academic literature available, I fulfilled the requirement to examine literature closely related to my research question to gain a better grasp of the key concepts and theories. This methodology allows me to refine and develop my research going forward.

2.2 Discussion

While conducting this literature review I noted that when Southwest Asia and Afghanistan is in extreme turmoil and near collapse it is a popular subject for academic research. I had assumed that most recent academic work would have been spurred by the ‘war on terror,’ which reenergized interest in international affairs and strategic studies in the region. However, I was proven wrong in this estimation because there exists relevant research throughout the years with peaks during times of turmoil. Over the years, new issues have evolved. Therefore, I analysed key issues over a historical period allowing me to apply historical context to these emerging issues, which require further analysis. As time goes on, the political debate shift is pivoting away from Afghanistan and focusing again on Iraq and now Syria. This drought in new academic material is justification in itself for this research. Although Afghanistan has become the forgotten war, it is still largely linked to regional security issues and the global community, and will continue to threaten local and global peace until it is properly dealt with in earnest.

Academics continue to research the historical issues of regionalism, security, and pure regionalism and analyse how these historical concepts can answer today’s security and economic problems. There has also been much recent research into regionalism, as both Iran and Russia foresee the U.S. withdrawal, with much anticipation, and are looking to the future of their relations with Afghanistan and as influencers in Central Asia. Noted expert in the area, Barnett Rubin has been working on regionalism and its implications on Afghanistan for almost 25 years. His works represent some of the keystone literature that I selected for my coverage. Rubin focuses on a realist theoretical approach and approaches regionalism as a realist tool to achieve state goals. The historical tracing of the early workings of regionalism has proven helpful, and has allowed me to develop my own research and theoretical model based on the failures of prior efforts identified in the literature. Drawing from the literature in

this way and making parallels is immeasurably helpful to answering my own research questions and addressing my hypothesis.

Some issues from the region are emerging, and have not been analysed by a breadth of historical academic work. The category of Afghanistan and Pakistan relations, AF-PAK as labelled by the U.S. State Department,²² is a modern trend; recognizing that these two countries politics are officially intrinsic to each other. As such, an overwhelming majority of the work dedicated to Pakistan and Afghanistan relations and real politic has been conducted within the past three to four years. This subject will continue to evolve in the coming years and is pivotal to my research as it is directly tied back to regionalism and security.

There is a common thematic base to the literature reviewed, is realism. Liberal realism (the English school), republican liberalism, and neo realism fit seamlessly with each other and are mutually supportive, dependant theories. From the literature and my own hypothesis, I believe that these theoretical frameworks can aid in explaining the situation in Afghanistan and Southwest Asia by unifying the elements needed to create a workable regional body. These key theories explain how the organs of state, the anarchical international system, and machtpolitik work together to form international relations and domestic affairs as it relates to my research question and goal of a workable model for modern regionalism.

2.3 Regionalism

I state that the Regionalism category is the most important because it is the linchpin that ties together security and AF-PAK/International relations. I assert that without regionalism each of the other categories acts alone will not be enough to stabilize Afghanistan.

²² <http://fpc.state.gov/120965.htm>

Regionalism itself cannot work for lasting stability unless in concert with security, as with no security there can be no regionalism, and with no regionalism, no effective security. My research indicates that regionalism can address Pakistani-Afghani problems from an objective view with the aim of resolving these issues. Regionalism can also boost educational development and civil society, whilst at the same time supporting tangible security to support and defend that civil society.

If a new type of regionalism is sought based on a theoretical model which differs and improves on failed plans of the past, then Afghanistan and the region can become secure and economically and socially re-developed.

In *Afghanistan's Regional Diplomacy*,²³ the first point of issue is that Afghanistan is not participating in a regional security mechanism. This conclusion is strongly in line with my hypothesis and theory. Without integration and acceptance into a regional security dialogue (like a NATO of Southwest Asia), Afghanistan cannot stand up for itself nor can others aid Afghanistan efficiently. The theory behind this is that with cooperative regionalism the anarchy of states can be overcome, as fits realist thinking.

Also raised is the interesting premise of Afghanistan as a regional hub for energy and transport. I have seen this in other texts and it appears to be an aspirational goal. Afghanistan is located at a crossroads and is a geographical bridge from the subcontinent to the Middle East. Research into this development is desired and will certainly aid me in developing a plan for sustained stability and growth. The authors agree with my hypothesis when they conclude from their findings that there will be no growth of importance in business and transit until there is security. However, if this 'new silk road' were to become a reality, Afghanistan could develop into the Dubai of

²³ 'Afghanistan's Regional Diplomacy', *Strategic Comments*, 12/5 (2006), 1-2.

the region, offering a centralized hub for cargo, goods, and minerals. This would benefit all and should be strongly encouraged and explored.

International cooperation and diplomatic relations are raised but not with much depth, opening the need for my research to fill this void. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is discussed as a suitable regional body; however, I disagree, as the SCO is largely undeveloped, unproven, and is not *prima facie*, willing to aid Afghanistan.

Rather, I believe something new and different is a necessity, as the old and current system, according to my research, is simply not working. What is pivotal to me, as a researcher, is that from this article I gather that China and Iran both have convergent interests in Afghanistan. In turn, perhaps other regional powers also have interests that overlap and, if they do, working together can only make whatever progress is ongoing rapidly accelerate.

Gregg Bruno is very thorough on the topic of regionalism, investment, and Iran. In his piece with Lionel Beehner, *Iran and The Future of Afghanistan*,²⁴ the subject of ethnicity crops up again as a method of historical instability analysis of Iranian/Afghani relations. Understanding the ethnicity of Iran and Afghanistan is vital, as many Afghans actually speak Persian and descend from the same ancestry as Persians; however, other tribes have historically violently opposed any Persian domination.

Research to help better understand this dichotomy would be helpful in getting a better bearing of Iran's international relations with Afghanistan and the region. This is because Iran is unique in the region with its own language, ethnicity, and sect of Islam that differs from the other regional states. This is not to say that I predict Iran will be

²⁴ Gregg Bruno and Lionel Beehner, 'Iran and the Future of Afghanistan', *Council on Foreign Relations*, (30 Mar. 2009).

hard to work with, on the contrary, I think Iran can bring a lot to the table and its diversity can be an asset as long as its international politics are better understood.

This article raises the issue of Iran desiring a weak Afghan state, to prevent long-term US interests in the region. This idea that Iran is subverting progress and a proponent of the anarchical system falls within realist liberal ideology and makes Iran even more fascinating and important. From what I have seen so far, and this article agrees, it appears Iran is currently following a dual-track foreign policy, building its own interests, yet causing strife in order to offset Afghan and US interests. This clearly will cause issue, however, if Iran can be brought to the negotiating table and integrated as a serious partner, Iran has vast experience in development and can significantly contribute to development and diplomacy in Afghanistan.

Another key conclusion to be extrapolated from this article is Iran's dire need to address its drug issues, which can be tied back to a porous Afghani border and most likely, the Taliban. Iran also is diametrically opposed to the Taliban and ISIS, their ideology and their brand of Islam. These are key pieces of information that can be used to build a better regional program with mutual benefits.

Working alone in *More Investment Will Bring Security to Afghanistan*,²⁵ Bruno makes his main conclusion that Afghanistan's ultimate goal should be using its economic promise to attract investors. I analyse that more investment will bring jobs and prosperity, and, in turn, when Afghans have jobs and opportunity, the Taliban will lose ground and Afghans will have a true interest for their own security. Without security, there can be no investment – attracting investors will result in both a net increase in money and security to protect those investments. This is in keeping with my hypothesis and supports my research. The dependency theory is applicable here as the

²⁵ Greg Bruno, 'More Investment Will Bring Security to Afghanistan', *Council on Foreign Relations* (09 June 2008).

people will depend upon the investors for their jobs and, thus, will want security. Also, Afghanistan will depend upon outsiders for investment, until enough Afghans become wealthy enough themselves.

Another research focus, which is discussed in the article, is the development of state economic planning. Afghanistan has very little experience in this; but states like India have ample experience in feeding a large population with very little money, as well as industry development. Using new regionalism, translatable skills and central planning from other nations can be harnessed for the benefit of Afghanistan and ultimately the entire region.

Following on, the author also presses the need for an Afghan national development strategy. My research indicates that currently mainly United States and European strategy is being applied to Afghan development. This may not be appropriate as other Southwest Asian methods may translate easier to the population and the nation as a whole.

With the aid of other regional powers, Afghanistan could reach a milestone in its own development and make realistic, achievable, and measurable goals. The debate is between an Afghan centric or Western centric approach. My research to date and the existing sample literature indicates that Western know-how is successful, but only to an extent. The long-term study of an Afghan strategy with regional, and even some Western support, seems a better combination. Research findings correlate well to this notion and, although regional theories exist, a new more advanced and all-encompassing plan is necessary.

The practical ramifications of such a model are immense, and I can learn from the flawed exercises and attempts of the past. The predominant methodology in security analysis is analysing statistics and academic research at a distance. However, I

propose that on the ground research, combined with interviews and statistical surveys would expand the dominant methodology.

Always a pertinent and representative voice, Barnett Rubin's contribution with others in *Afghanistan: Reconstruction in a Regional Framework*²⁶ further emphasizes ethnicity. This article, in essence, proves that security, regionalism, and AF-PAK relations are tied by the common threads of ethnic tensions, relations, and diplomacy.

From the findings, it is possible to see support for my grounded theory that interaction in a positive manner between regional powers is necessary for cooperation. Thus, the benefits of cooperation could be realized: a united front against the Taliban, civic society, economic development, and mutual security. This liberalist view of security, also supported by this article, can only be realized through regionalism, leading to liberal democracies that can participate in the international system. Of course, it is a possibility that the Taliban may take control again, however, their former international relations were largely limited to political engagement with Pakistan, and that being at a time when Pakistan was outside of the international community in relative isolation due to its development of nuclear weapons. A Taliban today, following, the same international norms of the 2001 Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, would not engage in the wider international relations needed to develop a regional security community²⁷. This is mainly due to the fact that Taliban international relations were rather isolationist and outwardly aggressive to neighbouring states with whom cooperation is sought. As such, Afghanistan needs to be ruled by the people, and not the Islamists for the sake of peace and stability.

²⁶ Barnett Rubin, Ashraf Ghani, William Maley, Ahmed Rashid, and Olivier Roy, 'Afghanistan: Reconstruction In a Regional Framework', *KOFF Peacebuilding Reports* (Jan. 2001).

²⁷ Nasreen Akhtar, 'Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban', *International Journal on World Peace*, 25/4 (2008), 49-73.

Research outcomes in this article are indicative of destabilization spurred by aggressive neighbours. The findings support a need for a change in strategy to stem the continued rise of the seemingly unstoppable Taliban. The debate, which continues to exist in the field of regionalism, is how to bring everyone together to target national interests and discourage aggression in favour of cooperation. My research will provide these answers and bring a complete solution to the table for the common good, which will result in a safer region and more secure Europe and United States in the long-term.

*Russia's Regional Engagement in Afghanistan*²⁸ discusses and analyses in depth the role that regional actors will play in the future Afghanistan, with a research focus on Russia's strategic outlook. When examining regional interests and players in Afghanistan, Russia is of central importance. Russia is a key player, as it is both experienced in conflict in Afghanistan and also as a large regional power, with a geographical vested interest, and historical role in the region, dating from Soviet times.

A common issue I was able to identify in this document was something I have seen throughout the literature, narcotics. Narcotics trafficking and associated crime and instability is worrisome to Russia, Iran, and Pakistan, as well as, China, Kyrgyzstan, and even Uzbekistan. In essence, narcotics affect the entire region transcending the issues of security, political stability, and investment. Ultimately fighting narcotics can be a regional effort, rather than a number of disorganized and underfunded national initiatives. Identifying this underlying spirit of commonality can be used to further efforts of a new regionalism.

Narcotics alone are not the only issue I have, through my analysis, seen as a recurring theme affecting security, regionalism, and international relations. Others themes discussed in this article, with reference to Russian interests, are pipelines,

²⁸ Shalini Sharan, 'Russia's Regional Engagement in Afghanistan', *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (9 Aug. 2011).

energy, water, and private sector investment. Of course, as the author points out and in agreement with my hypothesis, none of this progress can occur without security, especially not private sector investment. I propose that no progress is possible in the current state of affairs in Afghanistan.

My research indicates there are many small overlapping efforts going on currently by different state actors for varying national reasons. If these un-concerted efforts in Afghanistan continue, the result will be nil. However, if these states can act together by pooling efforts, and presenting a unified action, the desired result will be strengthened. Security, investment, democracy, and civic society are all interdependent. This new regionalism would certainly resolve the current debate of ‘what next, Afghanistan?’

Regionalism has been tried and debated before, but has never worked in Southwest Asia. However, my research will uncover why this is the case and will go beyond current works by proposing a regional confederacy organized around key partners. This is where regionalism has failed in the past by not going beyond papers, talks, or not being truly inclusive for selfish national reasons or due to mere myopia.

*Is a Regional Strategy Viable for Afghanistan?*²⁹ Examines the history of regionalism in Afghanistan. The article concludes that there exist informal pacts with converging interests between states who oppose each other. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for example both support more extreme versions of Islam and attempt to mould Afghanistan for their own strategic interests as a counter balance to India (for Pakistan) and Iran (for Saudi Arabia). The authors also informally ally Russia, India, and Iran on the other side; presumably, as these three seek to expand business and influence in Afghanistan, whilst undermining American policy.

²⁹ Ashley Tellis, Aroop Mukharji, and Jessica T. Mathews, ‘Is A Regional Strategy Viable in Afghanistan?’ *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (2010), 1-135.

This discussion of national interests as the biggest single influence going forward is rational. It also fits with my hypothesis that self-interest will inevitably drive regionalism as there are benefits which can enrich all participants. Furthermore, a new issue raised by this article is the role of the United States in failing to achieve peace. Lessons can be learned from the success and failures of the United States to formulate a new strategy that still incorporates the United States, but only indirectly. This incorporation is further examined in chapter two.

An interesting point is raised in the conclusions of this article about Afghanistan as a transit state, also discussed in other works. Establishing Afghanistan as a Dubai-like, transit hub for transport and energy is a positive and should be investigated further. This article cites construction projects and Afghanistan's own national goals of regional diplomacy and trade, as future indicators of progress. However, this is not feasible due to the notion of regional powers proxy fighting each other to the burden of Afghanistan. Thus, although it is true to assert that regional powers are not acting with one purpose today, it would be wrong to assume this is impossible going forward.

This is where my research questions and hypothesis diverge from this article. The notion of selfish national interest can be overcome and has been overcome in other areas of the world, which I shall investigate to draw parallels. To rule out a strong regional association due to 'timid' states, as the article suggests, is incorrect. The rhetoric and policies of China, Iran, and Russia, as well as, Pakistan and India quickly debunk the theory that these states are 'timid.'

The United Nations has unsuccessfully taken steps in the past to attempt a regional solution. This is investigated in *Beyond the Taliban? The Afghan Conflict and*

United Nations Peacemaking.³⁰ This article examines a historical context to discover why aid and peace-making has not worked over the years. It is concluded that two Afghanistan's exist; one dependant on aid and one a rural farming nation. These two worlds are so dissimilar that it is hard for the rural to accept, or even need, governance from Kabul. Narcotics are discussed as a destabilization crop, and this is tied back to the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. There is such a difference between the city and country that values do not translate. This is clearly a problem that needs to be addressed. How to do this is not discussed in depth, but many logical ideas flow from the assertion.

Discussion of regional proxy wars and self-serving interests of other regional powers is again a common theme, so defeating these long seeded rivalries will be a top priority for my research, as this poses the biggest threat to my model. The strength of the Taliban is examined, as by 2001 it was generally accepted that the Taliban were devastated. Fast forward to today where Taliban power is waxing. A plan to deal directly with the Taliban is thus, needed.

This article supports my research and hypothesis in providing me counter-arguments to disprove. However, this article is against my research as it concludes that the anarchical system will reign supreme and hinder any regionalist, or realist approach. Contrary to that assertion, the literature does specifically mention that UN peace making efforts in the 90's expressly failed for one reason, lack of Taliban inclusion. This isolation of the Taliban in peace efforts and regional development has also been reflected in the relative failure of the Bonn agreement. Thus, if the Taliban is included, progress can be made and a regional solution can function. From my research, it is apparent other regional powers can evolve and work together, even if on a limited scale,

³⁰ Matthew Fielden and Jonathan Goodhand. 'Beyond the Taliban? The Afghan Conflict and United Nations Peacemaking', *Conflict, Security & Development*, 1/3 (2001), 5-32.

as stability and security from Al-Qaeda is in the common national interest. As such, the anarchy of the international system can be harnessed and turned around to benefit the region. Self-interest can spur cooperation to ensure national stability and cooperation on a number of issues warranting mutual attention.

If there is no regionalism to make Central Asia and thus Afghanistan stable, then the world will be at risk of a destabilized state with no security apparatus, no functioning economy, and a lack of diplomatic links. Combine this with a weak government and a lack of funds and ability, and the stage is set for further trouble.

This very scenario is critically examined in *Afghanistan and Regional Instability: A Risk Assessment*.³¹ This assessment has research findings that indicate that instability from Pakistan will continue to spread to Afghanistan if not stemmed. This is supportive of my research and also continues the common theme of Pakistan and Afghan relations being one in the same. The concessions granted to militants in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) are analysed in this assessment and characterized as an abject failure. With no government checks, the FATA is now a porous border for militants to move back and forth. As such, more Pakistani cooperation is necessary and, I assert, regional powers could also aid in stability.

The weakness of many of the Central Asian neighbouring states also poses a threat to an independent Afghanistan. This, of course, all relates back to the Taliban and militant Islam. Without regional cooperation, these groups would have free reign over Afghanistan again and, could destabilize other nations or exploit the weakness of the small Central Asian states to their advantage. The conclusions reached include the need for the United States and the International Stabilization Assistance Force (ISAF) to

³¹ Heidi Kjaermet and Stina Torjesen, 'Afghanistan and Regional Instability: A Risk Assessment', *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs* (2008), 1-35.

find a way to include China and Russia because with no regional engagement from these big players Afghanistan will soon be on its own when US and ISAF troops leave.

This ties back to my hypothesis that a regional framework can bring in the big players and the small powers, to help Afghanistan; whilst mutually helping themselves by exercising regional leadership, passing on skills, and taking a more active role in regional progress and stability. The lack of US power in the region in future opens the door for the big regional powers to exert influence. If these powers can do this at the helm of a new international body then their political clout will justify the new body and will give it the credentials necessary to be active, useful, and accepted on the international level. It should be noted, that China is not usually involved in international actions and this can serve as an opportunity for such involvement, simultaneously protecting Chinese business and political interests, which is the purpose of a regional model – benefits for all involved. An interesting twist on this power vacuum is illiberal regionalism, or ‘strong man hegemony’, a relatively radical academic idea put forward for the region in articles such as *Understanding the Authoritarian State: Neopatrimonialism in Central Asia*, wherein Dr. David Lewis, a recognized expert on Central Asia, puts forth the concept of a third option. An option free from judgment, and an option which returns power to the traditional patrimonial hierarchical ways of Central Asia. The notion that strong men could and should run the region in a regional solution which provides brute force stability is daring, bold, and very realistic in its application. The empirical evidence exists that Central Asia craves this sort of traditional governance and indeed thrives upon it, with mutual benefits for all. In the wake of the past twenty years of failed western liberal democracy, illiberal regionalist theory is a welcome departure from the done and mundane and dares us to consider a post western method of regional hierarchical peace.

The article also finds that involvement of all classes of the economy, tribes, and religions is necessary. In short, without a regional approach the regional instability of today will only get worse. US involvement can be categorized as a bandage on a wound, but a regional solution could be the operation needed to treat the underlying injury. If there is no treatment and the bandage goes away, only further infection and spreading of disease will occur.

Throughout the regionalism category, many common themes and concepts have been identified: Iran, China, Russia, and India, as well as, Pakistan will play key roles in the future. A regional organization that addresses the issues and concerns of all parties involved, even the small Central Asian republics is a necessity. Wider ranging political ambitions of even the United States and Saudi Arabia will need to be accommodated and considered, as both could significantly contribute and support such a regime. Ethnicity and religion have been identified as factors of extreme importance to regionalism and thinking of Afghanistan and Pakistan as one has been solidified.

2.4 AF-PAK/ International Relations

In *Making Money in the Mayhem: Funding Taliban Insurrection in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan*,³² the authors plainly spell out the link between the Pakistani Taliban and the hard-core Afghan Taliban. The cross-border Taliban has similar motives and means of achieving instability. The authors further warn of a collapse in regional and global security if the twin threats are not countered. While this analogy the literature makes may be hyperbolic, the take away is that regional stability in Central Asia through regionalism is a major component to international security. The article

³² Arabinda Acharya, Syed Adnan Ali Shah Bukhari, and Sadia Sulaiman, 'Making Money in the Mayhem: Funding Taliban Insurrection in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32/2 (2009), 95-108.

discusses Taliban financing in Pakistan (which can be translated to both sides of the border), and uses a theoretical framework to demonstrate how the Taliban seek to destroy international norms and structure, in order to further the goals of their own militant Islamist system.

Narcotics, crime, violence, and a weak central government all play a part of the destabilization. Regionalism is discussed, as neighbouring states have overlapping interests in the stability of Pakistan and Afghanistan, and, thus, securing and normalizing (or not) the border areas will have wider ramifications for the international system and regional cohesion. This piece supports my own research and hypothesis and provides a Pakistani perspective, which is both enlightening and undeniably similar to western strategy.

The argument forwarded herein supports the concept of regionalism and alludes to possible actions from other states, but stops short of making recommendations focusing, rather, on the state of emergency in Pakistan. These findings suggest the Taliban are linked and not divided by the border. This supports my theory that the cross-border Taliban are headquartered in Pakistan's border agencies and as a result, the fate of Pakistan and Afghanistan are closely linked. What is needed is a clear plan to strengthen state power and consolidate control in Pakistan (a mirror of Afghanistan). This article indirectly suggests that unique research is needed on regionalism; especially focusing on AF-PAK relations and that a new solution could help stop the Taliban.

