### Student Handout- Sample Security K Shell (1/2) Handout #4

**The affirmative’s discourse of a China threat influences policy formulation at every stage.  The only way to achieve a coherent China foreign policy is to interrogate the role of discourse in policy making.  The K is prior to solvency**

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The modern day China ‘threat’ to the United States is not an unproblematic, neutrally verifiable phenomenon. It is an imagined construction of American design and the product of societal representations which, to a significant extent, have established the truth that a ‘rising’ China endangers US security. This is an increasingly acknowledged, but still relatively under-developed, concept within the literature.121 The purpose of this article has been to expose how ‘threats’ from China towards the United States have always been contingent upon subjective interpretation. The three case studies chosen represent those moments across the lifetime of Sino-US relations at which China has been perceived as most threatening to American security. The ‘threats’ emerged in highly contrasting eras. The nature of each was very different and they emerged from varying sources (broadly speaking, from immigration in the nineteenth century and from ‘great power’ rivalry in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries). Yet in this way they most effectively demonstrate how China ‘threats’ have repeatedly existed as socially constructed phenomenon. Collectively they reveal the consistent centrality of understandings about the United States in perceptions of external danger. They demonstrate that, regardless of China's ability to assertmaterial force or of the manner in which it has been seen to impose itself upon the United States, the  reality of danger can be manufactured and made real. China ‘threats’ have always been threats to American identity so that the individual sources of ‘danger’ – whether a nuclear capability or an influx of (relatively few) foreign immigrants – have never been the sole determining factors. AsJames Der Derian notes, danger can be ascribed to otherness wherever it may be found.122 During the mid-to-late nineteenth century and throughout the early Cold War, perceptions of China ‘threats’ provoked crises of American identity. The twenty-first-century China ‘threat’ is yet to be understood in this way but it remains inexplicable in simple material terms. As ever, the physical realities of China areimportant but they are interpreted in sucha way to make them threatening, regardless of Beijing's intentions. Most importantly, this article has shown how processes of representation have been complicit at every stage of the formulation, enactment, and justification of US China policy. Their primarypurpose has been to dislocate China's identity from that of the United States and introduce opportunities for action. Further, those policies themselves have reaffirmed the discourses ofseparation and difference which make China foreign from the United States, protecting American identity from the imagined threat. Ultimately, this analysis has sought to expose the inadequacy of approaches to the study of US China policy which privilege and centralise material forces to the extent that ideas are subordinated or even excluded. Joseph Nye argues that the China Threat Theory has the potential to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Based upon a crude hypothetical assumption that there exists a 50 per cent chance of China becoming aggressive and a 50 per cent chance of it not, Nye explains, to treat China as an enemy now effectively discounts 50 per cent of the future.123 In such way he emphasises the ideational constitution of material forces and the power of discourse to create selected truths about the world so that certain courses of action are enabled while others are precluded. Assessments such as those of Director of National Intelligence James Clapper in March 2011 should therefore not only be considered misguided, but also potentiallydangerous. For while they appear to represent authoritative statements of fact they actually rely upon subjective assumptions about China and the material capabilities he describes. In late 2010 President Obama informed Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao that ‘the American people [want] to continue to build a growing friendship and strong relationship between the peoples of China and the United States’.124 The hope, of course, is that a peaceful and cooperative future can be secured. Following the announcement that the Asia Pacific is to constitute the primary focus of Washington's early twenty-first-century foreign policy strategy, American interpretations of China must be acknowledged as a central force within an increasingly pertinent relationship. The basis of their relations will always be fundamentallyconstituted by ideas and history informs us that particular American discourses of China have repeatedly served to construct vivid and sometimes regrettable realities about that countryand its people. Crucially, it tells us that they have always been inextricable from the potentialities of US China policy. As Sino-US relations become increasingly consequential the intention must be for American representations of the PRC – and indeed Chinese representations of the United States – to become the focus of more concerted scholarly attention. Only in this way can the contours of those relations be more satisfactorily understood, so that the types of historical episodes explored in this analysis might somehow be avoided in the future.

