
Abstract

Title: *Reconstructing the Great Wall—Chinese Security Strategy in the Early 21st Century* (Ph. D Thesis)

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In this thesis, using the *social constructivist approach* of Alexander Wendt, the author analyzes the evolution of Chinese security strategy in the early 21st century as the symbolic *reconstruction of the Great Wall*. With a combined analysis of both ideational and material forces (the latter as both brute and perceived ones), the thesis shows how the Chinese elites have built the national security on a foundation of the ideas of defensive realism and the “materials” of the real and conceived national power.

The *defensive realism* in the minds of Chinese security strategy makers is analyzed in a three-layered framework. Firstly, it entails the realist inclination of emphasizing the centrality of the state for carrying out the will of Chinese strategy makers. Secondly, it reveals the neorealist bent of the strategy on the specific pursuit of Comprehensive National Power (the combined overall conditions and strengths of a country in various areas) as the primary means to national security, and the country’s efforts at creating a multipolar world and a peaceful and stable East Asia, based on the Chinese understanding of international and regional anarchy. Finally, it emphasizes the defensiveness of the Chinese security strategy per se, especially the active defense as a key military strategy and cooperative security as a preferred approach to security management.

After arguing that China will *most likely* re-emerge as a world power on the international arena, a set of scenarios are presented using the analytical framework of three cultures of anarchy (Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian). The thesis concludes that a *mixture of two cultures*, namely, between the Lockean and Kantian, is the most probable direction of future changes in the Chinese security strategy. This means that the dominant perspective would be Lockean (emphasizing the role of rivalry in international relations) but increasing awareness that rivalry could be transformed into friendship (the role representation in the Kantian culture) through the socialization of internationally accepted norms and behavior within various global and regional security institutions in the future.

Key Words: Defensive realism, social constructivism, cultures of anarchy, strategic culture, official national identity, Comprehensive National Power, multipolar world order, security regionalism, the New Security Concept, cooperative security, China