When I critically examined and analysed *Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban*,³³ I noted the theoretical framework was supportive of my research. Liberalism was the main theory advocated, calling for greater freedoms for the Afghan people, the ability to chart their own destiny and not be dominated by any one ethnic group or

³³ Akhtar, 'Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban.'

nation. This lack of freedom is the fundamental problem with the current strategy in Afghanistan, according to my hypothesis and research objectives.

Military dominance of Afghanistan by foreign powers or the Taliban simply will not work. Security and stability must be fostered in a more creative, original way combining the successes of previous efforts with renewed interdependency for all regional actors. *Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban* supports the theory I advocate that AF-PAK relations are inseparable as the two share a common history, common enemy, and adversely affect each other and the region.

Something novel yet obvious that I had not previously come to my attention, was domino theory. Similar to U.S. anti-communist ideology in Southeast Asia in the middle twentieth century, this article purports that a total collapse of Afghanistan into the hands of Taliban rulers would cause Pakistan to also collapse and could spread to all of Central Asia. The article supports this theory well and creates a realistic belief that unchecked the Taliban could cause serious stability issues throughout Central Asia.

This militant Islam domino theory is in keeping with the hypothesis and helps answer the research question in the belief expressed that Afghanistan and Pakistan's stability and state building is key to the region, and, thus, the world at large. The creation of a new regional body to counter this domino threat is paramount, as a means to control conflict and bridge the many differences and competing interests in Southwest Asia. It should not be forgotten that a weak and unchecked region could breed terrorism, which would again bring the US back to the region, something neither side can afford.

I believe *Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban* supports this hypothesis. The logical follow-on from this piece of literature is to continue research into how and why the Taliban seeks to collapse civil society in Pakistan and Afghanistan, to expose what can be done by the region to strengthen the state organs and prevent total collapse and

re-lapse. A strong regional body that is capable of administration and emergency rapid reaction is also key, continuing research on how to create such a body is necessary.

Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban is strong in its exposure of what is going wrong in Pakistan and Afghanistan with regards to the Taliban, and its only weakness is stopping short of making formal recommendations to fully combat this, hence the necessity of my research.

After analysing *Insurrection in Pakistan's Tribal Areas*,³⁴ I deduced that respecting and harnessing the power in cultural and religious customs is paramount to confronting the Taliban. The theory advocated is that culture must be understood and used as a weapon against militants, who are united across the border by language, values, and ethnicity. Looking at the insurgency in Pakistan and Afghanistan on ethnic lines, the strife can be traced from ethnic domination of one group over another in politics.

This work further solidifies the concept of AF-PAK relations and discusses the world of the frontier peoples of Pakistan and Afghanistan, whom cross the border at leisure seemingly unstopped by national lines and the Pakistani Army. Much is unknown about these tribal people whose relations run deeper than nationality labels. Understanding the power of ethnicity and language in Pakistan and Afghanistan is particularly useful in understanding how to build a better, modern Afghanistan.

This article advocates addressing the issues in the border agencies as key to the stability of the Pakistani State. The author also analyses the Islamist domino theory recognizing the border is nothing more than a formality, which explains how the roots of the Taliban can penetrate deep inside of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This work is incredibly helpful in identifying the key areas of Pakistan controlled by the Taliban and

³⁴ Brian Cloughley, *Insurrection in Pakistan's Tribal Areas*, Pakistan Security Research Unit, University of Bradford, (24 Jan. 2008).

their allies, or more relevantly, the areas not in government control. My research hypothesis concurs with this, as a key to stability in both Afghanistan and Pakistan is the provincial recognition of respective central government authority.

There needs to be further research into how to bring the Pakistani Taliban to the negotiating table, as isolation and military action has not worked. More importantly, ceding power and governance to the Pakistan frontiers has only showcased a weak government without trade-off or benefit to the central government. The cessation of power has only given the Taliban better abilities to operate, organize, and build distrust of the central government, contributing to its overall weakness.

It must be ascertained how to reign in the self-governing and *de-facto* self-governing regions of Pakistan, and put them back under the authority of the central government. In turn, the central government must build legitimacy, rule of law, and respect for its authority in order to exercise within its remit. This theoretical framework and concept can then migrate to the Afghan central government and be applied there, as the two nation's fundamental issues are co-dependent.

With this in mind, the theoretical framework indicates that a weak Afghanistan will prevent a strong Pakistan and a weak Pakistan will prevent a strong Afghanistan. I intend to research how they can operate in symbiosis and with the aid of the region at large to create mutual stability and prosperity.

Picture the Problem: Taliban Presence in Afghanistan,³⁵ is a good source for showcasing the power of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Although the statistics are slightly outdated, they are still representative of Taliban power. In November 2007, for example, the Taliban controlled 50% of Afghanistan. By 2008 that figure had increased

³⁵ 'Picture the Problem: Taliban Presence in Afghanistan', *The Washington Quarterly* 32/2 (2009), 12-123.

to 75% actual or de-facto control of Afghan territory. The surge no doubt brought much territory back under US or Afghan government control, but the real lesson learned is the ongoing power of the Taliban. Although it is argued that the Taliban have little actual support, I predict that fear alone is not the reason for such successful wide-ranging control. Therefore, social issues must be addressed and a stronger government for the Afghans must represent a better alternative to Taliban governance. With AF-PAK relations so key, I predict that Taliban dominance of this level could also occur in Pakistan if reforms and better methods are not applied. More research is needed, but the figures are alarming and show a need for a different approach in Afghanistan-Pakistan dealings with the Taliban and greater stability strategy. A unified front against the Taliban might be helpful, as is mutual state building, especially with the help and sanction of other state powers. Bringing Afghanistan and Pakistan back into the community of nations and helping remove some anarchy from the anarchical system is the best approach, in my opinion, and this is what I take from this supportive literature.

In regards to pure Pakistani affairs, *Pakistan: Weathering the Storm*,³⁶ attempts to use history to help answer the question of why Pakistan is not a developed liberal democracy. Pakistan is compared to Europe after World War II. Europe rose from the ashes, the author asserts, due to the Marshall Aid plan and a true commitment to the Europe region by the United States. The author asserts that had Pakistan not been ignored in that round of development monies and support, then maybe it would not be the state it is today. Although I agree with the thought process of the author, I do not think that it is appropriate to attempt to link the two.

As Afghanistan and Pakistan are currently recovering from war and have broken, disenfranchised, war scarred people, it is only logical that a new Marshall Aid

³⁶ Iftikhar H. Malik, 'Pakistan: Weathering the Storm', *Intelligence and National Security* 25/3 (2010), 394-401

type program could have the same results as it did in Europe. I think this conclusion is reached by many, but what is not understood is the corruption at play in Pakistan and Afghanistan which has made much of the aid programs strategically pointless.

I will continue research into how to prevent such graft, but I fear it has become an important supplement to government salaries in Southwest Asia, much like in Africa. Notwithstanding, there have been success stories from poor nations with regards to re-development where corruption has been targeted and stamped out to a large extent. I will compare and contrast various models and scenarios to attempt to beat corruption as a roadblock. Another reason aid in Southwest Asia is different to Europe is that in post-war Europe, religion and violence were not linked as they are in Pakistan and Afghanistan. There was very little tribal violence and all states were previously developed nations with functioning governments, used to statehood and state control. This easily controlled population which craved norms is probably what helped post-war Germany the most.

Afghanistan, and to a lesser extent Pakistan, I assert, is not used to a functioning democracy, at least not in recent generational common thought. This can be fixed through building better state institutions and winning the trust of the population. The author is a keen proponent of republican liberalist theory and argues that with western help, democracy can flourish in Pakistan; I fully agree.

Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations in the Post-9/11 Era,³⁷ is conceptually an in-depth report into the international relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and another work signifying the legitimacy of the AF-PAK relations label.

Pakistan's covert role in the insurgency in Afghanistan is researched in detail; concluding that, in agreement with my hypothesis, Pakistan and Afghanistan are

³⁷ Frederic Grare, 'Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations in the Post- 9/11 Era', *Carnegie Papers*, 72 (2006).

intrinsically linked in violence and politics. Research points to Pakistan playing both sides as it purports to fight the Taliban. Pakistan makes gestures of cooperation, yet at the same time, the Pakistani security apparatus is seen as complacent with the Taliban and even aiding them. It appears Pakistan's motives include shifting Taliban focus from Pakistan to Afghanistan, in order to de-facto fight the United States and the Karzai regime. Pakistan's motives are cleverly discussed in this piece but more research is clearly needed into the root of Pakistan's actions. I would propose that the Pakistani Army and the civil state speak and act differently. If they are going to work to stabilize the region, if this is their actual goal (which it should be to prevent Pakistan's own collapse) then they must truly work as one and act in concert for a single purpose.

This article exposes a large rift between the two countries, a rift made of power, ethnicity, and historical fear and distrust. This research seems to indicate that, although the two nations are linked and the importance of successful AF-PAK relations is important to mutual and regional stability, the two nations do not see eye to eye. This rift compounds hostile intentions resulting in stalled progress for both and the region at large. Although this seems negative, the new regional body, which I seek to propose, would address these ills and could help close the rift.

The theories purported in this academic work fit within liberal realism, republican liberalist, and structural functionalist theory: state institutions are praised and called a necessity; the need to return to normalcy is strikingly evident in order for Pakistan and Afghanistan to become rational state actors once more. My theories and hypothesis are bolstered by this article: a regional framework is needed, weak AF-PAK relations are identified, and the need to remedy this is vital. The author also recognizes the instability Pakistan could bring on itself by playing this two-sided game. More research into Pakistani motivations and their imagined end-game would be especially insightful.

This work also counters my proposal for a regional body, to the extent that it exposes the real differences in AF-PAK relations and challenges the desire, will, and ability of these states to work for common good. A realist strategy would dictate that states could try to not cooperate if it is against their interests; however, it can also be stated that if cooperation is in a state's self-interest the state will cooperate with other states by necessity or to further their own self-interest. Either way, cooperation is achieved.

The last piece of literature critically examined in the AF-PAK relations category is *Pakistan after Musharraf*,³⁸ author Frederic Grare takes an interesting and unexpected approach and has a question and answer session about the state of Pakistan after the departure of former President Musharraf. The author discusses prospective changes in Pakistan, concluding that Musharraf was a burden on the civil and military systems, and predicting that democratic change should be easier in the future. The advancements civil society and the national government can achieve are alluded to and a more stable Pakistan is concluded a possibility. I would definitely say I agree that a transition to a more democratic civil government is a positive thing, but it is a long way from an ideal solution, according to my research.

In keeping with realist theory, the author and I agree that reforms are a necessity in the government and military in order to have a more satisfied public, and a more stable country able to return to democracy that can be a strong state. However, this literature does not delve into how these changes will occur and clearly more research is needed. I can extract from this text that I will need to critically examine the changes in Pakistan to see how they relate to knock-on effects in Afghanistan. I will also need to analyse what steps can be taken in Pakistan to aid transition back to democracy, a better

³⁸ Frederic Grare, *Pakistan After Musharraf*, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (2008), 1-5, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/0820_transcript_pakistan_grare1.pdf.

effort to fight terrorism, and how to create a situation where the government, not the Taliban, controls the land.

Naturally, such a strategy could easily be migrated to Afghanistan, as the two are so tightly interwoven and suffer from many of the same ills. Much can be learned from this analysis, yet much is clearly still to be uncovered. Research needs to be approached from a differing perspective to conclude how to stop and prevent Taliban sympathy from within the central government, whilst strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions on both sides of the Durant line to work for mutual stability.

In the category of AF-PAK relations, the research methodology employed in all works has been fairly uniform. The notable exception to the norm has been the Q&A session in *Pakistan After Musharraf*, where the author himself is examined about the international and domestic ramifications of a Pakistan without Musharraf. The methodology of delivery was interesting, but the gathering of facts and research is not heavily discussed and seems to flow mainly from research and knowledge as a fellow with the Carnegie Institute.

By contrast, the main method of research conducted has been interview and research based, with conclusions drawn from contemporaneous and historical data on the international relations of the region. Current events and statistics from news data is important, as the situation is ever changing and predictions made can be proven, disproven, or reversed everyday as things progress in the region. The works are mainly focused on what is happening and why, but is lacking in how to remedy the situation. This is why there is a need for my research in this topic.

2.5 Security

The third tranche into which documents are classified based upon their content, theoretical framework, and potential comparison to my own research is security. Although this is the broadest category, it is also highly pertinent, as without security there can be no stability and with no stability, no development. Therefore, security is a necessary factor to achieve anything of worth in Afghanistan and Southwest Asia.

In *Afghanistan's Regional Diplomacy*,³⁹ the International Institute of Strategic Studies lays out its theory that although rudimentary progress is being made in economic development in Afghanistan, the cornerstone of regional security is missing. This fits in well with my overarching theory of realist international relations. These common themes pass throughout most of the works I reviewed and are especially prevalent in this work; pointing out the acute relevance of the theory and the norms that characterize it.

The authors of this work define and recognize what is vital to economic success and regional stability in Afghanistan. I was able to extract and critically evaluate the regional security mechanisms that, failed, are currently in place, and ought to be in place. This literature theoretically and conceptually supports my hypothesis that a stronger regional framework is necessary for economic prosperity, achieved in symbiosis with regional security and mutuality. Another aspect of which there is mutual agreement with my research and this work is that economic development with regional partners in areas such as energy, water, and transit is highlighted.

My theoretical formula forecasts that with significant investments and aid from neighbouring countries and regional powers, coordinated via a regional forum, progress will occur. This literature is indicative of the neighbouring countries primordial interests' in Afghanistan and lists each country's involvement. What is not noted

³⁹ 'Afghanistan's Regional Diplomacy', 1-2.

though is *why* these nations are getting involved. National interest is the natural common reason, but this article falls short of recommendations of how the individual national interests can be exploited to find common ground, even if out of selfish self-interest only. This is an interesting and novel concept which I developed as a result of this literature.

I think the idea of overlapping interests can be very useful when looking at regionalism and ways to involve non-traditional actors, such as China. This literature actually advocates an Afghan centric perspective, which is unique as most other works focus on ramifications for the region at large, the United States, or Western Europe. This differing perspective allows me to realize that my new model of inclusive regionalism would satisfy American, European, and Afghan strategic desires through compromise and mutual assistance. I find this reassuring going forward in my research.

In *Ill-Advised Retreat from Afghanistan*,⁴⁰ the author follows traditional security approach theory and categorizes the military failures in Afghanistan as stemming only from a lack of resolution on behalf of the United States. The theoretical framework that the author, representing the Council on Foreign Relations, pursues is traditional liberalism. The writer discusses ‘fragile and reversible gains’ and blames most security issues on the wrong application of US force. The writer proposes a better strategy to deal with the Taliban and insurgency through the use of force, which while interesting from a pure security perspective, is only American based and does nothing to address the underlying issues of the conflict. The theoretical side of this article is conflict based and hawkish. It is not based on true international relations theory, which disagrees with my multi-faceted approach to security as part of the greater regional strategy. This article suggests Hobbean realism found in liberal realism doctrine, as seen through the

⁴⁰ Max Boot and Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, ‘Ill-Advised Retreat from Afghanistan’, *Council on Foreign Relations* (2011), http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/ill-advised-retreat-afghanistan/p25334?cid=rss-firsttake-ill_advised_retreat_from_afgha-062311.

struggle for power through force. However, this does little to further the debate as to what can be done to fix Afghanistan in the long-term.

This work merely facilitates my understanding of how US strategy could have theoretically played out, but offers no deeper analysis. This piece is mainly a summation and criticism of US war strategy, specifically confined to counter-insurgency strategy. The author suggests a strategy to defeat the Taliban with force alone; however, there is no evidence that this will be successful. I think that further research into the long-term ramifications of US strategy in Afghanistan would be helpful to my research, as it would aid me in devising a way to prevent history from repeating itself.

In *Can Afghanistan be Saved*,⁴¹ the author poses questions to NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. This methodology is actually more pure research than traditional academic analysis, though there is critical reasoning in the questions asked. This is a radical departure from the methodology that all other authors used within this category. The main method of field work and research, by academics within this category, was compilation and analysis of statistics and interviews.

Discerningly, this piece is not a formal academic journal, which I think actually helps give a broader representation of sources and is, thus, useful to me as a researcher. Although non-traditional in an academic sense, this piece captures the author's motives, and research questions contained within the carefully crafted questions. From these questions, I can extrapolate the author's hypothesis, of how to make the Muslim world aware of the issues in Afghanistan and increase involvement of the Islamic world.

The author also poses questions about engaging with Pakistan and other partners in the region, but does not go on to ask about the possibility of concerted regional

⁴¹ Mina Al-Oraibi 'Can Afghanistan Be Saved?', *The Christian Science Monitor*, (3 Nov. 2009).

efforts any more than to suggest a conference. This is where my research is again warranted. There is a glimpse of hope in renewed regionalism, as in many other works, but that glimpse is just left as that alone, an aspiration.

I know that if I can achieve something tangible with my research on the subject, academia would be enriched by filling the gap. I definitely agree with the researcher but think that having support in spirit by regional partners is not as good as my proposed goal of actual regional engagement.

The author focuses on respect for the culture and religion as means to foster stability, but I think this is a shallow and fruitless examination. However, the author briefly discusses security and troop numbers; that is what I believe makes this article about security and not just regionalism and cultural relativism.

Furthermore, I think the author is mainly interested in advocating a theoretical policy of limited regionalism and cultural sensitivity. I fail to see, and the author fails to demonstrate, how cultural respect is anything more than a nicety and a diplomatic tool. In the grand strategy for stability in Afghanistan and Southwest Asia I think being inclusive and civil will accomplish very little in terms of tangible goals.

Another piece examined was *South-West Asia after the Taliban*,⁴² in which Mohammed Ayoob, reflects on developments in Afghanistan after liberation from the Taliban. This piece fits well with my hypothesis and research question. The findings of Ayoob are that the instability of Afghanistan threatens the region and the domino theory, which I previously identified, is also mentioned. As such, this piece follows the same theoretical framework as my research.

This article is almost a decade old and some of the predictions have proven false, but not at the fault of the author. The author was correct that Karzai did seem to

⁴² Mohammed Ayoob, 'South-West Asia after the Taliban', *Survival* 44/1 (2002), 52-68.

be a moderate Pashtun choice as leader, but his presidency is so sullied now that he may pose the biggest risk to Afghan stability. The article discussed how former Pakistani president Musharraf promised to get involved in the war on terror, but, as we now know, this was due to selfish political reasons. Pakistan's own national motives today remain unclear and unpredictable.

So whilst very optimistic, the analysis in this article is still supportive for surmising that Pakistan will remain volatile and a threat to world peace for years to come. The author's work concurs with my own hypothesis in identifying Iran and India as well suited partners for the United States in the region. I think this theory of regionalism can be tweaked so that Iran and India could be successful leaders even without the United States physical involvement. However, US assistance diplomatically and financially would still likely be necessary.

The author, true to realist doctrine, is identification of ethnic tensions within Afghanistan and the neighbouring nations, which could quickly lead to another breakdown and exit of Afghanistan from the international system. I conclude from these ideas that a support for a united effort to help Afghanistan will lead to mutual cooperation as long as the proper avenues are followed and the cooperation is to an extent which is acceptable to all nations involved.

This article introduced me to the novel concept of Saudi Arabia and Iran's influence on Afghanistan of competing forms of extreme Islam. This competing Islam can cause more instability with rival factions funded by third-parties proxy wars against each other. I had not previously given much thought to this conflict in my model of regionalism, but now I believe that with more research I could formulate a buffer between the competing Islamic sects.

Lastly, the author is very clear that ethnic conflicts and Taliban sympathy are rife in the Afghan national government. However, the author does not propose a remedy and, therefore, my research is necessary and justified to contribute to the field.

In *Talking to the Taliban*,⁴³ the author advances a very different and almost fringe perspective suggesting serious negotiations with the Taliban. This realist strategy departs from the conventional American security perspective of defeating the Taliban purely militarily and socially, and moves towards a more benign European school of thought, embodied in dialogue and diplomacy.

Although US contemporary strategy in Afghanistan also involves negotiation with the Taliban, I would characterize modern US negotiations as not genuine. The US has refused to attend events in Russia in 2017 to negotiate with the Taliban and other parties, and there seems a lack of concrete efforts to engage the enemy at the negotiating table. There are no publically available tangible goals of desired accomplishments from these talks and it appears that they are still only in their earliest phase. My research and hypothesis insists upon true, meaningful negotiations with the Taliban and all key elements, and it is not clear if this is happening today or not. Defined goals must also be chosen so that negotiations have an end game and are not merely a delay tactic.

The author's theoretical framework is realist, as peace with the Taliban is sought and strategies to achieve adherence to an international system of norms are proposed in order to further self interest. This article concurs with my work, in that both advocate negotiating with the Taliban and being more inclusive. However, our hypotheses disagree with the extent to which Taliban can be rehabilitated.

⁴³ Vishal Chandra, 'Talking to the Taliban', *Strategic Analysis* 32/5 (2008), 729-737.

My research to date predicts that having the Taliban switch sides is rarely effective, easy, or genuine. The author indicates that the moderate Taliban can be separated from the hard-core Taliban and brought back to aid the government. I contend that this is a fallacy and that all Taliban are in fact hard-core and dedicated, evidenced in their commitment to the Taliban and that so called rehabilitation, though preferential, is merely an aspiration. However, more research is necessary to determine if the Taliban can be successfully included as a nonviolent element of the new Afghan government, though recent records demonstrate a great deal of insider violence.

Realistic negotiations with the Taliban are a novel concept supported by other nations and tribes, but yet to be implemented. My research will propose a model for a regional body, which can work with the Taliban to build and ensure security.

Barnett Rubin has produced some of the most useful literature on the subject of security in Afghanistan. In *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State*,⁴⁴ which is a piece dating from the early 1990's, Rubin's research concludes that the solution will not be ethnic, but that ethnicity is a consistent factor in the instability of the country. However, I disagree with Rubin, as my hypothesis includes a solution to which ethnicity must be respected because my research indicates that there can be no solution which is fully comprehensive unless all ethnic factors are considered.