### Student Handout- Sample Security K Shell (2/4)

**Security discourse sanitizes global destruction by proliferating symptom-focused solutions to power imbalances—-causes cycles of violence that make global warfare and extinction inevitable—adopt the role of a critical intellectual to question the claims of the 1AC**

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This analysis thus calls for a broader approach to environmental security based on retrieving the manner in which political actors construct discourses of ‘scarcity’ in response to ecological, energy and economic crises [critical security studies] in the context of the historically-speciﬁc socio-political and geopolitical relations of domination by which their power is constituted, and which are often implicated in the acceleration of these very crises [historical sociology and historical materialism]. Instead, both realist and liberal orthodox IR approaches focus on different aspects of interstate behaviour, conﬂictual and cooperative respectively, but each lacks the capacity to grasp that the unsustainable trajectory of state and inter-state behaviour is only explicable in the context of a wider global system concurrently over-exploiting the biophysical environment in which it is embedded. They are, in other words, unable to address the relationship of the inter-state system itself to the biophysical environment as a key analytical category for understanding the acceleration of global crises. They simultaneously therefore cannot recognise the embeddedness of the economy in society and the concomitant politically-constituted nature of economics.84 Hence, they neglect the profound irrationality of collective state behaviour, which systematically erodes this relationship, globalising insecurity on a massive scale – in the very process of seeking security.85 In Cox’s words, because positivist IR theory ‘does not question the present order [it instead] has the effect of legitimising and reifying it’. 86 Orthodox IR sanitises globally-destructive collective inter-state behaviour as a normal function of instrumental reason – thus rationalising what are clearly deeply irrational collective human actions that threaten to permanently erode state power and security by destroying the very conditions of human existence. Indeed, the prevalence of orthodox IR as a body of disciplinary beliefs, norms and prescriptions organically conjoined with actual policy-making in the international system highlights the extent to which both realism and liberalism are ideologically implicated in the acceleration of global systemic crises.87 By the same token, the incapacity to recognise and critically interrogate how prevailing social, political and economic structures are driving global crisis acceleration has led to the proliferation of symptom-led solutions focused on the expansion of state/regime military–political power rather than any attempt to transform root structural causes.88 It is in this context that, as the prospects for meaningful reform through inter-state cooperation appear increasingly nulliﬁed under the pressure of actors with a vested interest in sustaining prevailing geopolitical and economic structures, states have resorted progressively more to militarised responses designed to protect the concurrent structure of the international system from dangerous new threats. In effect, the failure of orthodox approaches to accurately diagnose global crises, directly accentuates a tendency to ‘securitise’them– and this, ironically, fuels the proliferation of violent conﬂict and militarisation responsible for magniﬁed global insecurity. ‘Securitisation’ refers to a ‘speech act’ – an act of labelling – whereby political authorities identify particular issues or incidents as an existential threat which, because of their extreme nature, justify going beyond the normal security measures that are within the rule of law. It thus legitimises resort to special extra-legal powers. By labelling issues a matter of ‘security’, therefore, states are able to move them outside the remit of democratic decision-making and into the realm of emergency powers, all in the name of survival itself. Far from representing a mere aberration from democratic state practice, this discloses a deeper ‘dual’ structure of the state in its institutionalisation of the capacity to mobilise extraordinary extra-legal military– police measures in purported response to an existential danger.89 The problem in the context of global ecological, economic and energy crises is that such levels of emergency mobilisation and militarisation have no positive impact on the very global crises generating ‘new security challenges’, and are thus entirely disproportionate.90 All that remains to examine is on the ‘surface’ of the international system [geopolitical competition, the balance of power, international regimes, globalisation and so on], phenomena which are dislocated from their structural causes by way of being unable to recognise the biophysically-embedded and politically-constituted social relations of which they are comprised. The consequence is that orthodox IR has no means of responding to global systemic crises other than to reduce them to their symptoms. Indeed, orthodox IR theory has largely responded to global systemic crises not with new theory, but with the expanded application of existing theory to ‘new security challenges’ such as ‘low-intensity’ intra-state conﬂicts; inequality and poverty; environmental degradation; international criminal activities including drugs and arms trafﬁcking; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and international terrorism.91 Although the majority of such ‘new security challenges’ are non-military in origin – whether their referents are states or individuals – the inadequacy of systemic theoretical frameworks to diagnose them means they are primarily examined through the lenses of military-political power.92 In other words, the escalation of global ecological, energy and economic crises is recognised not as evidence

