

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In my literature review I will discuss the relevant research I have done that contributes to the study of Sino-Russian relations and my thesis of future divergence. I will begin with Nicklas Norling's 2006 book, China and Russia: Partners with Tensions. In this book Norling discusses the bilateral relations between China and Russia, especially after the tumultuous partnership between Mao and Stalin in the early 1950s that ended in the Sino-Soviet split in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Norling believes this split has persisted to today's post-Cold War world. Despite improvement during the 1990s, the Sino-Russian relationship in the 21st century has been more volatile says Norling. With the election of Putin and the aftermath of September 11th, Russia became closer with Washington. This made China increasingly uncertain of Russia's ultimate intentions. In the wake of a relatively stabilized situation in Afghanistan and Washington's support of color revolutions in post-Soviet areas, Russia started to shift eastward towards China. Since then, Sino-Russian relations have steadily improved. Still, numerous tensions continue to affect Sino-Russian relations and Norling attempts to identify these tensions by reviewing the relations between China and Russia since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The tensions, rhetoric, and to some extent, overlapping interests that exist today enables Norling to make an assessment of what to expect from Sino-Russian relations in the short- to medium-term.

Like Norling's analysis, in "The Limits of Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" Jennifer Anderson writes about Russia's and China's claim to have established a "strategic partnership". But Anderson argues that there is little in their relationship that can be seen as "partnership" and even less that is "strategic". She argues that in reality this relationship merely overlays a diplomatic agenda established by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in the late 1980s. China's pragmatic and limited approach and Russia's domestic economic and

political difficulties mean that the Sino-Russian strategic partnership is unwieldy and imprecise, and complicates the still-incomplete normalization process. Moscow and Beijing must return to building a stable, long-term relationship. In turn, Western governments and analysts need to make clearer to Russia the benefits of improved relations with China, and the position such relations occupy in a benign Asia-Pacific balance of power.

Another book that looks more closely at how China's rise is affecting the Sino-Russian relationship is Lian Hung-Yi's book, The Perception of China's Rise and Its Strategic Implication for Russia: The Influence on Sino-Russian Relations. Lian writes about how Russia has perceived China's rise in recent years, and how it influences Sino-Russian relations. Liu Chien-Hung's article, "China's Growing Military Power and Its Implications," similarly describes the rise of China but focuses on the concomitant rapid expansion of Beijing's military power, which has proven to be one of the most destabilizing factors for the stability and security of the Asia-Pacific region. In order to alleviate the anxiety of neighboring states, Beijing has trumpeted the so-called "peaceful rise theory" and stresses that its military modernization is purely defense-oriented. In this article Liu tries to briefly review recent trends and characteristics of China's military development, and to discuss its implications for regional security and its impact on the security situation across the Taiwan Strait.

Alexander Pisarev mentions that the recent discussion in Russia of the concept of "sovereign democracy" is a response of the country's political establishment to foreign critics of the political developments in Russia under President Putin in his article "Sovereign Democracy and Russia's Foreign Policy". Pisarev also attempts to conceptualize the term home policy, the essence of "sovereign democracy", which can be interpreted as a specific way of building modern democratic institutions with Russian characteristics. In terms of international relations, it probably signifies return to "imperial ambitions," that can put an

end to the cyclical pattern of development in Russia's foreign policy. As most of the other articles focus on the China factor in the relationship, this article gives us a perspective of Russia's internal political order and how it might react in its future foreign relations.

In "PRC-Russia Military Ties: Background, Development, and the Impact on Taiwan's Security," Tsai Ming-Yen addresses, after the end of the Cold War, how the Asia-Pacific region has entered a complex strategic situation, and a new balance of power has evolved. Following the collapse of the USSR, China and Russia has sought to improve their bilateral relations, put an end to long-term military confrontation, and develop bilateral cooperation in the military security field. China and Russia have developed bilateral military cooperation in two respects: first, both parties have sought to defuse military tensions through confidence-building measures (CBMs) and force reduction; second, China has tried to import weapon systems and defense technology from Russia to speed up the pace of People Liberation Army's (PLA) modernization. The purpose of the author in his study is to examine the Sino-Russian military ties and their impact on the security of Taiwan. Similarly, in "Restrictions of Sino-Russian Strategic Cooperation Partnership on the Interaction between Taiwan and Russia", Tsui Lin and Hsieh Cheng-Tao address the important tasks in Russian diplomacy, which include: maintaining equal and stable relations with Western countries, as well as obtaining foreign aid for reviving the Russian economy. Furthermore, any military conflict which would intensify the regional crisis in the Asian-Pacific area, does not serve Russia's national interest, which means even though Russian government supports the PRC in taking military action against Taiwan, it will maintain its relations with Western countries as well.

Lastly, in the "Taiwan-Russian Relationship Under Changing Situation in Northeast Asia", Luo Sheng-Xiong writes about president Putin's foreign policy in the 21st century, especially how Sino-Russian relations affect the cross-strait relations.

All these papers show that neither China nor Russia is a predictable actor in this relationship. While they have grown closer in recent years because of a mutually beneficial relationship, they still remain volatile partners. Unlike the US or other western powers, China and Russia are both still developing economies and are both skeptical about any strategic international partnerships. Both nations have their own agendas, and through my literature review I found that there is reason to think their relationship may diverge in the future.