As Afghanistan, Pakistan, and most of their regional neighbours are divided upon ethnic lines the issue of ethnicity is one of utmost importance to a lasting peace. As such, ethnicity deserves both more research and attention. Although Rubin believes ethnicity is not *the* solution, he does chronicle the varying ethnic groups, thus, laying the foundation for further research.

⁴⁴ Barnett Rubin, *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State* (New Haven, 1995).

Ethnic research is necessary for a plan, which will include the needs and desires of all groups who could pose a threat to the stability of the Afghan state. Currently no system of real interaction in the Western sense exists between these ethnic groups. However, if ethnic groups begin to interact as actors in the Western sense, then cooperation and a cohesive, representative national government will be realized.

In *Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition from Turmoil to Normalcy*,⁴⁵ Rubin unequivocally concludes, 'military domination of the Pakistani state is the problem.' This key point is representative of the current security situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The security forces of Pakistan are almost schizophrenic. Whilst Pakistan says they fight terrorism, and indeed do battle in the frontier regions, at the same time the military and security services are actively aiding the Taliban. My hypothesis concurs with Rubin in that Pakistani instability and domestic strife is a long-term security concern which will hamper progress in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

A key concept that Rubin introduces is that the Pakistani abrupt reversal of their pro-Taliban policy, is merely a tool to re-align themselves with US support and funding. I believe this is due to self-interest, fear of lack of influence, and as a stand against India. More research is necessary to determine how to make Pakistan sincere in stabilizing the security situation.

A rational Pakistan would naturally want to stop aiding the very terrorists who cause instability on both sides of the border. Unfortunately, I imagine that, due to the anarchy of the international system, a realist minded Pakistan wants to keep its options open. Rubin does not elaborate on how to make Pakistan help itself. However, I theorize that having the society and government back under genuine civilian control and establishing a legitimate democracy is the first step, as Pakistan's stability is tied to the

⁴⁵ Barnett Rubin, 'Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition from Turmoil to Normalcy', *Council Special Report* 12 (2006) 1-56. *Council on Foreign Relations*, <http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/afghanistans-uncertain-transition-turmoil-normalcy/p10273>.

security of the region at large. The second step, as my research suggests, is having Pakistan play an important role in regional politics and security.

Another piece of important representative literature in the category of security is *Saving Afghanistan*.⁴⁶ Here Rubin focuses on the borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan as important for security for the region. The article confirms that the border areas are a porous hotbed of terror, a constant that I have encountered throughout the literature.

Rubin also concludes that state building through institutions, government services, and schools are ways to defeat the Taliban without force. This effort to establish good governance and society if to make the state appear strong can be seen to follow with realist theory. I agree that civil society, education, and government facilities are needed, as they demonstrate central control projecting a strong image of a legitimate government. The Taliban currently offers such services, and, logically, the central government should also be able to provide such services.

To this extent, this article supports my own research leading me to believe that even more research is necessary. Does education really mean a safer country? Of this I am not sure. I propose that it is helpful, but I am not sure if it is the end game. Clearly, I also think that security, as well as institutions of the state are needed. One alone will not keep the people safe.

My research is more radical, in that it is all encompassing and follows a multi-stage approach of security, civil society, and regionalism simultaneously. I predict this multi-front assault of power, security, and diplomacy will make a significant difference and the literature concurs.

⁴⁶ Barnett Rubin, 'Saving Afghanistan', *Foreign Affairs Journal* 86/1 (2007), 57-78

The final document reviewed in the security category is *Afghanistan and Its Neighbors: An Ever Dangerous Neighborhood*,⁴⁷ the author follows a regionalist approach which could be characterized as American/European centric and embraces republican liberalist ideology with regards to Afghanistan and Pakistan security.

The research of the author supports my grounded theory that security is a co-dependent factor, which Afghanistan alone cannot create and maintain without other regional powers participating in a security capacity. What is especially strong about this article is that it demonstrates the evolution of strategic thinking over time, which links security, diplomacy and, regionalism. Paying close attention to regional rivalries and big power agendas are a rational conclusion of the author's work, as he theorizes that these rivalries and goals will adversely affect the security situation in Afghanistan for the worse. I found the author's research findings concerning Afghanistan as a 'regional fulcrum' to be a solid concept, and will explore this theory when examining the leverage of Afghanistan by other powers as my research progresses.

The influence of Pakistan, India, and Iran is examined, affirming the ability of these states to affect conflict in Afghanistan. The phenomenon of using established regional forums, such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation, to aid in security is briefly discussed. The author's finding that regional assistance can bring security supports my research and underpins my theory about cooperation and security. The debate over the roles of Afghanistan's neighbours is ever-changing and my novel research will benefit society and academia at large, by providing an improved plan to benefit the region.

The methodology of this article is constant with other articles in the security category, in that the main sources are analytical reasoning, and academic discussion and

⁴⁷ Marvin G. Weinbaum, 'Afghanistan and Its Neighbors: An Ever Dangerous Neighborhood', *United States Institute of Peace*, Special Report 162, (June 2006).

theorizing. What is missing from the category at large, in my opinion, is actual fieldwork in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and, Central Asia. This would expand on theory and analysis and would provide a more transparent and less biased approach to security solutions should a secure means of conducting this research be possible.

2.6 Conclusion

Most literature focused on failures within the region and the effects of a failed state, not remedies. My research differs in that I will address these issues and seek to find a solution to the problems. My work goes one-step further by not merely criticizing, but rebuffing weaknesses and attempting to build a solid, workable, and mutually acceptable plan. Facts, figures, opinions, and official ideology are important, as well as reflections on past experiences. A different approach to a different question is what I propose.

What I have found so far is that there are three key topics which revolve around each other and are inherently co-dependent: Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations, Security, and Regionalism. All three are wide ranging and invite analysis of the situation in Afghanistan on multiple levels. The research could be narrowed down to smaller sub-sections; but to keep general at this time is best, as the commonality found and the overlapping of the three categories became very evident as more research was conducted. Without one there cannot be another, the cycle is self-reciprocating and certainly not self-contained.

Absolutely everything is related between Afghanistan and its neighbours. The interests of Europe, the United States, and Saudi Arabia are important in the future,

even though these states do not share a geographical border with Afghanistan. From what I have uncovered so far, it can be noted that a border is not a wall or door to stop anything. A border is open no matter how secured it is, and, as such, all regional powers are very much linked with common problems and issues. What is positive is that many of these issues are shared and can be dealt with together, if my third way was possible.

Proposing a third solution, a new idea which is neither US dominated, nor is purely a clone of failed past attempts is my goal. Drawing from historical context, theoretical framework, and a sampling of the research already conducted, I am aware of the key issues, established framework, and theory, as well as, the problems which await. I can analyse from the American, European, and Afghan point of view and believe this will help with research and finding solutions to important research questions. Through this literature review, I identified key variables, phenomena, and methods that will be useful in my continuing research.

From here, the only way forward is to continue the research, modify my methods where necessary, and adapt to the ideas learned from my work so far. More research on the ground: at embassies, with senior officials, and with the people is needed. Academic research can only provide so much information. When combined these various research methods can provide the answers to my research questions and ideally affirm my hypothesis.

If I can develop a roadmap for a modern, inclusive regional system to include all parties and their analysed interests, then I can also predict what the outcome will be for all involved. It also is important to look at other models and to strategize what would happen if there was no model, as things develop on a daily basis in Southwest Asia.

The current research does not go far enough to propose a solution and current doctrine and strategy in Southwest Asia is not working. Something must be done for

the sake of the region and for academic debate on this issue. This is my goal, moving forward.

Post conflict reconstruction as well as meaningful interstate links are vital to finding a regional solution for Afghanistan and Central Asia, Making a stronger Central Asia will in turn make a stronger Afghanistan if the region can bind together and solve the Afghan instability itself. If the prior regional effort failure factor can be reasonably identified then any future efforts to stabilize the nation and region will need to build on measurable prior successes, whilst improving on the failures of the past. The modification of past regionalism into a new form of integrated top down regionalism will create more than a patch to the problem of instability that ravages Afghanistan and threatens the region.

This research aims to present a workable model for regional contribution leading to stability in Afghanistan, the rationale for this research paper to propose a well-defined regionalist role for the key powers, after the US and NATO withdrawal is the recognition that Afghanistan alone cannot sustain peace and stability. This hypothesis will be further analysed in this paper, but to understand why regionalism can be beneficial to Afghanistan, it bears investigating the history of regionalism itself.

Joseph Nye defines regionalism as the formations of interstate associations or groupings on the basis of regions. Regionalism is further expanded by Harvard University to include economic links between nations from different regions, thus regionalism can be a regional focus by the wider international community, as well as the international relations between nation states in a specific region.⁴⁸ Nye also breaks regionalist organizations down into two sub communities: micro economic

⁴⁸ Joseph S. Nye (ed.), *International Regionalism: Readings* (Boston, 1968).

organizations and macro political/security organizations.⁴⁹ What is thus necessary is a combination of the two theories is a good structure for a new model of regionalism and a central Asian security community. Micro-economic organizations serve a limited purpose, such as cooperation on matters such as agricultural output and sales, however, the limited role within the larger role is really what matters. Although a micro organization between traders may on the surface seem insignificant, such organizations build trust, mutual support and reliance. Economic links build trust, commerce and the wider economy. Such small economic agreements can foreshadow larger economic cooperation or can be formed as part of a wider umbrella of top down cooperation from the national macro level to the provincial micro level. In essence all actors play their part for their self-interest in a realist view, but within an international structure to achieve their own goals whilst these actors de-facto aid the larger nation and region through their actions and rational behaviour. The literature reveals that there is a real link between economic growth and security. This is riches creates security causal link can be applied to social science modelling. Through this modelling when international organizations and regional organizations are put alongside anarchy it can be seen that both the regional and macro security organizations seek security through stability. So what is a way to create this security and stability that is sought? There is a trilemma between economic development, security and international organizations. There needs to be some sort of regional cooperation in order to achieve stability in Central Asia. They each rely upon each other and stem from one another. You simply cannot have one without the other. They are intrinsically linked. This regionalist approach matches realist-institutional thought as objectives of both nation states, and non-state actors can be linked together to reach the end game objective that the state and region seeks, but this requires some master guidance and brokerage, hence the regional organization.

⁴⁹ Andrew Hurrell, 'Explaining The Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics', *Review of International Studies* 21/4 (1995), 331.

Although regionalism is not a ‘novel’ concept, the model I will propose will be a marked improvement on the generally accepted concept of regionalism, as applied to Afghanistan and central Asia.⁵⁰ What this means is that my model of modern regionalism relies on focused regional efforts (from a variety of partners) in order to achieve measured goals. What is unique about this new model is that a hierarchy of acceptability is used to model the most acceptable levels of integration on common issues. Also a more inclusive approach is advocated, which diverges from the traditional use of regionalism in the area. Past incarnations of regionalism were mainly in the national self-interest, poorly coordinated or overly coordinated. There has been a great deal of discourse over existing, limited-scope, regional organizations in Central Asia. However, none of these current regional organizations have gone that step further and been either all inclusive or achieved measurable, long-term successes necessary for future stability. A quick regional effort is uncoordinated, whilst a long-term regional body is overly complicated and slow, and would be hard to catalyse in the security environment which currently engulfs Afghanistan. Thus, unplanned regionalism or long term planning and a supranational body, result in either weak results or over entanglement between nations, neither of which would be appropriate for Afghanistan. Universalism and regionalism have a role to play, but to sustain and engage a region at its core, a regional community is most appropriate as it is composed entirely of members of the area in which change is desired.⁵¹ What must be identified are the key factors that will make a workable model functional for Central Asia. There are key factors in the literature which are common themes and underpin regionalism. If these common factors can be applied in the model to support the social science model which

⁵⁰ Paul Kubicek, ‘The Commonwealth of Independent States: An Example of Failed Regionalism?’ *Review of International Studies* 35 (2009), 237-256.

⁵¹ Christoph Schreuer, ‘Regionalism v. Universalism’, *European Journal of International Law* 6 (1995), 477-499.

predicts the success of a regional solution then a functional, applicable regional model can be developed.

Regionalism, historically, has had its successes and failures, and many scholars and politicians are divided over the usefulness of the doctrine. Examining a selection of past high profile regionalism efforts (which were either too weak or too strong) can result in data which explains how these prior examples of regional efforts are not appropriate for Central Asia.

What is needed is a framework of an international organization or form of regional cooperation to aid in stabilizing the region. Different types or levels of international organization can bring different levels of rewards to the participants depending on the level of commitment needed from the participants. Integration is defined as, ‘the process whereby an international organization acquires the responsibility for taking an increasing number of decisions in areas which were previously reserved for the state.’⁵² This is what makes regionalism inherently not an easy process to implement. There is always some give and take when integration takes place. This is true no matter the scale of the integration from the grass roots up to complex treaties and supranational bodies. There must be a reason for states to want to cede at least some power or the ability to make totally unilateral decisions on all points of interest for the ‘greater good’. This ceding of power, or not reserving the right to act however a state wants, can be seen as a limitation, but it can also be seen as a benefit to the state. If states choose to cooperate they can gain benefits such as collective security in a security community type structure or economic market gains in a customs union or trade agreement. By ceding some choices states will gain benefits. Collaboration breeds cooperation over competition and each individual effort can be complimentary to the group at large. There must be a structure of organizations (a taxonomy) which ranks integration in international

⁵² Paul Graham Taylor, *The Limits of European Integration* (New York, 1983), 26.

organizations from most easily acceptable (and least integrated), to most challenging to get buy in from all members (most integrated). Integration can generally take two forms, direct transfer of sovereignty from national power to a supranational authority (like the European Union – the most integrated form of international organization), or a pooling of national sovereignty in a manner in which each state keeps control of national policy but cooperates together on certain international issues (as ASEAN does in Southeast Asia). Both types of international organization go beyond pure treaty agreements and act as a ‘community’ beyond the traditional Westphalian notion of the ‘state’ and signify regional integration. Trade cooperation is the base level of an international organization. That is not to say that there is no regionalism on a scale smaller than a trade organization, however, the smaller pacts, agreements and accords serve a limited scope on a singular issue and cannot be seen as ‘regional integration’ on a larger scale.

There is a place for these smaller niche agreements, and that is within the larger body of an international organization. The integration allows for better organization, dissemination, financing and administration of obligations. Historically, most regional integration efforts started as trade agreements, and this is true of the European Union, ASEAN, as well as the African Union, MERCOSUR and NAFTA. These organizations started as primarily trade only organizations but as trade and politics are intertwined, they grew to embody political and economic decisions. This market capitalization is what can lure states to organize together, knowing that the prospects for their own economy will grow with regional cooperation and organization, as is the way in the ever more integrated economic-political globalized world.⁵³ Regionalism in Central Asia

⁵³ Richard Higgot, ‘Alternative Models of Regional Cooperation: The Limits of Regional Institutionalism in East Asia,’ in Mario Telo (ed.), *European Union and New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Global Governance in a Post Hegemonic Era* (Aldershot, UK, 2007), 77 and Amitav Archarya, ‘Regionalism and the Emerging World Order,’ in Shawn Breslin, W. Christopher Hughes, Nicholas Philips, and Ben Rosamond (eds.), *New Regionalism in the Global Political Economy* (London, 2002), 20-21.

can be characterized by the coming together of less developed countries to gradually cope with the competition of cooperation and divergent regional powers. Thus cooperating together is better than working against one another, as each state stands to benefit from cooperation. So in our classification of different levels of International organizations the hardest to get consensus on, being the most integrated, is the fully inclusive supranational system, of which the EU is the best example.⁵⁴ The easiest is the strategic dialogue, such as South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), essentially this is a forum for discussing joint efforts, but with little formal organs and thus no effective means of administration or enforcement, it is essentially a group of goodwill and although it is very easy to encourage this type of agreement, they have been referred to as a 'talking shop'. Not that regional dialogue is a bad thing, but for our purposes this research seeks to find a workable regional model for Central Asia, and an entry level discussion does not go far enough to achieve this. Some theorists like Charles Pentland have advocated for a 'third' level of regional integration. That middle layer, which is still acceptable and accessible to nation states, but which strikes a balance between domestic interests and external interests and interactions with other states in a community.⁵⁵

A security community would be one such type of this integration as would a more advanced version of this community would be reflected in the policies of a regional community which does not reach the integration extent of a full supranational state, but which has checks and balances and acts as a community, similar to ASEAN. This falling under the definition of, 'the attainment, within a territory, of a sense of community ...with institutions...and practices.'⁵⁶ This forms a security community or

⁵⁴ John Gerard Ruggie. *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form*, (New York, 1993)

⁵⁵ Charles Pentland, *International Theory and European Integration* (London, 1973), 220.

⁵⁶ Karl Deutsche, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area; International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton, 1957), 5-6.

an amalgamation, which is multiple states working through some common government or body. As previously stated this middle layer, between the full supranational state and the mere treaty is what the ideal medium is. There is a balance between being acceptable, not requiring certain norms of behaviour or loss of sovereignty which may not be acceptable to many states and no judgment of internal actions and politics in nation states. This type of model can be the security community, the trade community, or the loose political international organization.

Four stages of integration have been defined by economist Bela Balassa, the first being a free trade area: the removal of trade restrictions offering the most immediate pay off for any actor willing to participate. The next stage is the process of setting up a customs union, a common customs area where goods are not taxed from one nation to the next, allowing nations to compliment and not necessarily compete with each other producing the same goods. The third stage is a common market and finally an economic union.⁵⁷ Whilst the latter two are hard to envision in the current state of affairs in Central Asia, it must be recalled that whilst many entry level organizations start as trade agreements, they tend to develop and mature over time into deeper connections and as such any baseline is a positive. Having established the order in which regional institutions rank in order of ease of adaption to Central Asia, 1) base level – NGO's and foreign aid, 2) regional treaties of cooperation, 3) security community/economic organization/customs union, 4) supranational institution, it is noteworthy that for regional integration to really be useful institutions are necessary (even in the level 3 cooperation) as they provide guidance and 'commitment institutes' that hold actors to the agreement they assent to. This is necessary to ensure the validity and purpose of the regional cooperation.⁵⁸ The reason that integration is difficult is that it is inherently a process, 'whereby political actors in distinct national settings are persuaded to sift their

⁵⁷ Bela Balassa, *Theory of Economic Integration*, (Homewood, IL, 1961).

⁵⁸ Walter Mattli, *The Logic of Regional Integration: Europe and Beyond* (Cambridge, 2001), 99-101.

national loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new and larger centre whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing states.’⁵⁹ In any regional effort there has to be a certain amount of decision making seceded to the regional body. Although cooperation requires the state to not act in anyway it so wishes, the state still benefits. That means that although the state may not wish to cooperate, but doing so, it still meets its own self-interest. Regional integration is mainly due to the demand and supply needs. The demand for regional rules, regulations and policies are determined by the market.⁶⁰ It has been remarked by Palmer that ‘conceptualization and encouragement of other forms of cooperation that was less intensive but of a more realizable nature’ is an acceptable way to sell regional integration *ab-initio*.⁶¹ To create a successful regional effort, regional cooperation should build on less controversial issues towards issues of increasing complexity due to the fact that consensus is easier to achieve on base issues. For nation states to accept regional cooperation they must focus on cooperation and not fear integration. Domestic factors are also supremely important in regional efforts.⁶² Can the regional body accept the domestic issues in the member state? If so then the state can cooperate without fear, at first, of judgment. Focus again, must be on the benefits of cooperation in an international organization and not on the potential future integration.⁶³ On a pure numbers game, integration is in the favour of the economies of Central Asia. How to best sell it to the nation states is simple: appeal to their common prosperity and national self-interests.

If Central Asia was to create joinder of policy on counter terror and counter narcotics, big issues, which affect all the nations in the region then not only would it be

⁵⁹ Ernst Bernard Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950-1957*. (Stanford, CA, 1958), 12.

⁶⁰ Mattli, *The Logic of Regional Integration*.

⁶¹ Norman Dunbar Palmer, *The New Regionalism in Asia and the Pacific* (Lexington, MA, 1991), 11.

⁶² Stephen P. Cohen and Michael Haas, ‘The Asian Way to Peace: A Story of Regional Cooperation’, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 49/4 (1990), 240.

⁶³ Kishore C. Dash, *Regionalism in South Asia: Negotiating Cooperation, Institutional Structures* (London, 2008), 191-192

a gain for the region, but also for the bigger powers who would be convinced to back such an agreement as it is also in their interests. Although big power backing is not a necessity, having multiple big powers respect the sovereignty and purposefulness of the new regional organization would be beneficial for two reasons. Primarily, the organization would be seen as legitimate and thus would build political clout as well as potential funding, and secondly, the encouragement may be necessary in the early days of formation, since historically Central Asia has had limited success with forming a Central Asian 'unit' without any big power backing.⁶⁴ A variety of intra-regional and state level factors have created a propensity for regionalism in security and other fields as an immediate need in Central Asia, which could in turn lead to closer cooperation on other issues of 'soft power'.⁶⁵ Regional cooperation has been accomplished in the past but never to a successful or meaningful extent. Of course, there are not many factors which contribute to that let alone the facts that no regional organization has ever involved all members of Central Asia, nor has any effort ever been an organic Central Asian effort. Notwithstanding, there is direct evidence that cooperation is an option and this desire and ability to contribute in limited ways to an international grouping has been demonstrated through cooperation with NGO's, The United States, The Shanghai Cooperation Organization to name a few all the way back to the 1992 Tashkent Collective Security treaty.⁶⁶ Security agreements present the most obvious reason to collaborate aside from the equally important economics of trade agreements. A security community is only as strong as those who contribute and in the past Central Asian states have agreed to provide troops⁶⁷ to support such a collective security policy, however,

⁶⁴ Roy Allison, 'Regionalism, Regional Structures and Security Management in Central Asia', *International Affairs* 80/3 (2004), 463-83.

⁶⁵ Annette Bohr, 'Regionalism in Central Asia: New Geopolitics, Old Regional Order', *International Affairs*, 80/3 (2004), 485-502.)

⁶⁶ Andrei Zagorski, 'Regional Security Policy Structures', in Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth (eds), *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1998), 281-300.