### Student Handout- Sample Security K Shell (3/4)

that the current organisation of the global political economy is fundamentally unsustainable, requiring urgent transformation, but as vindicating the necessity for states to radicalise the exertion of their military–political capacities to maintain existing power structures, to keep the lid on.93 Global crises are thus viewed as amplifying factors that could mobilise the popular will in ways that challenge existing political and economic structures, which it is presumed [given that state power itself is constituted by these structures] deserve protection. This justiﬁes the state’s adoption of extra-legal measures outside the normal sphere of democratic politics. In the context of global crisis impacts, this counter-democratic trend-line can result in a growing propensity to problematise potentially recalcitrant populations – rationalising violence toward them as a control mechanism. 3.2 From theory to policy Consequently, for the most part, the policy implications of orthodox IR approaches involve a redundant conceptualisation of global systemic crises purely as potential ‘threat-multipliers’ of traditional security issues such as ‘political instability around the world, the collapse of governments and the creation of terrorist safe havens’. Climate change will serve to amplify the threat of international terrorism, particularly in regions with large populations and scarce resources.94 The US Army, for instance, depicts climate change as a ‘stress-multiplier’ that will ‘exacerbate tensions’ and ‘complicate American foreign policy’; while the EU perceives it as a ‘threat-multiplier which exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability’. 95 In practice, this generates an excessive preoccupation not with the causes of global crisis acceleration and how to ameliorate them through structural transformation, but with their purportedly inevitable impacts, and how to prepare for them by controlling problematic populations. Paradoxically, this ‘securitisation’ of global crises does not render us safer. Instead, by necessitating more violence, while inhibiting preventive action, it guarantees greater insecurity. Thus, a recent US Department of Defense report explores the future of international conﬂict up to 2050. It warns of ‘resource competition induced by growing populations and expanding economies’, particularly due to a projected ‘youth bulge’ in the South, which ‘will consume ever increasing amounts of food, water and energy’. This will prompt a ‘return to traditional security threats posed by emerging near-peers as we compete globally for depleting natural resources and overseas markets’. Finally, climate change will ‘compound’ these stressors by generating humanitarian crises, population migrations and other complex emergencies.96 A similar study by the US Joint Forces Command draws attention to the danger of global energy depletion through to 2030. Warning of ‘the dangerous vulnerabilities the growing energy crisis presents’, the report concludes that ‘The implications for future conﬂict are ominous.’ 97 Once again, the subject turns to demographics: ‘In total, the world will add approximately 60 million people each year and reach a total of 8 billion by the 2030s’, 95 per cent accruing to developing countries, while populations in developed countries slow or decline. ‘Regions such as the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa, where the youth bulge will reach over 50% of the population, will possess fewer inhibitions about engaging in conﬂict.’ 98 The assumption is that regions which happen to be both energy-rich and Muslim-majority will also be sites of violent conﬂict due to their rapidly growing populations. A British Ministry of Defence report concurs with this assessment, highlighting an inevitable ‘youth bulge’ by 2035, with some 87 per cent of all people under the age of 25 inhabiting developing countries. In particular, the Middle East population will increase by 132 per cent and sub-Saharan Africa by 81 per cent. Growing resentment due to ‘endemic unemployment’ will be channelled through ‘political militancy, including radical political Islam whose concept of Umma, the global Islamic community, and resistance to capitalism may lie uneasily in an international system based on nation-states and global market forces’. More strangely, predicting an intensifying global divide between a super-rich elite, the middle classes and an urban under-class, the report warns: ‘The world’s middle classes might unite, using access to knowledge, resources and skills to shape transnational processes in their own class interest.’ 99 3.3 Exclusionary logics of global crisis securitisation? Thus, the securitisation of global crisis leads not only to the problematisation of particular religious and ethnic groups in foreign regions of geopolitical interest, but potentially extends this problematisation to any social group which might challenge prevailing global political economic structures across racial, national and class lines. The previous examples illustrate how securitisation paradoxically generates insecurity by reifying a process of militarisation against social groups that are constructed as external to the prevailing geopolitical and economic order. In other words, the internal reductionism, fragmentation and compartmentalisation that plagues orthodox theory and policy reproduces precisely these characteristics by externalising global crises from one another, externalising states from one another, externalising the inter-state system from its biophysical environment, and externalising new social groups as dangerous ‘outsiders’. Hence, a simple discursive analysis of state militarisation and the construction of new ‘outsider’ identities is insufﬁcient to understand the causal dynamics driving the process of ‘Otherisation’. As Doug Stokes points out, the Western state preoccupation with the ongoing military struggle against international terrorism reveals an underlying ‘discursive complex’, where representations about terrorism and non-Western populations are premised on ‘the construction of stark boundaries’ that ‘operate to exclude and include’. Yet these exclusionary discourses are ‘intimately bound up with political and economic processes’, such as strategic interests in proliferating military bases in the Middle East, economic interests in control of oil, and the wider political goal of ‘maintaining American hegemony’ by dominating a resource-rich region critical for global capitalism.100 But even this does not go far enough, for arguably the construction of certain hegemonic discourses is mutually constituted by these geopolitical, strategic and economic interests – exclusionary discourses are politically constituted. New conceptual developments in genocide studies throw further light on this in terms of the concrete socio-political dynamics of securitisation processes. It is now widely recognised, for instance, that the distinguishing criterion of genocide is not the pre-existence of primordial groups, one of which destroys the other on the basis of a preeminence in bureaucratic military–political power. Rather, genocide is the intentional attempt to destroy a particular social group that has been socially constructed as different. 101 As Hinton observes, genocides precisely constitute a process of‘othering’in which an imagined community becomes reshaped so that previously ‘included’ groups become ‘ideologically recast’ and dehumanised as threatening and dangerous outsiders, be it along