⁶⁷ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan offered a battalion each to support the Russian dominated Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) a failed counter to NATO in the CIS.

such agreements have yet to mature beyond mere infancy, mainly due to poor funding, lack of leadership, commitment and being non Central Asian controlled organizations, and thus missing the regional 'buy in' required for a community to be successful.

The factors identified in the research for successful regionalism are international organizations, economic development and security. These three factors presented themselves multiple times throughout the literature and form the paragon to apply to Central Asia. Applying this model with the recognized inherent political diversity in central Asia, I propose a concerted and focused effort in an exercise in modern regionalism between the states mutual benefit. The EU is a shining example of the successes of regionalism, yet it is too supranational to neatly be replicated at once in Central Asia. There is simply too much to accept with that model. The positive though is that the benefits exerted by the EU can help frame a new model for a security community in central Asia. For example, in 2007 the EU established a Central Asia partnership strategy.⁶⁸ While the strategy is far from all encompassing, it did open a dialogue on pan central Asian strategic aims and government initiatives. The EU essentially has sowed the seeds for cooperation that are necessary for a new security community, and has established the foundation for regional cooperation in a loose, acceptable manner. What remains a challenge is to make the dialogue, more than a strategic partnership for peace, and more of a semi-permanent organization, whilst remaining palatable to member states. This will be a formidable challenge, yet the effect groundwork the EU has set up is significant and promising, as well as the promise of close EU / future security community cooperation to increase effectiveness (and funding). There is thus desire to cooperate in Central Asia. This is the keystone in the security community theory and also a main factor in the realist and liberal institutional

'No Integration without Stimuli', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (22 Dec, 2003).

⁶⁸ Hoffman, Katharina. 'The EU in Central Asia: Successful Good Governance Promotion?' *Third World Quarterly* 31/1 (2010), 87-103.

approach to international organizations. With this basic will to enter talks comes the lowest level of international organization taxonomy. The grass roots of regional cooperation. From this strategic dialogue there can be seen a will to want to share common problems and solve them. The need for balanced multipolarity⁶⁹ is essential if cooperation is to take place, and the willingness to discuss international cooperation is demonstrative of this.

Research in this project has indicated that to create a successful regional organization there must be 3 key factors available. 1) There must be a will to genuinely cooperate between member states, 2) there must be a forum for member states to participate in conferences and caucuses and 3) there must be goodwill in the form of funding, participation and national recognition of the supranational authority of the regional organization. These factors fit with the trifecta factors identified throughout the research. There are many models available for application to Central Asia. The question is which model works best. The answer is a hybrid that can take into account the different types of governance in Central Asia, the political acceptance of such a body and the integration process.

These three factors are not hypothetical; rather, they are the three most common forces seen in functioning and legitimate regional bodies such as the EU and ASEAN. It can also be said that without all three of these factors on the side of the new regional body, looking through a realist framework, the body is doomed to failure. Take the League of Nations without US participation and ratification. This lack of American participation and 'buy in' by the national government caused a lack of general legitimacy leading to non-participation by Germany and Japan, and the leagues failure. Had the US have recognized and participated in the League of Nations, it may well have

⁶⁹ Carol Weaver, 'Black Sea Regional Security: Present Multipolarity and Future Possibilities', *European Security*, 20/1 (2011), 1-19.

been seen by the world as a legitimate governing body, and may have developed better rules, guidelines and norms. These very ideological concepts, or norms, are the regional communities' identity, mission statement and sword and shield. Norm building grants authority and a deeper acceptance of the regional organization. Without actual legitimacy or a desire to participate by member states, a regional body is but a forum where ideas are loosely exchanged. For example, the Warsaw pact⁷⁰ was a forced security community⁷¹ in which member states had very little input⁷². This alternate type of regional model is not appropriate as it is not acceptable and has no means of enforcement in Central Asia. It was such an unpopular model that when its member states had the opportunity to defect and turn towards the west for economic and stability reasons, they left and even joined NATO; demonstrating the power of an organization of equal input and recognition, which does not control its members by force and fear.⁷³ For Central Asia, something more concrete is necessary if the region is to set goals of economic regeneration, prosperity, trade, and security. All must genuinely want progress in order for progress to come, on any plane.

Chapter III. International Relations of Central Asia

The international relations of Central Asia as the status quo are key to understanding any future security community or regional concert in Central Asia. The manner in which the states interact with each other sets the tone for the interest in developing both a regional security community and for regional cooperation on grassroots issues.

⁷⁰ Joan Bird, ed., 'CIA Analysis Of The Warsaw Pact Forces: The Importance Of Clandestine Reporting', CIA, 1-56.

⁷¹ 'The Warsaw Pact, 1955,' Fordham University, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1955warsawpact.html>, accessed 28 Mar. 2013.

'Avalon Project: The Warsaw Pact', *Yale Law School* (n.d).

⁷² 'The Warsaw Pact: Czechoslovakia', Library of Congress, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/czechoslovakia/cs_appnc.html, accessed 28 Mar. 2013.

⁷³ Fred Eidlin, 'The Initial Political Failure of the Warsaw Pact Intervention in Czechoslovakia of 21 August 1968', *East Central Europe* 5 (1978), 245-66.

3.1 India

Although India is not geographically part of Central Asia, Indian influence in Central Asia is a constant, and thus acknowledgment of Indian capabilities and limitations should be examined. There are already countless instances of cooperation between the regional states already, for example India, which is a strong regional power in itself is actively engaged in the redevelopment of Afghanistan. Is this due to a selfish state interest in undermining Pakistan? Quite possibly, however, it does belie an effort to cooperate even if in the self-interest, in keeping with neo-realist theory. Cooperation is a tangible goal, which is *prima facie* evidence of building relations. The rationale for the cooperation is almost immaterial. What matters is the measurable progress in creating a safer, more stable Afghanistan. Indian companies have already significantly contributed to the development of Afghan infrastructure, which in turn, leads to industry, and jobs, and thus stability, in theory of course. Indian companies are actively engaged in road building, and have invested over 1.3 billion USD in aid already.⁷⁴ In fact, India was the only nation, which allowed the Northern Alliance; counter Taliban forces an actual embassy. India cites civilizational links for its desire to build cultural and economic links with Afghanistan, and this nation building is what is required to build greater links across the region at large. Of course, the downside to Indian interest in Afghanistan is the Pakistani factor. Pakistan considers Afghanistan its traditional realm and does not care for Indian 'interference' no matter, the rationale. The regional organization needs to find a way to temper these Indian-Pakistani flare-ups or focus on one or the other to avoid aggression. Of course, It can be seen that an Indian interest in Afghan security if in concert with a Pakistani effort could really sure up defences and security as a large regional power has certain abilities smaller states do not.

⁷⁴ Jyoti Thottam and Gurgaon, 'Afghanistan: India's Uncertain Road', *Time* (11 Apr. 2011).

‘A more robust Indian military role in Afghanistan represents one of the best ways to advance New Delhi’s strategic interests while fostering Kabuls’ continued security and economic development after U.S and NATO forces begin to withdraw in 2014.’ Larry Hanauer and Peter Chalk, RAND senior policy analysts, in *Hindustan Times*, July 11, 2012.⁷⁵

Having discussed Indian actions in Afghanistan there must be a counter balance to the large regional power from the east. That counterbalance comes in the form of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran is a regional power in its own right and has a vast swath of influence over much of what goes on in the Middle East and Southwest Asia. As such, engagement of this large power is exactly what the Central Asian region needs. Of course, like India, Iran’s decision to get involved in Afghan reconstruction is not entirely selfless. This real politik fits with the theoretical framework established by the research, indicating that the willingness to cooperate can still exist, even though the reason for the cooperation is entirely for selfish reasons. The bottom line with India relations is that although at first any relations with India seem unthinkable due to Pakistan’s long standing aggression with India. However, it can be argued that until a détente can be reached with Indian relations via a regional body, there must be independent interaction with Afghanistan and India in order to build a more robust Afghanistan and expended links with Central Asia. The essence of the relationship is that India possesses a large amount of skills, which can be beneficial to Afghanistan and greater central Asia. This central tenant of regional cooperation for greater good, in order to expand regional markets both ways, and to introduce newer infrastructure and security is expounded in the following;

⁷⁵ *Rand Review*, 36/2 (Fall 2012), 8.

‘The people of Afghanistan want to lay down their Kalashnikovs and take up spades. Instead of tanks, we want to see tractors ploughing the fields of Afghanistan.’⁷⁶

India and Afghanistan have already signed grassroots cooperation agreements on agriculture and education. Furthermore, the leaders of India and Afghanistan have both shown their determination to commit to cross border regional relations, in that they have publically stated that they hope that

‘India and Pakistan and Afghanistan, can work together to fight the menace of terrorism...I very much hope that we can joint hands to fight this menace.’⁷⁷ President Karzai’s musings on relations between AF-PAK and India belie a sense of cooperation which has been missing from the region for so long, one which can only come from the needs of the states, not something which can just be imposed by outside actors. The need to cooperate is going to have to overcome potential tensions between Pakistan and India, as some have commented that ‘Indian involvement in Afghanistan could further raise tensions in Indo-Pak relations’, however, the common good and both states interests in countering terror and grow economics should balance the power.

Any integration process in Afghanistan should be Afghan-led, and should include ... those who abjure violence, give up armed struggle and terrorism and are willing to abide by the values of democracy, pluralism and human rights as enshrined in the Afghan Constitution....India would like to expand its role in the South Asia region, and accepts a regional arrangement for rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan with close cooperation of other nations. However, Pakistan has expressed opposition to the creation of a regional body which will oversee the economic and security situation in Afghanistan. India would also hope for the various ethnic divisions of Afghanistan to cooperate with each other to ensure sustainable peace in Afghanistan. India has also expressed interests in the large natural gas reserves in Iran, and may decide to build a natural gas pipeline through Afghanistan.... It is also in India’s interests to prevent corruption within the Afghan government, and seeks to

⁷⁶ ‘Afghanistan Turns to India for Help’, *AP Online* (15 Jan. 2002).

⁷⁷ ‘India, Afghanistan Ask Pakistan to Join Hands Against Terror’, *Hindustan Times (India)*, (10 Apr. 2006).

strengthen democracy in Afghanistan and has also expressed its desire to abolish the illicit cultivation of opium in Afghanistan, as it is a method by which the Taliban raises funds. Methods that may be taken to reduce this could include but are not limited to increasing security in areas where opium is grown, incentivizing the production of other cash crops, establishing fair trade systems to ensure profitability for farmers, and promoting education and awareness in Afghanistan.⁷⁸

As can be seen the promotion of stability through security apparatus, economic growth, and education, and trade is a key factor in India's approach to Afghanistan and Central Asia. This concurs with the hypothesis of this research paper, and further more consolidates the grounded theory that the central tenants of regional cooperation should be economics, security and common threads where cooperation is mutually beneficial. The example of reducing the drug trade between the states is one; another is natural gas pipelines, just some of the many common themes which can be seen throughout the international relations of central Asia-at-large and Afghanistan. These recurring examples of willing cooperation which populate over and over again when discussing the neighboring states of Afghanistan are the issues which need to be explored in depth between the states in a regional cooperation agreement, as these very reasons for cooperation will feed each state's own self-interest and thus produce buy-in and mutual support. The Trump administrations own policies towards Indian engagement in Afghanistan have been revealed through a Department of Defense Policy Paper entitled *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*⁷⁹. In that policy paper, the US government has labeled India as 'Afghanistan's most reliable regional partner'⁸⁰. India has much to offer in terms of economic engagement and a long and storied history of democracy and public order. If India can harness these exports and sell them to Afghanistan with US backing and assistance, positive gains can be made in

⁷⁸ Shreshta Blachandar, 'India's Role in Afghanistan: Past Relations and Future Prospects', *Foreign Policy Journal* (November, 2012).

⁷⁹ https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/June_2017_1225_Report_to_Congress.pdf

⁸⁰ 'What Trump's Afghanistan Policy Means for India', www.thediplomat.com, (July 15, 2017).

Afghanistan. The ‘brain trust’ India offers is immeasurable, India’s economy also offers a large marketplace for Afghan goods and services. Of course, India is keen as always to see how the Trump administration involves Pakistan, and may remain uncommitted until they see a clear US and Afghan preference for Indian assistance. India and Afghanistan have signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) for the purposes of re-development and stabilization. In 2017, the partnership announced a US\$1 Billion Indian investment in Afghanistan⁸¹. The Indian government has an interest in re-settling Afghan refugees and is investing in healthcare, industry (notably Gypsum), and housing in an effort to make the nation more stable and self-sufficient. India is utilizing soft power similar to the Chinese and through their investment vs actual large security presence⁸², their strategic goals can be predicted to be more economic than territorial, and the Indian influence and investment can be accepted easier by those in Afghanistan, especially as India is following an ASEAN style non-judgmental approach to support for Afghanistan⁸³. India’s goals as of 2018 have been to influence Afghanistan security and the economy as a counter balance to Pakistani extremist influence, and to gain access to energy markets in greater Central Asia through their positive links made in cooperation to access the region⁸⁴.

3.2 Iran

According to the US Department of Defence⁸⁵, Iran remains very interested in Afghanistan’s future. Iran has invested in the economy and in transport links, and has signed the Chabahar deep-water port agreement with Afghanistan and India, which will allow supply access without transiting Pakistan. This has the potential to open up a new world of commerce and business for Afghanistan. Iran is actively engaging in cultural,

⁸¹ https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/1Afghanistan_October_2017.pdf

⁸² <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/22/opinion/india-afghanistan-pakistan.html>

⁸³ <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/?0354?000>

⁸⁴ Harsh V. Pant and Vinay Kaura, ‘India Faces a New Reality in Afghanistan’, *The Diplomat*, (December 28, 2018).

⁸⁵ https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/June_2017_1225_Report_to_Congress.pdf

religious, and intergovernmental relations. Iran's first strategic goals are to increase its own influence over American influence, to counter ISIS and to protect the Shia communities living in Afghanistan. Continuing US and Iranian power struggles in the Middle East and west Asia, do not increase cooperation between the two states in Afghanistan, but further complicate goals. As such, the Afghan strategy with Iran should be direct and without American influence, whilst simultaneously engaging the two large powers in the regional forum in order to combine resources and prevent proxy wars and inefficient dispersal of funding and development skewed by national interest.

Iran has in the past offered to 'help the US rebuild Afghanistan' according the Guardian newspaper. Mohammad Mehdi, Iranian delegate to the International Conference on Afghanistan in the Hague said:

Welcoming the proposals for join cooperation offered by the countries contributing to Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to participate in the projects aimed at combating drug trafficking and plans in line with developing and reconstructing Afghanistan.⁸⁶

Cooperation with Iran, a major regional power, would carry with it certain risk-rewards. That is to say that any cooperation with Iran would be at Iran's invitation as that state has more to offer in its relationship. As such, and as has been seen in current events, Iran would seek to further its own aims in the region through any cooperative agreement. This of course fits with the theory of realism, and should not be seen as a solely negative rationale for cooperation. However, due to modern trends with Iran, cooperation with the US is highly unlikely.

What is needed is real input, fiscally and politically to stabilize the region, build bridges (both theoretical and actual), and improve trade and commerce. A powerful state like Iran could significantly contribute to the region and to Afghanistan specifically. Iran has a long history of counter Taliban interests and has always sought

⁸⁶ Julian Borger, 'Iran Offers to Help US Rebuild Afghanistan', *The Guardian* (31 Mar. 2009), 1.

to prevent the Taliban from gaining power as this Taliban influence threatens both Iranian security and interests. Trade wise, Iran could be one of the largest trading partners with Afghanistan and would effectively have an extremely large market share of foodstuffs, and electronics as the domestic Iranian market produces many of the goods that the domestic Afghan market is in need of. Iranian technical expertise in manufacturing, business growth, economics and technology would be tremendously helpful to Afghanistan and to other central Asian states if the economics of cooperation allowed a growth in cross border trade and knowledge, something which a regional organization would have to consider as part of its growth. Furthermore, Iran has grown and developed their economy in relative isolation due to decades old sanctions from the United States and Europe.

However, Iran has still managed to develop an organic economy, provide jobs, and business ownership opportunities as well as reduce its poverty level to almost half that in Afghanistan.⁸⁷ This is important as the true tangible benefit, which can come from Iranian-Central Asian cooperation, and specifically Iranian-Afghani cooperation is economic growth. Although this is not an essay on economics, the Chinese foreign investment model encouraging joint risk, and joint ownership by joint venture corporations would be a good starting ground to explore economic investment.⁸⁸

Although over the course of the past decade, Iran has not been a partner, in any respect, to the United States or NATO in Afghanistan, It seems that geopolitics have made a paradigm shift across the rubicon in recent times. Primarily, this shift away from conflict only with Iran toward more open options has been demonstrated through the inclusion of Iran in regional discussions on the Taliban, along with Iranian

⁸⁷ 18.7% vs 34% (2008 figures) from <http://www.indexmundi.com/factbook/compare/afghanistan.iran/economy>

⁸⁸ Osman Özturgut, 'Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Educational Challenges of Administering a Sino-US Joint Venture Campus in China', *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 4/3 (2008).

expressions of a desire to be better involved in Afghanistan's future, in order to counter the mutual enemy, the Taliban. Back in 2009, US Secretary of defence Gates commented that "Iran is unhelpful in many, many ways, so I wouldn't be overly optimistic at this point but there are mutual interests that I think might offer some possibilities."⁸⁹

However, times were changing, and with the Iran nuclear deal, came a thawing of relations between the two powers, and the opportunity to open a window to greater economic and security cooperation in Afghanistan and central Asia. However, this window appears to have closed as the new US administration has no desire to work alongside Iran. Indeed, even without any US support or direct involvement in fostering a regional community or regional relations, Iran has a long standing desire to keep the Taliban from coming back to power, as the Taliban threatens Iran at a distance as a destabilizing power, and is outwardly hostile to Iranian interests in Afghanistan. Currently, Iran is very engaged in countering the influence of ISIS and this includes in Central Asia. This is important for Iranian foreign affairs and domestic security to see an ISIS free or contained region. This along with narcotics cooperation presents the most accessible transborder issues for cooperation. Economically, Iran is further tied to Afghanistan than ever, with its 2018 rise to largest trading partner, sending over US\$ 2 billion across the border per year. This strengthening of ties with Afghanistan bodes well for future relations, and Iranian cooperation and support for strong Central Asian regimes which hold the security of the region as a priority⁹⁰. Iran has invested in transport links and economic programs with Tajikistan, energy projects with Turkmenistan and Security projects with Uzbekistan and is seemingly supportive of

⁸⁹ 'Afghanistan "Top Priority" for US', *Aljazeera* (30 Jan. 2009).

⁹⁰ Scott Worden, 'Iran and Afghanistan's Long, Complicated History', *United States Institute for Peace* (June 14, 2018)..

regional cooperation for stability⁹¹. Security is the main goal of Iranian policy it seems and this desire for cooperation to achieve this is well justified⁹². A counter to this notion is that even though Iran is fundamentally opposed to Taliban and ISIS extremism, they have been known to support groups waging war against US troops in order to rid the region of US influence, which is perplexing considering the strategic goals of Iran, yet meets their short term Tactical goals. As such, it is presupposed that without the US in Afghanistan Iran may be more rational regarding inciting limited regional aggression⁹³.

3.3 Pakistan

Tracing the history of Pakistani involvement in Central Asia in its modern form, former US Secretary of Defense Gates has spoken of regional cooperation and this is expressed through the Taliban negotiations in which Gates has said that regional neighbours, primarily Pakistan should be involved in. Taking this one step further, if Iran, as well as other neighbours were included, the representation would be pan-central Asian and would offer Afghanistan and the surrounding region future prospects. This doctrine of inclusion fits along with structural functionalist theory, and also appeals to conservative doctrine, as mutual cooperation on certain matters of deep interest to every states national core, necessitates a chain reaction to cooperate for each states own self-interest. Also as the international system in Afghanistan and Central Asia is so raw, the power vacuum needs to be filled. Like India, and Iran, although Pakistan is not a Central Asian state within the scope of this research it can be examined as a player in Central Asian International Relations as it is an influencer, a regional counter balance to

⁹¹ Rollie Lal, 'Central Asia and its Asian Neighbors: Security and Commerce at the Crossroads', (Rand Corporation, 2006), 11-15.

⁹² <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/21/magazine/the-corner-where-afghanistan-iran-and-pakistan-meet.html>

⁹³ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/16/shutting-out-iran-will-make-the-afghan-war-even-deadlier/>

Indian power in Central Asia and a traditional actor in Central Asian politics when incorporating Afghanistan.

The United States Department of Defence has been strong on headlining AF-PAK relations to the maximum extent, as the two are recognized by the United States as being intrinsically linked, not just culturally and linguistically, but also through a porous border. This linkage of the nations through large land borders is what needs to be underlined and capitalized on, going forward. These same links need to be explored and exploited in regard to the other central Asian neighbours and regional powers that see themselves as neighbours, such as India.

The desire to cooperate and invest in Afghanistan for self-serving needs is not only good for the two states in that bilateral relationship, but also for unintentional multilateralism through building stability, economic growth, and trade and transport links which has a knock on effect of growing regional confidence and security. This benefits everyone. I do not think this can be emphasized enough, even in the face of the doubtful. It is a simple fact that cooperation between nations builds trust, and this trust is important to build further relations and can be contagious to others who also wish to continue their links with Afghanistan.

“Pakistan, Afghanistan should make good friends not bad neighbours”⁹⁴ This Chinese government official media outlet statement on AF-PAK relations is the best way to lead into that regional act. Indeed, Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked by AF-PAK, and this needs to be expounded upon. The relationship waxes and wanes, but the fact remains that the two states need each other to be following similar tracks for mutual benefits. When one state stumbles, the other intrinsically also suffers, and this is not good for the people of either state, or the region at large.

⁹⁴ ‘Pakistan, Afghanistan Should Make Good Friends Not Bad Neighbors: Experts’. *Xinhua News Agency* (July 21, 2009).

There is a fine power balance between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and all indications are that this has always been, and will always be the case. What that does not mean though is that cooperation is off the table. This balance of power is just a historical norm for the relations of those nations. The historic inequities and disagreements over borders, certain rights, and treaties do need to be addressed, yes, but the gravitas of the two states relationship should also be underlined. This is a powerful relationship, and is one which will continue to flux the region and influence regional cooperation from other powers, such as India, who requires multilateral engagement in order to reach Afghanistan economically, by road, for instance.

According to Pakistan's President, "there is a need for improving the level of cooperation between the two countries."⁹⁵ This is something which is not only being addressed by Afghanistan and Pakistan but is actively being pursued by India, China, and the former ISAF and current Freedom's Sentinel nations. In fact, the cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan is seen as so paramount to Afghan and regional stabilization and growth that Freedom's Sentinel has formed its own regional agenda which is as follows:

Freedom's Sentinel contributing nations:

- Calls on Afghanistan's neighbours to act resolutely in support of the Afghan governments efforts to build a stable Afghanistan with secure borders;
- Looks forward to deepening their engagement with Afghanistan's neighbours, particularly Pakistan;
- Supports efforts to improve security and stability along the Afghanistan/Pakistan border;
- Encourages further cooperation and intensified dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan including through Jirga mechanisms, the Ankara process and the tripartite commission.

⁹⁵ Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari quoted in 'Pakistan, Afghanistan Should Make Good Friends.'

Through these mechanisms, there is a reflection on regionalism, why regionalism is needed is self-evidenced in the strategic outlook above. Cooperation breeds security and dialogue. A Major General has commented, “Afghanistan and Pakistan are increasing their substantial support to stabilize the security situation along their borders but much more needs to be done.”⁹⁶ This statement is also echoed by the Chinese and Americans. The big take away is that border security is a key issue and this fits with the common themes of cooperation identified by this research paper. Find a common ground to cooperate on and interaction will occur. There has to be genuine mutual desire to accomplish mutually beneficial goals, though, any progress is still progress.

The problem is that there are hundreds of different agendas and strategic goals being executed in a non-organized and decentralized manner. This is chaotic, unorganized, lacks clarity, and is not efficient. Much more can be accomplished through open, notorious, and organized central efforts, like through the regional body I propose. This central authority would be a marketplace for ideas, debates, and progress; something, which is distinctly lacking from today’s random unilateral and bilateral relations in the region.

General Masood of Pakistan believes that Pakistan will have to make a lot of efforts, not just the military effort, to bring peace and tranquillity in these areas [border areas], to make economic development and to provide the people there with better security, more employment opportunities and a greater emphasis on education, health and security. This attitude is tremendously positive and demonstrates the ability to want to be viable. Pakistan is in a very malleable state currently, as US aid has been frozen

⁹⁶ ‘ISAF, Afghanistan, Pakistan Address Border Security in Kandahar’, *US Fed News Service* (April 20, 2008).

due to perceived lack of response to terrorism, and Pakistan-Afghanistan arguments have been flaring over everything from water to trans border terrorism. However, Pakistan now has a new government as of 2018 and has the chance to seek rapprochement with Afghanistan, the US and further work with China in order to get back to the negotiating table with the Taliban, moving forward⁹⁷. In Pakistan the situation remains fluid, and largely unpredictable. However, Pakistan has recently recognized that India and Pakistan share a mutual 'responsibility' along with other regional powers and the US in finding a solution to stability in broader Central Asia and Afghanistan in general⁹⁸.

This cooperative responsibility approach can be mirrored to other neighbours in their endeavours with Afghanistan. Job creation, pride, security, and economic prosperity are what are needed and these can only be accomplished with the aid of neighbours and regional powers.

Aside from borders, Pakistan and Afghanistan also have a mutual need to improve economic ties, security, and counter narcotics. These simple foundation level cooperation areas are common throughout Central Asia, and these are the issues that warrant primacy. The compounding issue with Pakistani relations is that Afghans seek a fair, equal friendship, whereas some in the Pakistani establishment seek to influence and almost govern Afghanistan by proxy. Afghanistan needs friends, not masters.⁹⁹ The Afghan people have put up with occupation for too long. It does not work. They need change, and they need it now for their sake and the region. There is a very direct relationship in place between Central Asia and Pakistan (Tajikistan and Pakistan already cooperate deeply regarding energy resources¹⁰⁰). The relationship is symbiotic as

⁹⁷ <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/imran-khans-foreign-policy-approach/>

⁹⁸ <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/imran-khans-foreign-policy-approach/>

⁹⁹ Akhtar, 'Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban'.

¹⁰⁰ Anish Mishra, 'Tajikistan: Pakistan's Gateway to Central Asia'. *The Diplomat* (August 7, 2017).

Pakistan lacks energy, but has a deep-water port, which the Central Asian states lack and need. As such, the two can cooperate for mutual benefit and if following the non-judgmental ASEAN model, each can go about their business without fear of interference, which is much easier to accept versus a top down model of control¹⁰¹.

What is clear is that the status quo is not satisfactory, and Pakistan as well as the other regional states need to step up to counter the threat of militancy whilst upgrading and integrating the Afghan economy into the regional and world economic system. An outlier is dangerous, to itself and those around it. Change is necessary. But for change economically, you need security.

For security apparatus, and political stability you need financing and political support. In short it is a cyclical process that is not possible without buy in. There is already support, but the backing of major players like Pakistan is necessary to further the goals of both states. Pakistan has much influence in the region and with the Taliban and can be either a highly divisive force, or a highly useful ally. Pakistani true support is necessary, possibly more than any other nation in the region, due to the weight of the links between Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹⁰²

Afghanistan's desired profile in the region is as the pivotal state in a new network of trading and energy relationships between Central and South and East Asia. This objective is realistic, but until the country stabilizes and a significant political dimension is added to the government's economic strategy, Afghanistan is likely to remain a marginal transit state rather than an integral and active component of the regional security complex.¹⁰³

As such, it is clear that other political thinkers are in concurrence that Afghanistan can become a regional hub for trade and economic links; however, the cooperation of neighbours, regional powers, and Afghanistan itself is required in full

¹⁰¹ Faisal Javaid and Asghar Ali Dashti, 'Relations between Pakistan and Central Asian Republics: An Analysis', *Maarif Research Journal* (2016), 67-78.

¹⁰² Daniel Dombey and Matthew Green, 'US Aims to Turn Afghanistan into Neutral Zone', *Financial Times* (June 27, 2011).

¹⁰³ 'Afghanistan's Regional Diplomacy', 1-2.

faith. The whole spectrum of international affairs needs to be addressed in the re-imagined Afghanistan regional relations sphere, from Iranian and Indian road building projects to rekindling the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan energy pipeline project from the 1990's.¹⁰⁴ Turkmenistan for instance has many cultural and linguistic links to Afghanistan and is a regional source of energy exploration and processing. Harvesting this energy growth and transporting the energy through Afghanistan and to the sub-continent would be a net growth item for all the states involved.

The same could be argued for Iranian oil and electricity as well as water from other central Asian republics. Matters of cooperation such as this are paramount to a solid foundation of economic growth, links, and progress. Mutually beneficial multinational projects provide a carrot for the nations involved. The mutual profitability, which can be attained, acts as the driving force behind the cooperation and provides a self-sustaining interest in continued cooperation.

3.4 China

Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and China have been engaged in a quadrilateral trade and transit agreement since 2004, this is promising and demonstrates that cooperation is possible, and although this agreement is limited in scope and does not incorporate Afghanistan, and other key regional states, it does show the willingness for nation states to cooperate for mutual benefit.¹⁰⁵

The agreement also provides a building block for further growth, and interestingly enough incorporates China, which is a large regional power that exerts influence in an economic, rather than military means. This Chinese approach to regional

¹⁰⁴ 'Afghanistan's Regional Diplomacy', 1-2.

¹⁰⁵ Ayoob, 'South-West Asia after the Taliban'.

influence in an area which China considers to be of priority due to their own struggles with militant Islamism and transnational crime and proliferation of narcotics is wildly different from the American and western direct approach to addressing such issues. The Chinese foreign policy is an aggressive policy designed to secure Chinese borders and military interests throughout Asia and the Pacific.

Since around 2014 China has been actively engaged in a policy termed ‘The Silk Road Economic Belt’. By 2019 the initiative has been instituted in full force and highway building and construction projects are well under way around Central Asia, mimicking China’s soft power approach to Africa and the South Pacific. The project promotes both China’s interests and infrastructural and economic development across Eurasia. The belt also echo’s China’s goals of security through cooperation and economic development. A criticism of the belt has been that although the belt builds regional integration, it could also act to keep regional strong men in charge, as it is non-judgmental (like ASEAN – who are a cooperation partner in the belt program) in its approach to development¹⁰⁶. This is a good Segway to the alternate theory of regional illiberalism, where a larger organization administers development and collective security cooperation, but where individual nation states maintain their sovereignty and continue with authoritarian policy to keep ‘the peace’ as such. This is wildly different from western views of development, however, the past 18 years have taught many that western cultural imperialism and beliefs are simply not directly applicable to Central Asia.

China also seeks to influence affairs in certain regions of interest, such as Central Asia and Africa, through intense economic investment and use of human capital. This so-called ‘soft power’ is actually much better received and provides deeper intrinsic and institutional penetration than traditional western power plays. The simple

¹⁰⁶ Richard Ghiasy and Jiayi Zhou

lack of open aggression is the one factor, which differentiates the western and eastern approaches to influence. The Chinese are thus better able to slowly penetrate cultural and

Afghan society has been militarized by decades of war, starting with the 1979 Soviet invasion. Since then, they have lived with ‘total war’¹⁰⁷, non-conventional war, civil war, and the hybrid 4th generation warfare that is still ongoing in the nation. This is exactly the problem and a major stumbling block to modernization, reforms; trust in the government, and economic growth. There needs to be reconciliation, and rehabilitation of all facets of society, including the Taliban. The only way to achieve this is through soft power, and incentives. The Chinese method is strong, in that it is pervasive and tolerable. Regional cooperation like this is non-judgmental along the ASEAN method and is thus acceptable to all parties. UN resolution 1267 imposed sanctions on the Taliban on 15 October 1999,¹⁰⁸ and isolated and radicalized the movement even more. Such isolation and fractionalization is highly undesirable moving forward, and lessons learned from this international buffering of Afghanistan from the world and its own neighborhood should be actively avoided in order to encourage growth in economics and stability from within. This is exactly what the Chinese seem to be doing, providing an inclusive relationship with little formality, which allows growth and sustainment.

Expanding this type of penetrative growth through deeper connection is highly desirable. Washington itself has been pushing a “New Silk Road” initiative¹⁰⁹ for a number of years now, and with increasing Central Asian and regional power support it could become a reality, leading to more entrenched regionalism. China has in fact been pursuing regionalism in Central Asia since 1996. The Chinese version of the new Silk

¹⁰⁷ Fielden and Goodhand, ‘Beyond the Taliban?’

¹⁰⁸ Fielden and Goodhand, ‘Beyond the Taliban?’

¹⁰⁹ John Hudson, ‘China Has a Plan to Take Over Eurasia – and America Loves It’. *Foreign Policy*, (2015).

Road is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). A regionalist network set up by China to include Eurasian players such as Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The other key regional players, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Iran and some other seemingly random geographically separated small Asian states such as Cambodia are observers or guest members, without the full rights and responsibilities of the main former CIS nations plus China.¹¹⁰ The Chinese view the SCO as their own personal spin on regional relations.

China [views the SCO] as an institutionalized means for . . . engagement in Central Asian affairs, as well as a platform for overall cooperation between China and Central Asian states.... In fact, the organization also benefits Russia and the states of Central Asia. The SCO enhances regime security in each country by helping to legitimize rulers. Since virtually none of the political leaders were selected through free and fair elections, the SCO functions as an autocrats' club, providing rulers with a tangible means to demonstrate their status and offer real economic benefits to their citizens through international trade and investment. Moreover, the SCO is a forum for all the member states to cooperate in keeping one another in power: As secular authoritarian regimes, they all share a common interest in blocking Islamic fundamentalism and democratization.¹¹¹

This is a perplexing example of regionalism. It is not the free western ideal of regionalism that has been encouraged by this paper, and the west at large. It is more of a feudal regionalism that is, using regionalism to tie together the oppressive security apparatus of the original member states in order to solidify their power and political control. China, of course, is an autocracy, and it seeks to prevent democracy in order to foster its own capitalist ambitions under the misleading ethos of communism. That is, China is communist in its planning and state apparatus, but as capitalist as can be in the growth of wealth both personally and of the state. The SCO is effective in aiming to

¹¹⁰ Andrew Scobell, Ely Ratner, and Michael Beckley, 'China's Strategy Toward South and Central Asia An Empty Fortress', (RAND, 2014), 28-29.

¹¹¹ Denis D. Gray, 'China Could Prove Ultimate Winner in Afghanistan', Associated Press (January 26, 2013).

curb militant Islam in the original member states but has had literally no recorded positive effects in the “observer” states, such as Pakistan, and Afghanistan. In fact, these states are denied the rights to be actual members and are castigated into what they are classified as by Chinese and Russian international affairs, second class states who need to be isolated politically.

Economically, China and the SCO are willing to engage in limited multilateral investment but with caveats. Although stability is a goal, this is not the ideal form of regionalism for Afghanistan and Central Asia and will not provide stability across the region for 3 reasons. 1) The organization has existed for almost two decades, during the most violent modern times in Afghanistan and Central Asia and has done nothing to prevent or control this violence and war. 2) The key members of the region who can control or incite stability or instability, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and India are not even granted membership, but mere observer status making them less than equals. 3) The goals of the SCO are merely to be a polar opposite to US policy in Central Asia in order to strengthen alternative (Chinese and Russian) political ambitions, under the guise of engagement. This simply is not working and cannot work in the current power vacuum.

Lessons can be learned though, and the framework can be used as a model for a foundation to a modern regional project. In fact, with modernizations and lack of direct Chinese control, this model has much promise. The structural functionalism is there, the underlying theory behind the project though is not the multipolar conservatism which is sought, but rather unipolar power projection and token investment. The primary reason that a Chinese security community can never properly function to its full extent is this, China is not willing to commit to any military or policing action overseas, and in Central Asia in particular.

In 2008, the Chinese foreign minister said;

China's position on the issue of Afghanistan has not changed a bit. Except for the UN peacekeeping missions approved by the UN Security Council, China never sends a single troop abroad. It's out of the question to send Chinese troops to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.¹¹²

Without this desire to engage in affirmative security or to aid in regional security, training and support, the SCO lacks any 'teeth.' Without a will or means to assist with security or defense the organization is even weaker than ASEAN, which engages in regular military exercises and cooperative actions to re-enforce regional relations. Lacking this security aspect makes a security community inherently weak. However, the belt and road initiative does give the SCO more pull through the use of acceptable soft power¹¹³.

Of Course, it has been said by some analysts that they see a trend of China cooperating closely with Pakistan to counter US cooperation with India. This would still be a net gain for the region as there would be more Sino-central Asian cooperation, however, cooperation with all regional powers would be ideal.

That said, increased Chinese investment in Pakistan would lead to better economics and possibly stability, which has the potential to wash over the border into Afghanistan and create larger waves of success. A rail and pipeline to the Pakistani coast would be fantastic, and such has been discussed between the powers. This would open up newer markets and would make transit of goods much easier. If Afghanistan would cooperate they would have access to the seas and would thus have a much more open means of import/export going forward. Strategically cooperation around the

¹⁰² Gray, 'China Could Prove Ultimate Winner'.

¹¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/ng-interactive/2018/jul/30/what-china-belt-road-initiative-silk-road-explainer>

Pakistani coast also opens up the possibility of future security dialogue and military attachments, all positive things for regional security.¹¹⁴

3.5 Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan

What about Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan? These states stand as pillars for the future of the region, being strong, fairly stable states run by regional ‘strong men’¹¹⁵. In fact, this notion of the strong man may be a possibility for future stabilization of Afghanistan itself. If the model of the autocratic former CIS states was exported to Afghanistan the larger power supported and funded strong man has a chance at bringing stability back to Afghanistan and the region, much as the Russian backed premier did until the rise of the Taliban in the mid-1990s. With stronger support and backing a regional strong man does have the ability to hold territory, however, with this possibility also comes the inevitable human rights violations, open violence against opposition, control, and a security state. Are these qualities which Central Asia needs¹¹⁶? Or are democracy and political openness what are needed? This research is still uncertain, as there exist a vast wealth of sources pointing toward illiberal regionalism (or strong man patronialism) as a fulcrum for stability¹¹⁷.

Each method of governance has its own pros and cons. The ASEAN method of regionalism allows the member states to decide on their own domestic policies whilst still engaging in regional cooperation. Can the two work hand in hand? Evidence tends to show a trend that yes, this can happen, however is it the ideal solution? Of that I am uncertain. Each nation is different, and even though democracy may work in one place

¹¹⁴ Andrew S. Erickson and Gabriel B. Collins, ‘China’s Oil Security Pipe Dream: The Reality, and Strategic Consequences, of Seaborne Imports’, *Naval War College Review*, 63/2 (Spring 2010), 102.

¹¹⁵ <https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/central-asian-echoes-in-non-democratic-politics/>

¹¹⁶ https://en.tengrinews.kz/politics_sub/Central-Asia-strongman-regimes-challenged-by-stuttering-263219/

¹¹⁷ <https://www.newsweek.com/who-karimov-uzbekistan-kazakhstan-strongmen-leaders-central-asia-dictator-495346>

it may work poorly in another, and may allow violent forces to exploit this weakness in order to bid their own will.

Although nation-state borders may politically divide these nations, they have an ethnic and cultural mega state already in the region, which borders do not respect.¹¹⁸ As such, these other Central Asian states have a lot they can offer Afghanistan, and the region at large. By being strong nations themselves, they shore up the security; they can grow their economies and create a larger trade community. With the raw resources these former CIS states have, and the established manufacturing and civic organizations, lessons could be taught and exported to Afghanistan and other regional states in order to deepen cooperation and aid. All of these states want to counter terrorism and narcotics as both destabilize the leadership. Cooperation on this grassroots issue is paramount, which can lead to further cooperation in economics, trade, education, and security.¹¹⁹

3.6 Russia

Despite the more recent entry of China and the USA, Russia remains the most significant external actor with the most durable relationships in the political, economic, security and cultural spheres in [Central Asia]. It sees the region as it's 'near abroad', part of the strategic frontiers with an unstable Afghanistan, and security engagement with the [Central Asia Regional Security Community] as a necessary step towards preventing the spread of terrorism and narcotics given the long borders and the migratory flow....Russia therefore exerts influence bilaterally as well as through collective security instruments that it sponsors, notably the CIS and CSTO, but also to an extent the SCO...but its own budgetary vulnerabilities means that it prefers to pursue commercial and political goals without large financial expenditures, leaving the West to provide aid and assistance, including for security transfers.¹²⁰

As becomes readily clear from the above, Russia is interested in Central Asia for 3 main reasons. 1) Russia sees Central Asia as its historic sphere of influence and is interested in keeping it exclusively Russian dominated through a variety of economic

¹¹⁸ <http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/central-asias-stake-in-afghanistans-war/>

¹¹⁹ <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/central-asia-and-afghanistan-tumultuous-history>

¹²⁰ Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, 'Central Asia and Afghanistan: Insulation on The Silk Road, Between Eurasia and The Heart of Asia,' *PRIO:Peace Research Institute* (28 Dec. 2015).

and security programs, all of which are fitfully weak and of little use. 2) Russia seeks to stem the flow of militant Islamism and narcotics from the region, which is a positive as this is a baseline common cause that all regional powers seek and can collaborate on with relative ease. 3) Russia seeks to balance China's influence in Central Asia¹²¹.

What is positive from this list of disingenuous interests in the region is that Russia does still see itself as a major player and wants to be involved in whatever way it can, even if to counter American power in the region, even when the US is winding down its direct intervention in the region¹²². There is a positive which can be harnessed from this spike in interest and that is that a Russia keen on engagement and security, especially in the wake of the October, 2016 Metrojet terrorist attack and entrenched intervention in Syria, can be directly involved in guiding the region towards stronger security, stronger economics, and stronger cooperation, but only if it wants to. Russia can be a major divisive force or a force for good; it can encourage and foster relations between the regional powers and can provide a big power balance to American and Chinese support, allowing Central Asian states to conduct their own regional affairs under a watchful and supportive guise. As seen in Syria, Russia can also act to prop up a strong man regime, if it fits with Russian strategic objectives¹²³.

Russia participates in some concert with the region under the banner of the SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). As a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization along with China, Russia seeks to counterbalance American affairs in Central Asia. Under this broad spectrum they are involved in regional matters, much like the Chinese, and can influence and contribute to regional affairs. Tajikistan, Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are part of an “anti-narcotics quartet” within the

¹²¹ Catherine Putz, ‘China and Russia in Central Asia: Rivalries and Resonance’, *The Diplomat* (July 27, 2017).

¹²² <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/oct/28/us-russia-relations-central-asia/>

¹²³ Fiona Hill, ‘The Real Reason Putin Supports Assad’, *The Brookings Institute* (March 25, 2013).

organization, which is a good foundation for future cooperation between those states on narco-crime, as well as other matters. If this grouping could be expanded to include all members acting in unison against narcotics proliferation the region would be much better served. Russia is worried of “the danger of the restoration of a regime on Afghan territory that would foster the spread of terrorism, drug trafficking and instability,”¹²⁴ and this fear fits well with this paper's research questions and hypothesis. That is, if these issues of concern can be worked upon in a constructive, meaningful manner with a laid out plan and concerted multilateral efforts, a new wave of Central Asian regionalism, be it a security community, or political debate floor, can aid in a new century of Central Asian affairs. As the SCO is Chinese run, Russia runs a parallel organization called the CSTO which is composed mainly of former CIS states. This organization is less regionally accepted and offers less than the SCO, however, Russia maintains membership in both in order to push its own agenda and undermine the US and other foreign powers.

The pure fact that Russia is concerned and interested for their own self-interest fits with realist theory that this will cause them to interact in the power vacuum to seek norms and to protect their own security and economics, the side effect of this participation being a new realm of international affairs for the region. Russia is very aware that the regime in Kabul lacks the strength that it should have at this point, and is keenly aware that after the US forces leave Afghanistan there will be a major potential for a Taliban resurgence, which may result in another Jihadist state on Russia's back door, directly risking the safety of Russian nationals, business and borders. Russia is interested in finding a way to counter the militant Islamist threat, whilst maintaining the stability of Afghanistan and growing this greater Central Asian stability for its own security concerns. Russia is trying to find a balance for regional security concerns.

¹²⁴ <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/from-point-zero-to-new-warmth-russian-afghan-relations-since-1989/>

Russia has little interest in allowing the SCO or the CSTO provide full stabilization and post conflict reconstruction efforts, as it does not wish to commit itself directly to a war in Afghanistan due to Russia's own past history.¹²⁵ What Russia currently wants to do is seek a better way to penetrate the region in order to ensure its own interests and security are taken care of, and whilst strengthening its own borders, realizes that security must start in Central Asia if it is to stem the spread of militant Islamism beyond the region. Moscow must deal with a broad range of regional affairs themselves whilst seeking the aid of regional powers such as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which are weary of Russia.¹²⁶

The sensible solution would be to have Russia support and frame a new regional community in order to have the region better self-police, and self-aid itself. At the very least Russia could stand up and back up regional strong men who seek to keep security and stability with economic development an immediate goal¹²⁷. This way Russia could fund projects and pass on technical expertise to ensure its own needs were being met at the same time it makes better friends of regional powers and builds trust, consent and multilateral relations, to benefit all involved. Through the current security mechanisms of the CSTO and the SCO, Russia has a hand in Central Asian affairs. Does this hand go far enough to ensure their own security, and to ensure the future of the region? Unfortunately, the answer is no. If it did, the region would already be a stable and fruitful geopolitical area, but thanks to the poor cooperation links, even with the CSTO and SCO, the region is as divided as ever on a broad range of topics ranging from security to economics.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Mark N. Katz, 'Putin's Predicament: Russia and Afghanistan after 2014', *Asia Policy* 17 (January 2014).

¹²⁶ Vladimir Mukhin, 'Pyandzh' Plan for Russian Border Troops,' *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (May 20, 2013), cited in *The Current Digest of the Russian Press* 65/ 21 (2013), 12–13.

¹²⁷ <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/russias-lasting-influence-central-asia>

¹²⁸ <http://thediplomat.com/2015/09/csto-gathers-in-tajikistan-talks-isis/>

The CSTO is the organization in which Russia holds the most weight. It was formed in 1992 and reformed in 2002. The organization is a collective security agreement, similar in theory to NATO or the Warsaw pact, but not nearly as well integrated or controlled. The organization is in essence a collection of former Soviet states and has become a CIS and Central Asia dominated security arrangement, as Afghanistan is now an observer.

The major flaw of the organization is that it overlooks many concerns and does not include all CIS states or Central Asian states. It is a hodge-podge of membership, and is poorly aligned to react to or produce stability in a volatile and changing region. The organization is also at loggerheads with the SCO, which Russia and Afghanistan are also both a part to, as they appear to recreate one another and have overlapping domains.

The CSTO is primarily a security agreement though, whilst the CSO is a political forum. Neither is cohesive with each other, and neither have teeth or the will and ability to react to any situation which may arise. This is seen through the lack of current cohesive and unified action in Central Asia. The small steps are there, and this is good, however, the bigger leaps remain to be achieved, and this is what must be done going forward. Rather than spread efforts around over a large canvas, it would be better for Russia and Central Asia, if Russia would concentrate its efforts, money, and organization on one unified regional organization to address the issues which directly and indirectly threaten and effect Central Asia, Russia, and the world.

Russia has tried to create a rapid reaction force, similar to the EU rapid reaction force model; however, it has met much criticism from other Central Asian powers, as it seemed to only benefit Russian security in the region. Lessons learned from this

experience could prove useful in a future organization to strike an acceptable middle ground for any policing forces.¹²⁹

Regional organizations can be a tool for big powers to project influence. An indirectly supported method of this, without ideological backing is exactly what is needed, as it would form a strong dichotomy, allowing the regional states to develop their own norms and behaviors whilst under the support and general framework of larger, more experienced powers for collective good. Russia has been actively engaged in Central Asian relations for many years, and this experience is invaluable. It can be harnessed along with Russian industrial and security might and know-how to benefit the region as soon as such efforts can be organized and put into use. It is this organization on a mass scale, which is missing currently. However, since 2015 Russia and China have been cooperating closer together as Moscow joined the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (Chinese run) and supports the belt and road initiative as both support Russia's own goals of influence and stability in the region¹³⁰. The status quo is that Russia tolerates China in Central Asia, and seeks to balance its own power there with counter narcotics, terrorism, political influence, anti US movements and economic opportunities.

Chapter 4. Regional Organizations of Central Asia

The Central Asia region has been the Petri Dish of regional organizations since the end of the Russian war in Afghanistan. A multitude of different powers, both global and regional, have tested their ability to start, maintain and influence regional organizations in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Lack of dedication, lack of resources,

¹²⁹ 'Tashkent Throws Temper Tantrum over New Russian Base in Kyrgyzstan,' *EurasiaNet* (3 August 2009).

¹³⁰ https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/theworldpost/wp/2018/02/08/putin-china/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c5701186142b

acceptance by the wider international community and unique economic and geographical challenges have been the downfall of many, whilst some show some markers of success, though far less integration has been achieved than that sought by this research, mainly due to a bias for large power politics vs true regional community building¹³¹. The metric for measuring the success of regional organizations, past, present and proposed should include acceptability to the international community, credibility, progress achieved, and ability to implement policy, as well as strategic and tactical dialogue creation. The dialogue being one of the most important yet under looked and under rated aspects of regional integration. This dialogue is the grassroots to any further cooperation and integration. The diplomatic ramifications of interaction between state powers are the origins of policy between states in a closer manner than normal geopolitical posturing. With this roadmap to future cooperation, the opportunities of regionalism really become ascertainable¹³².

Central Asia is ripe for regional cooperation due to 4 categories defined by Laruelle and Peyrouse¹³³ as urgent transborder issues which necessitate cooperation to solve; water, energy, transport and terrorism. Central Asia is already cooperating at the lowest levels, such as with the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline for energy¹³⁴. Building upon these lowest levels of interaction are what looks most promising for the region.

As such, it is theorized that regionalism is a positive thing for Central Asia, and that certain conditions exist between the states, such as mutual need and desire to work

¹³¹ Marlene Laruelle and Sebastien Peyrouse, 'Regional Organizations in Central Asia: Patterns of Interaction, Dilemmas of Efficiency', *Institute of Public Policy and Administration*, Working Paper No 10 (2012).

¹³² <http://theconversation.com/south-asia-how-regional-cooperation-could-bring-stability-to-the-region-82954>

¹³³ Laruelle and Peyrouse, 'Regional Organizations in Central Asia', 6.

¹³⁴ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/view-regional-cooperation-can-leverage-afghanistans-development-and-stability/articleshow/64727971.cms>

together to find mutual solutions to common issues, which make the prospect of regional cooperation mutually beneficial¹³⁵.

It now benefits the research to examine one by one, the incarnations of regional organizations that have existed in Central Asia. Firstly, let us look at the most promising. Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), founded in 1997. This organization is composed of 11 states (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and is supported by 6 multilateral institutions. The organization is aspirational and may have a chance to evolve into a acceptable regional player. It focuses on economics, transport, and energy, which are good non-judgmental policies, following the ASEAN model of non-interference and non-judgment¹³⁶. The mission statement is “Good neighbors, Good Partners and Good Prospects”. This regional organization has not been harnessed or embraced deep enough to date and it is remotely based in the Philippines; however, with improvements it provides a solid foundation for institution¹³⁷. Historically, the first real success of a regional organization in Central Asia was the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS). This regional organization spearheaded the grassroots cooperation necessary for a successful regional integration. Water boundaries, investments and projects are all a part of the issues discussed by members in an organized, structured forum. The ecosystem protection between all member states is a relatively accepted success¹³⁸. Although the body is limited in its realm, it demonstrates that regional organizations can be a success in Central Asia¹³⁹. Another successful regional organization based on limited goals is the Central Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (CANWFZ), this limited scope treaty was agreed to by all Central Asian states

¹³⁵ M. Ashraf Haidari, ‘A Peaceful Afghanistan Key to Regional Connectivity in South and Central Asia’, *The Diplomat*, (January 26, 2018).

¹³⁶ http://www.ijer.in/journal/journal_file/journal_pdf/14-349-1496916596102-105.pdf

¹³⁷ <https://www.adb.org/countries/subregional-programs/carec>

¹³⁸ <http://kazanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Bro%D1%81hure-EB-IFAS-in-RK-2018.pdf>

¹³⁹ Saghit Ibatullin, ‘International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea as a Basis for Regional Cooperation in Central Asia’, *ECIFAS REPORT* (March 2010).

and guarantees the region will not seek proliferation of Nuclear weapons¹⁴⁰. Although it is a large accomplishment, it should also be noted that some states in Central Asia create income from the international community by dismantling former Soviet Nuclear bases. Even though selfish state interest are the backer of cooperation, the states without Soviet nuclear facilities, still consented to the accord, demonstrating a spirit of cooperation for mutual goals and benefits¹⁴¹.

Of the large regional organizations in Central Asia, one that is heavily organized, time tested, and well structured, though, critically lacking membership of Afghanistan is the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The CIS was formed in 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The organization is very much a Russian dominated organization, but unites its members based on the common soviet market, cultural, military and industrial experience. The organization has a number of organs that have clearly defined areas of expertise and remit. The main sources of power are the Council of Heads of Government and Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. These two departments account for the bulk of the state-to-state power politicking. There are subordinate councils, which conduct affairs on a lower scale, and it can be said that these lower councils actually accomplish the most by creating trade organizations, border and customs unions and dealing with regional issues. The most appealing part of the CIS is that in the Industrial Councils, members vote on industrial policies. If approved, they are adopted, and with interest, if a state does not approve of it, they simply do not have to participate in that provision. This flexibility allows each state to maintain their sovereignty over certain issues and an analysis of this indicates that this makes this type of regional cooperation more acceptable to a broader group of states with varying interests and national goals, allowing differences whilst encouraging cooperation and not propagating isolation. There is a rotating presidency and the seat of

¹⁴⁰ <https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/isn/canwfz/>

¹⁴¹ Id.,. 8-9.

the organization is in Minsk¹⁴². The weakest link in the organization is that most states play a passive role, and even Russia favors unilateral and bilateral action vs multilateralism through its current foreign policy¹⁴³.

One of the larger organizations is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This organization has included a multitude of regional states, whilst of course, excluding Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. The membership seems to have been very unorganized and chaotic with members from Europe and Central Asia, some members joining and leaving, and other states such as Turkmenistan never joining¹⁴⁴. Regional powers like Uzbekistan joined and left, leaving the organization fairly weak and not useful. The crux of the matter was that the community was an instrument of Russian foreign policy, and members viewed their participation as being a tool in which to express their satisfaction with Russian policy affecting their nation. If Russia were not friendly with a state, that state would just leave¹⁴⁵. This left the organization in poor shape and with no legitimacy. In theory, and on paper, the CSTO is logical. It consists of member states committed to fighting regional security matters. The treaty provides for military assistance on a collective basis should a member come under attack, provides for anti terrorism¹⁴⁶ and trans border anti-criminality measures and in order to be more acceptable, does not allow involvement with domestic military affairs¹⁴⁷. The organization does actually hold joint state run exercises like “Air Bridge 2018” and

¹⁴² <http://mfa.gov.by/en/organizations/membership/list/c2bd4cebd6bd9f9.html>

¹⁴³ Kubicek, ‘The Commonwealth of Independent States’.

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.mfa.am/en/international-organisations/1>

¹⁴⁵ Eduard Abrahamyan, ‘Internal Discord in CSTO May be Pushing Armenia to Leave Russia-Led Alliance’, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 15/168, (29 November, 2018).

¹⁴⁶ Roger McDermott, ‘CSTO Exercises Rapid Reaction Forces in Armenia’, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 9/169 (18 September 2012).

¹⁴⁷ Miriam Elder, ‘Kyrgyzstan Tests Russia’s Regional Commitments’, *Global Post* (15 June 2010), <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/russia/100614/kyrgyzstan-ethnic-violence>.

“Cooperation 2018”¹⁴⁸, but these are merely a show of force as the organization has never intervened in another’s territory.

A relatively unknown regional organization is the Eurasian Economic Community¹⁴⁹. This is an initiative between Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Afghanistan and Uzbekistan are not members, nor has Afghanistan ever been invited to membership or observer status¹⁵⁰. This community is based upon the European Union¹⁵¹, though has nothing like the buy in, nor benefits that the EU offers member states. The aims of the organization are to become an economic arena, encouraging free trade, and a common market, creating a single currency and labor market, in which human capital can freely move from one state to the other, much like the EU¹⁵². The organization is highly organized, and has headquarters in both Almaty and Moscow, demonstrating its seats of power and political backing, more than being convenient for all members. There is an industrial committee, a financial committee and a number of interesting projects to aid the block, like the Eurasian Development bank¹⁵³, which finances regional development under heavy Russian funding. The major flaw, however, is that it is not all encompassing in membership, excludes regional states of utmost importance to stability and security, such as Afghanistan, and it is overwhelmingly Russian influenced, controlled, financed, and yet another tool of Moscow’s power projection into Central Asia and the former USSR. The integration in economics between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus lead to the Eurasian Economic

¹⁴⁸ <http://tass.com/defense/1025827>

¹⁴⁹ Bruno S. Sergi, ‘Putin’s and Russian-Led Eurasian Economic Union: A Hybrid Half-Economics and Half Political Janus Bifrons’, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 9/1, 52-60.

¹⁵⁰ https://www.polsoz.fuberlin.de/en/v/transformeurope/publications/working_paper/wp/wp82/WP_82_Gast_WEB_neu.pdf

¹⁵¹ Shalva Dzidziguri, ‘The Race for Eastern Europe: Russia vs. the EU’, http://www.Atlantic-community.org/index/articles/view/The_Race_for_Eastern_Europe%3A_Russia_vs._the_EU/print

¹⁵² <https://news.gallup.com/poll/231383/eurasian-union-benefit-harm-member-states.aspx>

¹⁵³ <https://eabr.org/en/>

Union in 2015, signifying greater economic integration, but only of those three states, showing a lack of acceptance in Central Asia¹⁵⁴.

As previously mentioned, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a Chinese backed organization, is on its metrics the most accomplished and inclusive regional body in existence in Central Asia today. Although the body is on its face a Chinese organization pushing Chinese regional goals¹⁵⁵, it does go one step further than any Russian effort and actually engages with nations in Central Asia, with which China seeks cooperation. Although the origins of the SCO arose out of necessity in settling border disputes with former Soviet republics¹⁵⁶, the organization has evolved to include Iran, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey, although these Muslim states only have “observer” status, which belittles their sovereignty and makes clear that China does not see them as equals to bargain with. This very label can be said to diminish any true progress made in the organization, as mere observers of their own fate. The structure of the organization is very formal, and there is a secretariat based in Beijing and an antiterrorism body based in Tashkent. The real underlying issue with the SCO is that it is a body floundering to find its identity. It is a Chinese sponsored body reaching out to regional partners like the UN. It is a tool of Chinese policy to counter US influence in Central Asia, but as its agenda is rather loose, some academics have even proposed a potential tie up with the US, in order to pool resources¹⁵⁷. However, as the organization is generally opposed to western influence, that seems unlikely. The truth is that the SCO has left many promises unfulfilled. There is the foundation for success, but due to Chinese dominance, a distant secretariat and loose organizational goals, measurable

¹⁵⁴ Golam Mostafa and Monawar Mahmood, ‘Eurasian Economic Union: Evolution, Challenges, and Possible Future Directions’, *College of Security and Global Studies, American University in the Emirates: Dubai*, (12 July 2018).

¹⁵⁵ Alexander Cooley, ‘What’s Next for The Shanghai Cooperation Organization’, *The Diplomat* (June 1, 2018).

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.cfr.org/background/shanghai-cooperation-organization>

¹⁵⁷ Julie Boland, ‘Ten Years of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: A Lost Decade? A Partner for The U.S?’, *The Brookings Institute* (20 June, 2011).

progress has been hard to come by. It is concluded that if the Central Asian states were true partners and equals in the project then there would be more buy in, more desire to participate and more lateral transfer of knowledge and abilities from one member state to the other. This equality and impetus for participation with structure is what the SCO misses. The SCO touts many generic and watered down goals like “regional peace and harmony”, however, these remain quantified¹⁵⁸. Aside from supporting the belt and road initiative of the Silk Road belt, the program really shows no unified progress aside from furthering Chinese goals and improving some infrastructure to meet those aims¹⁵⁹. Although the SCO does build on generic regionalism by furthering macro interactions between nation states, its end goals are too generic and Chinese focused to be a model this research backs¹⁶⁰.

On the opposite spectrum, the counterbalance to Russian influence, NATO set up their own attempt at regionalism in the early 1990's through the “partnership for Peace¹⁶¹” (PfP) program. This program encompassed outreach to former Soviet states in an effort to spread western norms and cooperation and planning on multiple levels of government. This program has been a success in Europe and the med, but in Central Asia only Kazakhstan stands out as the shining example of interoperability, when their forces deployed with NATO to Iraq jointly in 2003-2008¹⁶². This type of joint force, and the cooperation it represents on a variety of strata is very impressive and demonstrates good statesmanship and unified goals. If this type of cooperation could be expanded to include other Central Asian states and Afghanistan then security cooperation would be taken care of by this security community, but common values

¹⁵⁸ <https://aric.adb.org/initiative/shanghai-cooperation-organization>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.cfr.org/background/shanghai-cooperation-organization>

¹⁶⁰ Rashid Alimov, ‘The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Its Role and Place in the Development of Eurasia’, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 9/2 (July 2018), 114-124.

¹⁶¹ www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm

¹⁶² Roger N. McDermott and Col. Igor Mukhamedov, ‘Kazakhstan’s Peacekeeping Support in Iraq,’ *The Central Asia Caucasus Analyst* (24 Jan 2004).

would arise through the cooperation. However, the polarizing power of NATO¹⁶³ and its image in the region is a negative, and thus reinforces the non-judgmental ASEAN¹⁶⁴ style political discourse backed by this research.

On the supranational level, both the European Union and the United Nations have multiple efforts in Central Asia¹⁶⁵, of outstanding mention are the Border Management in Central Asia¹⁶⁶, and the Central Asia Drug Action program¹⁶⁷. Both programs are fairly mature and both offer funding and equipping, training and sharing of information between the EU, UN and Central Asian states¹⁶⁸. The program is limited in its scope though and is but a technical skills building program which could be absorbed and ‘owned’ by a new Central Asian body¹⁶⁹ in order to be administered from the local level, in order to take advantage of foreign funds as utilizing established pathways to non political funding is key to creating synergy in and amongst the members of Central Asia¹⁷⁰. These projects can actually do good to grow national bonds as long as they are apolitical and follow no judgment protocol, in such circumstances even a strongman government could cooperate with such international string less aid¹⁷¹.

As Central Asia is religiously Islamic, there have also been efforts by religious organizations to participate in regional relations. The Organization of Islamic

¹⁶³ Roger McDermott, ‘Kazbat Deployment in Iraq faces Uncertainty’, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 1/15 (21 May 2004).

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/asean-countries>
<https://www.e-ir.info/2012/02/08/asean-and-the-principle-of-non-interference/>

¹⁶⁵ <http://cris.unu.edu/border-management-programme-central-asia-explaining-european-unions-choice-implementing-partners>

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.bomca-eu.org/en/>

http://www.uz.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/operations/projects1/poverty_reduction/border-management-program-in-central-asia.html

¹⁶⁷ Richard Lewington, ‘The Challenge of Managing Central Asia’s New Borders’, *Asian Affairs* 41/2 (2010).

¹⁶⁸ <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14393.html>

¹⁶⁹ <https://unchronicle.un.org/article/role-shanghai-cooperation-organization-counteracting-threats-peace-and-security>

Allisher Latypov, Jean Paul Grund, Nabila El- Bissel, Lucy Platt, Heino Stover, Steffanie Strathdee, ‘Illicit Drugs in Central Asia: What We Know, What We Don’t Know, and What We Need To Know’, *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 25/6 (November 2014), 1155-1162.

¹⁷⁰ George Gavrilis, *Beyond Border Management Programme for Central Asia (BOMCA)*, *Eucam Policy*.

¹⁷¹ <https://assets.trimbos.nl/docs/4dcb1ced-e0f3-4832-a9ae-84c565664c42.pdf>

Cooperation (OIC), formerly the Organization of the Islamic Conference, comprised of 57 states, including Afghanistan, the conference has many organs and bodies, and is run by heads of state of Islamic nations. The program pushes group Islamic decisions and although it is meant to be able to stop conflict, it has been unable to do so in Central Asia and thus can only be seen as a values guide for Islamic states.

As the leading power in Central Asia, Kazakhstan has also put forward its own regional model¹⁷², known as The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)¹⁷³. The organization has its origins in the UN General Assembly of 1992, and is codified in the Almaty Act of 2002. The organization's strengths are that it is non judgmental, does not interfere in domestic policy, which is important for acceptance in Central Asia, and all decisions are by consent. It does require member states to affirm their commitment to the UN charter though. This organization is now allied with the SCO. Its mission statement is in keeping with the general theme of the non judgmental organization, showing an acquiescence to the non judgmental nature needed in Central Asia.

“We have come together to advance a fundamental truth in today's world: mutual trust and confidence building are cornerstones of peace and security.”¹⁷⁴

What is clear from the research is that although there are many organizations operating in parallel in Central Asia, none have gone far enough to attempt to unify the region under common goals or common security. Mutual trust and confidence building are the two things most needed in order to come together and redevelop the security and economic landscape across greater Central Asia. Assessing the actual value added by each of the organizations discussed above becomes problematic, as the only real metric

¹⁷² <http://www.s-cica.org/page.php?lang=1>

¹⁷³ Mu Chunsan, ‘What is CICA (and Why Does China Care About It?)’, *The Diplomat* (May 17, 2014).

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2014-05-21/secretary-generals-remarks-fourth-conference-interaction-and>

is economic development and security, both of which are severely lacking in the region. In terms of soft power, there has been a great deal of political successes, even if the stated goals of the organizations involved have not been achieved, such as the SCO¹⁷⁵. Organizations such as this have formed many bonds politically but have not solved the actual real issues that confront them¹⁷⁶. However, the progress of getting states talking and getting them together, no matter how in extensive is important as it proves in a series of tests that these nations can cooperation, especially on both niche and broader issues such as counter drug and border security, playing to their selfish state interest¹⁷⁷.

Chapter 5. Why Prior Regional Organizations Failed, A New Regional Organization and Conclusions

From the research conducted it is clearly indicated that a new form of regionalism is needed in order to further integrate and tie together Central Asia in the name of mutual support and security. The status quo of Central Asian affairs is simply failing in securing the region in order to allow business and civic life to develop at the pace needed going forward. As there is no workable regional solution on the table currently, this research advocates the establishment of a new regional model, which can be directly fit to Central Asia.

Many forms of regionalism from around the world and around the region have been examined and analyzed in this research, and in accordance with the research questions, it has been found that the most appropriate form of regionalism which should be applied to Central Asia should be somewhere between a security community and a

¹⁷⁵ Alexander Cooley, 'Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central A Competing Agendas and Divergent Interests in Central Asia', *PONARS* memo no. 85 (September 2009). Alexander Cooley, 'The Stagnation of the SCO: Competing Agendas and Diverging Interests in Central Asia.' *PONARS* Memo no. 85 (September 2009).

¹⁷⁶ <https://astanatimes.com/2017/10/conference-on-interaction-and-confidence-building-measures-in-asia-cica-whats-in-the-name/>

¹⁷⁷ <http://www.mfa.go.th/sameaf/en/other/8546/91656-Conference-on-Interaction-and-Confidence-Building.html>

loosely integrated regional community with many similarities to ASEAN, the main similarity being soft power and non-judgmental regional relations. These types of regionalism would be seen by the member states of Central Asia as most palatable as they do not significantly interfere with domestic politics, are loose organizations which encourage and foster development and reforms but do not mandate, enforce or demand concessions as terms of membership. The independent state decision making of the ASEAN model also bodes well for all types of leadership in Central Asia as it is not an interference model, like that of the EU¹⁷⁸. The power of the ASEAN model is strong, with trade, tourism, and investment flows throughout the member states, signifying great progress without compromising the national governments of the individual states that retain their sovereignty to choose to administer their land the way they choose¹⁷⁹.

The types of regional organizations currently in play or historically employed in Central Asia, fall under a broad umbrella consisting of Geopolitical, Geographic, Cultural, and economic regional organizations¹⁸⁰.

Hard power is not something that has been found to be welcome in Central Asia, both by members of the region and also by the larger powers, which view the region as part of their sphere of influence. Hard power is hard to accept, and is not something the region has traditionally responded well to. Enter soft power, or the act of encouraging progress and investment through mutual cooperation. This type of regionalism has been found to be less aggressive on its face and thus is able to be better accepted and can thus penetrate deeper into the member states, causing better integration and cooperation over time.

5.1 Why has regionalism thus far failed in Central Asia

¹⁷⁸ <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2017/08/06/should-the-eu-be-considered-a-model-for-asean/>

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/commentary/asean-economic-community-connectivity-rebirth-growth-model-10879030>

¹⁸⁰ Id., 5.

Regionalism has failed. In so far as the spirit of regionalism to date has not overcome barriers of national sovereignty, political entrenchments, fear, economic starvation and lack of security. Recognizing that regionalism has failed to achieve cohesive, substantive results which significantly improve the situation in Central Asia is key to understanding why it has failed. Regionalism is not dead, it is just frozen in a political purgatory unable and unwilling to flourish beyond a point due to numerous external and internal factors.

In order to understand why regional organizations have not grown at the pace needed to overcome the regions ills it makes sense to first analyze the base level of governance, the state. In all Central Asian states the state plays a central role in everything from the media to health and welfare to economic management and entanglement of government with private business. This governing intervention in economics can be seen as good intentions acting badly. That is to say the governments become involved in private enterprise but are unable to innovate, grow and diversify or improve the business and end up strangling the free enterprise. The governments of all Central Asian states suffer from the undermining plague of corruption, according to Peter Evans;

“...[there is]...the informal interaction of state with private interests. It is therefore often used as a synonym for corruption, clientelism, patronage, cronyism, nepotism, the ‘big man’ syndrome, godfather-ism, warlordism, capture, predation, kleptocracy, prebendal regime, etc....¹⁸¹,”

What is taken from the above is that the very fabric of the state and thus society is caught up in this cyclical system of have and have nots, there is entitlement, and pervasive institutional favoritism rampant throughout Central Asia. The true reformers

¹⁸¹ Peter Evans, ‘The State as Problem and Solution: Predation, Embedded Autonomy and Structural Change’, In Stephan Haggard, Robert R. Kaufman (eds.), *The Politics of Economic Adjustment: International Constraints, Distributive Conflicts, and the State* (Princeton, 1992), 139-181.

have issues being heard as the elites remain at the top, surrounded by their family, their 'tribe', and their supporters. This problematic continual support and the rise of the one tier of society only causes inequity, lack of political voice and stifles change and progress. This rise of so-called 'presidential monarchies'¹⁸², has lead to stalling of actual long term progress in terms of western democracy. However, this exposes a new paradigm in Central Asia, one which asks if western democracy is even appropriate for the region? The integration of blocs like the EU cannot happen, as strong man patronialism remains popular in the region. The ASEAN model allows this type of national rule while softly pursuing reforms, economic and technological links as well as people to people communication¹⁸³. Perhaps, what is most appropriate is a loose regional organization following the ASEAN model which overseas progress and ground up links between states, whilst remaining impartial and encouraging rather than judgmental and imposing of top down policies, which simply are unacceptable to the people, and have not worked to date.

Daniel Bach has called such illiberal states "anti development" states, and has compared states where there is little confidence in the central government, and who have vast recourses but an underdeveloped infrastructure and weak economy which mainly serves the rich to states like Nigeria, Angola and Equatorial Guinea. This is compounded when there is large portions of international aid and much money to be pocketed and skimmed from the sale of hydrocarbons. What is really desired is economic performance and state building, but what we get is stagnation and the creation of a 'low equilibrium'¹⁸⁴. However, to counter this, we need only look to look at the public infrastructure and national development in the authoritiarian states of China,

¹⁸² Mehran Kamrava, 'State-Building in Azerbaijan: The Search for Consolodation,' *Middle East Journal* 55/2 (2001), 216-236.

¹⁸³ <https://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/asean-model-central-asia>

¹⁸⁴ Jean-Francois Medard, 'Autoritarismes et democracies en Afrique Noire,' *Politique Africaine* 43 (1991), 92-104.

Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan for example to disprove this myth that strong national governments lead to weak living conditions, rather, they can spur development and promote norms of conflict management and promote alternate norms as these non liberal actors seek sustained hegemonic control through social discourse, space, and the economy, and create a hybrid localization of global practices. This new notion of ‘illiberal peace’ has proven effective in many states in the region, as the hegemons deny usage of all spatial dimensions to militants and opponents and thus uphold stability with force. Although this third option may seem peculiar, it is growing in acceptance and is actively promoted by the SCO¹⁸⁵ as a harbinger for a future non-western world order. By controlling all vectors of society and through injections of national wealth and power this authoritarian conflict management can control the battle space and bring peace. It is also not at odds with an ASEAN style of regional model, which tolerates this control, while developing grass roots integration, especially as local actors may reject international (western) policies and see a new strategy as promising¹⁸⁶. Authoritarian conflict management is defined as “ The prevention, de-escalation or termination of organized armed rebellion or other mass social violence through methods that rely on instruments of state coercion and hierarchical structures of power to re-establish political order and stability, and eschew liberal practices of negotiated settlement, third-party mediation, and constraints on the use of force’¹⁸⁷. Thus, this type of conflict management may bode well for a future central Asia, and this new reality needs to be worked with and regional links developed alongside, as this type of conflict management meets the immediate goals of violence reduction, terrorism reduction,

¹⁸⁵ Thomas Ambrosio, ‘Catching the Shanghai Spirit: How the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Promotes Authoritarian Norms in Central Asia’, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60/8, (2008), 1321-1344..

¹⁸⁶ Catherine Owen, Shairbek Juraev, David Lewis, Nick Megoran and John Heathershaw, *Illiberal Peace and Authoritarian Conflict Management: Empirical and Theoretical Contexts* (New York, 2018), 1-24.

¹⁸⁷ David Lewis, John Heathershaw and Nick Megoran, ‘Illiberal Peace? Authoritarian Modes of Conflict Management’ (21 Jan 2018).

stability and opens the space for economic and social development alone or with a non judgmental regional organization.

The pure abundance of natural resources of Central Asia can also be seen as a bipolar resource. On one hand the abundance of fresh water, hydroelectric power, agricultural products such as Cotton and Hydrocarbons make the region both potentially very wealthy, but also very afraid to share the wealth. It has been widely speculated that Central Asia does not need regionalism as it has the ability to be self-wealthy without sharing or pooling of resources¹⁸⁸. However, it has widely been speculated that the water, electricity, and oil and gas from other Central Asian states could jump start the Afghanistan economy. This is where the regionalism comes into full swing, as there would need to be roads built, pipelines, better business and trade links, more air travel, more hotels, better communications connectedness, upgraded finance, and commercial transactions and thus job creation, and wealth creation. A regional institution modeled after ASEAN, could aid in governmental links, regulations, customs and excise and guarantee safe and efficient transport through better policing, roads, and combating militant factions which seek to undermine this progress, thus uniting the region on a scale never seen before.

Another potentially large reason why regionalism thus far has not fully adapted to Central Asia or Central Asia has not fully embraced regionalism is due to the concept known as neopatrimonialism.

“Neopatrimonialism supposes centralized and hierarchical corruption that operates in a pyramidal fashion, and serves a political legitimacy strategy. Cronyism is also found in all societies, including legal-rational democracies, because it is based on an exchange of services between business groups and political circles, especially when

¹⁸⁸ Inomjon Bobokulov, ‘Central Asia: Is There an Alternative to Regional Integration’, *Central Asian Survey*, 25/1-2, (2006).

it involves the allocation of public funds. Cronyism does not consistently prevent economic growth, as it can operate in systems that produce wealth, while neopatrimonialism is not productive since the exchange is not fair. The latter therefore does not allow wealth to flow, as market mechanisms are designed only to meet the rulers' needs. According to the World Bank, countries with neopatrimonial systems are among those with the Largest Gini coefficient, which is indicative of the unequal distribution of wealth.¹⁸⁹

This patrimonialism which is common throughout Central Asia has its origins as a theory in Max Weber's sociology of domination and legitimacy. Neopatrimonialism is defined primarily by the hybridity between the two logics of domination and legitimacy, a characteristic hybridity¹⁹⁰ common to Central Asia. This neopatrimonialism in Central Asia is seen in government, through the strong man theory that leads to long term dynastic rule, which though it builds stability through the police state set up to defend the regime, challenges western norms of democracy and freedom. The neopatrimonialism defines the informal interaction of state with private business. It shows how they are awkwardly married and leads to corruption. This gives rise to the cycle of clan politics which is extremely hard to break. Even Uzbekistan which has gone through major reforms has noticed that clan politics cannot be totally liquidated and that clan politics really erodes liberty¹⁹¹.

Some want to slowly push it from conscious group memory¹⁹², however, it has recently gained some traction that in the current state of the international system, liberal peace building (which has failed in Afghanistan, for instance), is being challenged and

¹⁸⁹ Marlene Laruelle, 'Discussing Neopatrimonialism and Patronal Presidentialism in the Central Asian Context', (George Washington University), 305.

¹⁹⁰ Henry E. Hale, 'Eurasian politics as hybrid regimes: The case of Putin's Russia', *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 1 (2010), 33-41.

¹⁹¹ P. L. Markowitz, 'The Subnational roots of Authoritarianism: Neopatrimonialism and Territorial Administration in Uzbekistan', *Demokratizatsiya* 20/4 (2012).

¹⁹² K. Collins, 'The Logic of Clan Politics: Evidence from Central Asian Trajectories', *World Politics*, 56/2, (2004), 224-261

replaced by norms of war and military victories, in places such as Syria, Ukraine, and Sri Lanka. This alternative concept for pax Central Asia is called Authoritarian Conflict Management (ACM), and consists of reigning control in three spheres, 1) discourse (information), 2) spatial politics (society), and 3) political economy (distribution of resources). By controlling all three the power essentially owns the battle space, and can manipulate and coax to aid the state in its goals. In Uzbekistan it has been argued that a ‘good authority figure’ would be a ‘strong and ruthless but benevolent and wise paternal figure who’s influence would hold sway over neighborhood, city and state.’¹⁹³ This self regulating peace is also noted in Tajikistan where locals claim ‘peace and harmony is dependent upon the existence of good male leaders...political figures’¹⁹⁴. These hierarchical mediators and leaders are revered across central Asia including in Kazakhstan and Afghanistan as part of traditional cultural norms. This paternalistic authority is self-justifying for ruling elites, and is even seen in Turkey with President Erdogan¹⁹⁵. Although, the negatives are many, the unifying factors ACM brings, may cause it enough justification to be something to consider applying to the region in concert with an ASEAN style regional organization. These ACM actors engage with NGO’s and accept their work but do not allow it to affect political systems. Likewise the SCO and CSTO both promote peace through hierarchical models, as to them liberalism is a destabilizing factor, counter to western liberalism¹⁹⁶, eschewing the traditional view on regionalism in Central Asia.

Looking at Central Asia as a whole and reflecting upon the large amount of different regional organizations that have existed some common threads emerge.

Primarily, the organizations have either been sponsored by Russia or China and have

¹⁹³ Morgan Liu, *Recognizing the Khan: Authority, Space, and Political Imagination among Uzbek Men in post-Soviet Osh, Kyrgystan* (PhD Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2002). Morgan Liu, *Under Solomon’s Throne* (Pittsburgh, PA, 2012).

¹⁹⁴ Mostowlansky, ‘The State Starts from the Family’ 372.

¹⁹⁵ Steven A. Cook, ‘Strongmen Die, but Authoritarianism is Forever’, *Foreign Policy* (5 July, 2018).

¹⁹⁶ David Lewis, ‘Authoritarian Regimes and the Contestation of Peace in Central Asia’. (University of Exeter, 2016).

been limited as they mainly served to support and pursue the foreign policy of those states, and crucially did not include all members of the region and neighbors (such as Iran and Pakistan), and secondly, if the organizations were run by a single less powerful global state like Kazakhstan, the progress stalled and failed to progress even though there was promise. In order to overcome this, there must be more buy in, and deeper government and populace support at the local and international level. Although a large power pushing their own agenda is not at all needed, the political support of a large power is favorable as it brings with it legitimacy and the global stage. Lastly, the UN and EU have been very successful in their regional initiatives, although these are initiatives funded by the respective NGO and are not regionalist in the pure sense of the definition as they are not based in the region nor do they serve the long-term goals of regional members post funding. These initiatives for peace, security and borders have been wide in their scope though and the skills learned could be further built upon by regional members without the NGO influence, as common ground and need has been established. Going forward, these very successes at all levels without direct foreign influence should be followed in the new model to ensure long-term viability. There have come and gone many regional efforts previously, but it is argued they failed directly due to lack of acceptance and support from the states. The SCO has emerged as a real 'norm entrepreneur' recasting discourse through multilateralism. This directly contradicts NGO and US lead liberal political norms, which never really caught on in Central Asia. This failed 'socialization' of Central Asia is what allows it to remain chaotic. Rather than top down international orders to interconnect what was needed was a body which encourages mutual respect, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non aggression and non interference in internal affairs. Acharya has argued that international norms are not accepted or rejected through norm diffusion but rather are adapted, localized and given new meaning through 'constitutive localization', such as practiced

by ASEAN¹⁹⁷. This ultimately is what has failed so far. There has been no real localized effort, no localized norms, no respect for tradition and culture, and no bottom up effort. Change is slow, and can only be encouraged, not forced. Central Asia has become a microcosm of broader world trends, and this is reflected in shifts in attitudes towards international liberal norms and global power.¹⁹⁸ Hybrid norms and sovereignty norms are becoming the new standard and a new regional organization needs to take this into account when entering the arena as a neutral arbiter for good.

5.2 How to Incubate Interstate Interconnectedness

Institutionalist theory assumes that states are rational actors which are uncertain of each other's interests and act in their own self-interest; this fits much with neo-conservatism which assumes that states are unpredictable actors which act in their own selfish interests. This theoretical framework makes regional integration based on mutual interests the best line to pursue. The rationale behind that is that if something benefits the states in question, the actor will cooperate to profit for themselves, even if such cooperation is on a quasi-supranational scale in order to achieve their own goals. Of course, the weakness of this logic is that the cooperation is only superficial until the goals are achieved, but it is projected that if the goals are numerous and for perpetuity, the actors will learn that interaction is a positive and that mutual benefits actually benefit all parties exponentially, and accomplishes state goals. This cooperation also reduces the volatility and unpredictability of the anarchical society power vacuum as projected by Hedley Bull. If a power vacuum exists, why not fill it with ACM and a new regional model, which can provide dual stability and development¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁷ A. Acharya, *Whose Ideas Matter? Agency and Power in Asian Regionalism* (Ithaca, NY, 2009).

¹⁹⁸ W. Sandholtz, W. and K. Stiles, *International Norms and Cycles of Change* (New York, 2009).

¹⁹⁹ David Lewis, 'Who's Socializing Whom? Regional Organizations and Contested Norms in Central Asia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64/7 (2012), 1219-1237.

According to Robert Keohane, “Institutions are necessary [...] in order to achieve state purposes.”²⁰⁰ Thus regional institutions remain relevant in this new normative Central Asia. Although common interests may exist, regionalism and institutionalism require the states to adjust national policies to meet the demands and interests of others. This is the adjustment process, and is best achieved with the help of institutions. As such, according to Keohane the capacity or ability of the regional organization to work is the limiting factor. For real multilateral cooperation to foster there needs to be a solid understanding of regionalism.

Regionalism can be defined from the grass roots to mean simple interaction between the states up to the total integration of a political block. This beneficial regionalism should be viewed as “purposive interaction, formal and informal, among state and non-state actors of a given area in pursuit of shared external, domestic and transnational goals.”²⁰¹ The regionalism that this research foresees in Central Asia is the type which, “the process that leads to patterns of cooperation, integration, complementarity and convergence within a particular cross-national geographic space.”²⁰² This interaction will result in development and cooperation across the spectrum, but following the ASEAN model of soft power and acceptability.

5.3 Tangible Goals and Measured Successes

But how do you measure the progress of regionalism? This measurement has been defined as “regionness”²⁰³ and is used to explain how regionally aligned and

²⁰⁰ Keohane, Robert O., *After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, (Princeton, 2005), 245.

²⁰¹ Amitav Acharya, ‘Comparative Regionalism: A Field Whose Time Has Come?’ *International Spectator*, 47/1,(March 2012), 3.

²⁰² Bjorn Hetne and Frederick Soderbaum, ‘Theorizing the Rise of Regionness,’ *New Political Economy*, 5/3 (2000), 4.

²⁰³ Stephen Aris, *Eurasian Regionalism: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, (Basingstoke, 2011), 53.

integrated member states are. For Central Asia, this will start as it is today, as weak, and through the process of the regional forum should steadily increase as participation, acceptance, experience and results come from active engagement. Regionness can be judged by geographic proximity, transnational social relations, and formal political integration. According to this theory, the more factors that are present, and the higher the regionness score. This theory is, however, limited in that it does not go so far as to explain that transport, and economic links are key to this regional integration and thus contribute significantly to the idea of regionness, and this process can still apply even with the ACM advocated by this research.

The notion of regionalism expanding in Central Asia had the ability to propagate and grow new norms, foster international norms and encourage more normalized relations on an interregional and international basis.²⁰⁴ The current efforts at regionalism failed to include all actors, both state and non-state in peace negotiations has been a large fracture point. This lack of organic Central Asian based inclusiveness and non-judgment has been the ultimate failure of regionalism to date.

A true Central Asian forum would reduce direct outside influence from Russia, China, and the US and would encourage these actors to exert pressure within the regional forum and thus further develop regional norms.²⁰⁵

Representatives from all parts shall assemble at the center..., the people selecting them from among those who are learned, wise, faithful, and have the good of the country at heart, and in whom the nation can fully put its trust.²⁰⁶
- Nadir Shah

Applying this very sentiment to the makings of a new regional forum would be an ideal way to garner support. Buy-in is what is needed to make the organization

²⁰⁴ Fielden and Goodhand, 'Beyond the Taliban?'

²⁰⁵ Kjaernet and Torjesen, 'Afghanistan and Regional Instability', 5, 11, 22.

²⁰⁶ Peter D. Franck, 'Economic Planners in Afghanistan', *Chicago Journals, Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 1/5 (1953), 323-40.

successful, and by putting the best, brightest, and most trusted in charge of this effort on the national scale, really makes the entire process a lot more digestible. A major issue with current regional politics is that there is very little trust between the states. In order to build this trust, there has to be some tangible benefits for the people.²⁰⁷ For a regional organization to make any headway it must be accepted and tolerated by the people it covers. Trust and good will are key to all politics, but ever more so in the environment in which Central Asia finds itself.

5.4 Justification for the New Regional Organization and Proposed Structure

The new regional forum is needed for a number of reasons, the main being that 1) The region is incapable of stability as it currently stands, 2) There is little economic and social progress in the region, even with current efforts and organizations at work, and 3) Consolidating all efforts by into one Central Asian based body charged with administration of the region and its affairs would be the most efficient and effective use of money, people, and is in line with both theoretical stance and US policy.²⁰⁸

The new regional forum shall have its base goals built upon the ASEAN model, as this model of acceptable, home grown norm development, is tried and tested and fits best to this region. If these baseline goals are followed through and distilled locally, then these goals will be more acceptable, more adaptable and easier to be accomplished.²⁰⁹

A blueprint of strategic goals to be accomplished by the new Central Asian regional community are as follows:

²⁰⁷ Rubin, 'Saving Afghanistan'.

²⁰⁸ 'Foreign Minister Spanta addresses UN General Assembly in New York', Ministry of Foreign Affairs Afghanistan. Sept 29, 2009.

²⁰⁹ 'White Paper of the Interagency Policy Group's Report on U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan,' https://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/afghanistan-pakistan_white_paper.pdf

- Disrupt terrorist networks
- Promoting a more capable, accountable and effective government in Afghanistan
- Developing self-reliant Afghan security forces
- Include Pakistan in regional discourse
- Encourage dialogue between the heads of state, no matter their form of government.
- Establish a regional security and economic group within the regional forum.
- Jointly develop agriculture and energy for mutual strength and wealth.
- Greater commitment to raising living standards and global visibility.²¹⁰

The creation of a more capable regional community with soft power vs. hard power is the marked difference in the application of recent US policy. US policy is focused on a war on two fronts, politically and with actual military hardware. The regional community which is most easily appealable to the people and nation states of Central Asia is one which is not inherently aggressive, thus without military teeth and thus extremely different. Should a future security community become a reality at a later date, the most recent US policy on security in Central Asia would still be pertinent.

This policy calls for executing and resourcing an integrated civilian-military counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan. This intervention in Afghanistan is pre-supposed to cause ripple effects across Central Asia resulting in the stability of Afghanistan and thus the remainder of Central Asia. The major difference to the soft power approach favoured by the new regional organization is that it is top down, versus down to top. That is, this research believes that the best way to stabilize Afghanistan is to strengthen Central Asia through regionalism and thus cause the unity of the region,

²¹⁰ 'White Paper of the Interagency Policy Group's Report on U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan.'

which will sweep stability into Afghanistan. The hangover US policy and that of a future regional security focus group would be to;

- 1) Securing Afghanistan's south and east against a return of Terrorists
- 2) To aid Afghan government in establishing control
- 3) Providing the Afghan security forces with the mentoring needed to become effective.

What needs to be done is to rehabilitate captured and surrendered insurgents and must break the link between narcotics and the insurgency. Furthermore, the regional organization must assist Pakistan in capabilities to fight insurgents, as this causes weakness to the region and threatens all regimes. The new regional organization must strengthen trade relations and maximize long-term economic and policy aims. Any security community or regional organization must also encourage foreign investment in key economic sectors. Lastly, any new body must reach out to large powers and ask them to provide assistance to accomplish shared objectives and have sustained commitment, with substantial resources.

As can be seen, the steps above, outside of direct combat action, can be part of the policy for either a regional security community or the new regional organization.²¹¹ The specific goals listed are the goals of the new regional organization. With the greater participation element, and the shift away from combat with the Taliban, to negotiation and reconciliation with the Taliban, greater inclusiveness ought to bring with it better, more lasting results. By removing the hard power element, the acceptability factor increases and makes the net gains by each party greater. This accomplishment of self-interests fosters cooperation and mutual goals through multilateralism.

²¹¹ 'White Paper of the Interagency Policy Group's Report on U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan.'

As this research is directly proposing a soft power based inclusive regional organization, policies should be implemented which increase cooperation across a broad spectrum of regional activities from the high priority targets of counter narcotics, transnational crime and counter terrorism proliferation to the mundane yet important aspects of the regional economy such as agricultural growth sectors and water and electricity production, as well as oil and gas and road, rail, air, and shipping infrastructure. Without an effective and safe way to move goods, there can be no real interregional commerce. Security is key, and should be shored up through the organizations allocation of funds and training of police and state security apparatus.

Education and civil society are all elements of stability, and these can be accomplished with the support of the regional organization. The United Nations has also developed a plan for regional cooperation. This plan is based on the UN being the sole agent of regional change, and though that itself is flawed based upon the inability of the UN to effectively govern and keep peace in the region, due to numerous external and internal factors, the plan is still solid for an example of what is needed in the new organization.

The UN has called for a 6+2 organization in order to include more Central Asian states, as well as cooperation with other communities focused on development like the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The UN has also discussed setting up a civic affairs office to administer civil affairs. The UN noted that Afghan society was heavily divided and it has been stated by Barnett that a reconstruction and institute building package is necessary before any progress can be carried out. This would be addressed by the regional organization as the central administrative organ in this fiscal dispersal, versus the current unaccountable money machine. Barnett has also called for the transition from peace-making to peace building with a heavy focus on the economy. Transformation from a war economy to a global economy is what the regional

organization needs to achieve for Afghanistan and all of Central Asia, in order to make the region both competitive for investment and output and also to build stability via jobs, which in turn creates wealth, and thus a reason to care about security and domestic issues amongst the population. This grassroots care for the population is what the new organization must focus on, dealing must not side-line it exclusively with nations, and it must foster the people, and develop the lives of the people of the region.²¹²

These people want education, they want healthcare, and they want jobs. With their support, true development is possible. Another issue with the current state of affairs is that there is no budget, no Marshall-aid style package, and no concentrated effort. There are multiple actors acting in converse ways, in a multitude of bilateral relationships with no clear-cut goals. According to Peter Krasnopolsky:

The magnitude of resources required to have a significant impact on incentives appeared to be far beyond what the international community had offered. The renewed engagement of the international community means that state building and reconstruction are not only recognised as desirable but may also now be backed up with significant political and financial resources. The security, political and socio-economic transitions need to occur simultaneously, rather than sequentially. For example, a continued political vacuum is likely to lead to the reinvigoration of the war economy and there are already signs of this happening with poppy planting apparently occurring in newly 'liberated' areas.²¹³

Learning from this analysis and the experiments in regionalism in Central Asia in the past, as well as drawing from the projects in regionalism around the world, the new regional organization can take its lead from ASEAN, and establish an organization that is truly non-judgmental and thus palatable. This organization can affect change through soft power, encouragement, and regional initiatives without judging the other member states. The organization will be fully inclusive and will grant each Central

²¹² Conflict, Security & Development 1:3 2001

²¹³ Peter Krasnopolsky, 'Major Powers and Regionalism in Central Asia,' <http://web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/GSCIS%20Singapore%202015/Archive/8e26ebb3-f4a3-4a13-ac59-adb0ee445aa5.pdf>

Asian state and regional power equal footing. It will not be exclusive like the SCO or CSTO, which have side-lined the actual key actors in Central Asia in pursuance of their own big power agendas. The new organization will also engage with and work alongside non-state actors such as the Taliban, in an effort to make them integrated and part of the puzzle as apart to a factionalized minority who can actually significantly shape the political and security landscape of the entire region.

Russia and China are willing to participate in any regionalism and this backing brings with it treasures in the form of expertise and investment. Russia sees itself able to interact with Central Asia much more easily, should the region stabilize, and Russia has indicated it is quite ready to cooperate in counter terror, economic projects and counter crime, all things which the regional organization will pursue to the fullest.²¹⁴ China has also signalled its intentions to cooperate in Central Asian regionalism through both its initiatives in the SCO, which can be migrated into the new regional forum which will concentrate efforts, but also through its own investments and investment potential in Afghanistan and greater Central Asia.²¹⁵ China, indeed, should be willing to get access to Turkmen energy to feeds its growing market. As this first with its Belt and Roads initiative. This access to energy can actually make Afghanistan a key transit point for energy and hydropower, and this is a growth market for every nation in Central Asia and has been identified as a large potential project by the World Bank for development.²¹⁶ Developing the economy will be a major pillar of the regional organization as through economics, there can be denser integration into regional trade and communication links. Cotton, gas, minerals, and rare earth metals²¹⁷ and cash crops are the future, as well as manufacturing for the large population of the region who is

²¹⁴ Sharan, 'Russia's Regional Engagement in Afghanistan'.

²¹⁵ Kjaernet and Torjesen, 'Afghanistan and Regional Instability.'

²¹⁶ World Bank, *Water and Energy Nexus in Central Asia: Improving Regional Cooperation in the Syr Darya Basin* (Washington DC, 2004).

²¹⁷ Robert D. Tucker, Harvey E. Belkin, Klaus J. Schulz, Stephen G. Peters, Forrest Horton, Kim Buttleman, and Emily R. Scott. 'A Major Light Rare-Earth Element (LREE) Resource In The Khanneshin Carbonatite Complex, Southern Afghanistan', *Economic Geology* 107/2 (2012), 197-208.

developing a taste for consumerism and where the potential market capitalization is large. There is currently no economic planning, par say, in Central Asia; with this planning the economic status of the region could significantly change.

Regardless of how this dilemma is solved, the economic lesson for planners in the Middle East [and Central Asia] must be clear by now: A frontal attack by simultaneous or rapidly successive investments in a number of different industries will remedy the deficiency in purchasing power (provided transport costs and other barriers to movement of goods are low enough to make economic exchange of goods between the various segments of the economy possible) whereas even a substantial application of capital in an isolated project will be discouraging if not wasted. Only when enough people making diverse products are working with higher productivity due to higher capital per capita can a number of projects support each other.²¹⁸

More income equals stability, and with this stability comes regional stability and prosperity.

With the cooperation of Iran and India who both seek to penetrate the market, Iran has a dire need to cooperate on narcotics as Afghanistan accounts for 90% of the world's opium production. Half of that product is smuggled across the Iranian border, and of that a large number of domestic addictions are fed. Iran has the highest opiate addiction rate in the world, and is keen to help Afghanistan develop saffron not opium, and is ready and able to help Central Asia combat drug trafficking alongside economic links such as road building and technological advances including in agriculture.²¹⁹ India on the other hand is also keen to counter Islamic terror, and develop an economy in Central Asia. It has the ability to project and train security and expands its mega economy to the benefit of itself and Central Asia.²²⁰

With the background set, and the major regional actors ready to cooperate, with the ability to influence Central Asia relations dramatically, what form shall the regional

²¹⁸ Franck, 'Economic Planners in Afghanistan'.

²¹⁹ 'Iran and Afghanistan'. Institute for the Study of War. Pp. 236.

²²⁰ *Rand Review*, 36/2 (Fall 2012). 8

body take? If the regional organization is to look, function, and work as a legitimate organization, it should need a seat for its delegation. The logical situation would be Kabul, as Afghanistan is truly at the heart of Central Asia, both in terms of geography and as a hub for ethnic groups and cultures. It is a real cross road, and would make a new 'silk road' possible. Having the organization based in Kabul would cause infrastructural development, global and regional interest in the city, and would force Afghanistan to own a more high profile position in regional affairs. The city would need security, and this would be an interest of all member states. Afghanistan has been described as the new "hub" of Central Asia, and is well located to serve as the head of this regional effort. According to the Eurasian Integration Yearbook 2012, Central Asia has actually significantly integrated its economy, and can capitalize on a large market share of domestic regional products versus import products and can export billions of dollars' worth of raw and manufactured materials. With the cooperation of the major powers, the regional organization has a good set up²²¹.

The organs of the regional organization will initially be divided into 4 pillars. The first will be the regional agency responsible for aid delivery and dispersal, as the large amount of foreign aid the region receives can be distributed in a more focused and targeted approach, where it is needed most. This will also increase accountability, which in turn will both make progress more likely, and will make other nations more willing to donate funds.

The second agency will deal with economic issues, such as regional trade deals, customs tariffs (potentially a Central Asian customs union or free trade area) and manufacturing and industrial incentives and expertise. This agency will draw on the vast breadth of knowledge in the region in order to organize the economies of those who

²²¹ Johannes F Linn, 'Central Asian Regional Integration and Cooperation: Reality or Mirage?' *The Economics of the Post-Soviet and Eurasian Integration*, EDB Eurasian Integration Yearbook (2012).

wish to participate to be in unison and not in competition, allowing for a variety of products, which can be traded between the regions and exported. Investment and economic infrastructure will also be dealt with along with transport matters such as road, rail and aerial and seaport development.

The third agency will deal exclusively with criminal policing, and will be the authority on regional cooperation in counter narcotics, drawing on the vast experience of all member states plus the US DEA, Russian Federal Police, and Chinese security apparatus as well as Indian and Iranian police, all experienced counter narcotics forces who are willing to pass on their knowledge to the region in order to meet their mutual goals to protect their own borders from such crime. The policing agency will also work towards mutual training and establishing Central Asian policing norms and the rule of law.

The fourth pillar will be an agency whose exclusive remit is administration, this will be the agency where the general assembly is located where member states and organizations can discuss issues at hand, and resolve their problems in a constructive and logical manner. This general set up of the regional organization lays out the main elements of the organization, the elements needed to make it function and to improve upon regional relations. This organization would replace the multiple uncoordinated efforts in order to channelize attention where it is needed imperatively.

The synergy produced by this consolidation is similar to that seen in business institutional change and reformation. The goal is to create a leaner, central, and more efficient and effective mechanism in order to gain control of Central Asian regionalism for the benefit of the region at large. With the region's economy kick started, and nations working together on common goals, relations will warm, and the stability should in theory spread to Afghanistan where the regional organization will penetrate

government to influence regional norms and goals to pursue a common agenda towards progress without western direct involvement, something all member states of the region desire.

The cost to fund such an organization is not something this research can clearly and accurately predict, but what can be said is that the total cost would be less than what has already been expended by all of the states involved. Also, the leaner, more efficient political progress would provide recurring savings over the long term, making this project a sound investment, both by outside nations and member states of Central Asia.

The regional organization would be known as the Central Asian Forum (CAF), and would better the interests of the people and states of Central Asia to an extend unheard of today. This is the progress the region needs and has the potential to carry forward progress made in the past, and to build an organization, which can be as successful as its counterparts in Asia, Africa, South America, and Europe. This stable Central Asia would thus result in a stable Afghanistan. The cooperation on large issues will be the foundation for future progress and integration. This is in line with the taxonomy and the key elements for regional cooperation exposed in this research. This model would be tangible, acceptable, and workable and can be applied to Central Asia now. The ASEAN spirit and model will be used, and the non judgmental, non invasive policies of ASEAN transposed to Central Asia. This will lead to acceptability and will foster cooperation. This regional organization can work hand in hand with ACM as together they offer real prospects of stability through cooperation with governments who can actually establish ‘sustained modes of governance that encompasses different phases of a conflict, including cessation of armed violence, post-conflict settlement and reconstruction processes, and on-going conflict prevention mechanisms’²²². The ACM contains the domestic conflict, and the regional organization fosters growth and

²²² Lewis, Heathershaw and Megoran, ‘Illiberal Peace?’.

cooperation unseen before, working hand in hand, or side by side to achieve mutual parallel goals²²³.

5.5 Conclusions

“The focus of the violence emanating from this region is not confined to Afghanistan or Pakistan alone, but spans the entire world, especially Europe and North America.”²²⁴ The threat of instability that Pakistan and Afghanistan pose to Central Asia, and indeed the world is great. As such, there has been a great deal of interest in the stabilization and security of these two nations, with plans, conferences, and security agreements all attempting to address the security situation in Central Asia for the sake of regional and global stability. The United States, China, Russia, and the United Nations have all attempted to introduce a draft plan or policy towards greater regional cooperation. The Chinese and Russians have formed and adapted regional security communities and cooperation organizations to tackle the unique problems posed by Central Asia; however, none of these organizations have produced a workable Central Asian based organic model for regional cooperation. There has been a great deal of bilateral efforts to improve the security and economic conditions in Central Asia, however, all have fallen short of the mark. That is to say the research has indicated that there exists a gap in the current regional situation regarding total inclusiveness in order to create a workable regional solution to the conflict and instability in Central Asia. The literature indicates that many in Central Asia see the instability of Pakistan and Afghanistan as the biggest security threat to the region, and as such the region, themselves must act in concert to address the deficiencies in security, economics, and

²²³ P. Collier, A. Hoeffler, and D. Rohner, ‘Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War,’ *Oxford Economic Papers*, 61(2009), 1-27.

²²⁴ Acharya, Bukhari, and Sulaiman, ‘Making Money in the Mayhem.’

social matters in these nations.²²⁵ There needs to a mechanism to address the issues in Afghanistan and Central Asia, and it needs to be locally originated.²²⁶ The research questions have been answered and the logical nexus is that a new wave of regionalism in Central Asia is needed in order to ‘own’ the situation in Central Asia. A large number of key issues which necessitate regional cooperation have been identified, and if these baseline issues are dealt with multilateralism originating from within Central Asia itself, the stability of Central Asia and thus Afghanistan can be secured. Regional matters such as transitional crime, people trafficking, counter narcotics, and counter terrorism require immediate attention. The member states of Central Asia and their large power backers have shown great interest and initiative in fostering regional relations, however, none have managed to change the status quo. To date, Central Asia remains highly divided and a tinderbox of criminality and terrorism. This research has found that the people of Central Asia need to be more included in any governmental initiatives, going forward, as well as state and non-state actors.

The logic of pursuing a regional approach in Afghanistan is flawless in theory. However, what is required to truly achieve a regional solution Afghanistan’s neighbours- both those that border it and those who influence its stability, must collaborate to advance the goals of economic prosperity, harmony and political integration, neighbourly peace and stabilization through counter terrorism, economic policy, and state building programs.²²⁷

Through governmental programs focusing on making the government more strong, credible, and transparent, confidence can increase. A regional organization which can foster these social goals is highly desirable and can significantly contribute to regional stability. The skills and expertise in the region are varied and when used in concert can have a very deep effect on the stability of Central Asia, by better

²²⁵ Tellis, Mukharji, and Matthews, ‘Is a Regional Strategy Viable in Afghanistan?’

²²⁶ *Countering the Threat of Failure in Afghanistan*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, September 17, 2009).

²²⁷ G. P. D., ‘Afghanistan: After the Russians’, *Economic and Political Weekly* 23/17 (Apr. 23, 1988), 817.

combatting regional issues to produce a world class model of stability and post conflict migration from war zone to economic zone.

It has been stated that the insurgent's goal in Afghanistan is to wait, to win by waiting for the International community as a whole to lose interest in Afghanistan and Central Asia, and to then rise up again and seize control.²²⁸ It has been demonstrated in this research that if security and economic growth are established the two will be self-fulfilling and will continually grow the other, this in turn, will create a more fertile environment for peace, prosperity and development. By engaging the region and all of the actors, including, the Taliban, something which has never been done before on a mass regional scale, there can be tangible progress. Many forms of regionalism have been examined and the security community or soft power community have proven to be the most likely to work for a regional model. The security community is more a long-term goal, whilst the non-judgmental, loose regionalism followed by ASEAN has been found to be the most appropriate means of regionalism to apply to Central Asia. What is meant is that non-judgmental engagement is easy to accept, it allows the nation state to slowly change, by introducing regional norms, encouraging development, and fostering stability, security and economic growth.

The idea of a Central Asian based organic, regional organization is revolutionary. It simply has not been conceived before and is one, which must be pursued if the needs of the region are to be adequately and properly addressed. Of course, many instances exist which may not allow the direct application of such a regional model, however, the current strategy in Central Asia is not working and should be abandoned in favour of a more consolidated, single track approach, which combined multilateral diplomacy with stimulus packages, aid, and investment. A central body which can administer and serve as the nexus of regional issues is a must, and can

²²⁸ G.P.D., 'Afghanistan: After the Russians.'

revolutionize regional affairs in Central Asia, leading to stability throughout the region, and thus in Afghanistan. Central Asia needs to have its own regional solution, but this will require the acquiescence of regional and global powers. As without cohesive and unified support, the long term credibility and funding of any regional body are limited.²²⁹

This research has proven that the new wave of regionalism for Central Asia controlled by a Central Asian regional organization fit the strategic long term goals of the United States, Russia, China, and even Iran and India. This strategic alignment, alongside the potential net ‘wins’ each state in the region and global powers can gain from regional cooperation indicate that the net result from this type of new regional cooperation and collaboration are positive for all involved. The region as a whole can do more to encourage trade links, build transport links and develop industries for mutual profit.²³⁰ Encouraging investment and effectively managing and promoting such investment whilst legitimately governing allocation and use of donations and resources would make the region a much more attractive place for investors, donors and would do much to change the political and economic landscape to further the goals of the regional and global powers. There must be ownership of conflict, and remedial action by the Central Asian states. ACM adequately addresses conflict abatement and management and is a realistic neo-norm developing in Central Asia which allows stabilization on the national level, so that regional cooperation can take place. Transition theory is flawed, whilst illiberal authoritarianism has been proven to be an effective tool in stabilizing and fostering economic and social growth. With neopatrimonialism there is a patron – client relationship, business networking and a real impetus to cooperate and work alongside the ruling government. Business is the new ideology. There is trickle down

²²⁹ *Rand Review*, 36/2 (Fall 2012), 5.

²³⁰ Nissenbaum, Dion, ‘Delays Imperil Mining Riches Afghans Need After Pullout’, *Wall Street Journal* (12 June 2012) and Yaroslav Trofimov, ‘U.S. Exit Imperils Afghan Projects’, *Wall Street Journal* (August 10, 2012) A1, A8.

and a middle class flourishing under these regimes. In some of the patrimonial states like Tajikistan, there is even pockets of tolerated liberalism, proving that there can be economic and security progress with measured and controlled norms. It has been theorized that this ACM really just contains a fragile peace, however, there is a peace and this is the real goal. The SCO and other non western powers are distilling these new norms in Central Asia, and the paradigm is being crossed establishing these regimes as acceptable. International Relations must adapt to this shift from Western liberalism to ACM, as it is a new wave²³¹. The ASEAN style of cooperation proposed can work with these types of governments, as has been shown in Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia as well as Vietnam. The progress is possible and realistic. The realist theoretical interpretation indicates that each state's own self-interest would actually drive further cooperation as each state stands to profit from more effective and efficient multilateralism. Furthermore, by building on the blueprints developed by the United States and United Nations, as well as the multitude of regional organizations acting independently of each other with no real focus or comprehensive end goals, can create an entirely different strategic outlook for the region, creating a stable Central Asia and Afghanistan.

²³¹ David Lewis, 'Understanding the Authoritarian State: Neopatrimonialism in Central Asia', *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 19/1 (Fall/Winter 2012).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACM	Authoritarian Conflict Management
AF-PAK	Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CACO	Central Asian Cooperation Organization
CAEC	Central Asian Economic Community
CAF	Central Asian Forum
CANWFZ	Central Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
DEA	United States Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Agency
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas [Pakistan]
IFAS	International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USAF	United States Air Force

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