### Student Handout- Sample Security K Shell (4/4)

ethnic, religious, political or economic lines – eventually legitimising their annihilation.102 In other words, genocidal violence is inherently rooted in a prior and ongoing ideological process, whereby exclusionary group categories are innovated, constructed and ‘Otherised’ in accordance with a speciﬁc socio-political programme. The very process of identifying and classifying particular groups as outside the boundaries of an imagined community of ‘inclusion’, justifying exculpatory violence toward them, is itself a political act without which genocide would be impossible.103 This recalls Lemkin’s recognition that the intention to destroy a group is integrally connected with a wider socio-political project – or colonial project – designed to perpetuate the political, economic, cultural and ideological relations of the perpetrators in the place of that of the victims, by interrupting or eradicating their means of social reproduction. Only by interrogating the dynamic and origins of this programme to uncover the social relations from which that programme derives can the emergence of genocidal intent become explicable.104 Building on this insight, Semelin demonstrates that the process of exclusionary social group construction invariably derives from political processes emerging from deep-seated sociopolitical crises that undermine the prevailing framework of civil order and social norms; and which can, for one social group, be seemingly resolved by projecting anxieties onto a new ‘outsider’ group deemed to be somehow responsible for crisis conditions. It is in this context that various forms of mass violence, which may or may not eventually culminate in actual genocide, can become legitimised as contributing to the resolution of crises.105 This does not imply that the securitisation of global crises by Western defence agencies is genocidal. Rather, the same essential dynamics of social polarisation and exclusionary group identity formation evident in genocides are highly relevant in understanding the radicalisation processes behind mass violence. This highlights the fundamental connection between social crisis, the breakdown of prevailing norms, the formation of new exclusionary group identities, and the projection of blame for crisis onto a newly constructed ‘outsider’ group vindicating various forms of violence. Conclusions While recommendations to shift our frame of orientation away from conventional state-centrism toward a ‘human security’ approach are valid, this cannot be achieved without confronting the deeper theoretical assumptions underlying conventional approaches to ‘non-traditional’ security issues.106 By occluding the structural origin and systemic dynamic of global ecological, energy and economic crises, orthodox approaches are incapable of transforming them. Coupled with their excessive state-centrism, this means they operate largely at the level of ‘surface’ impacts of global crises in terms of how they will affect quite traditional security issues relative to sustaining state integrity, such as international terrorism, violent conﬂict and population movements. Global crises end up fuelling the projection of risk onto social networks, groups and countries that cross the geopolitical fault-lines of these ‘surface’ impacts – which happen to intersect largely with Muslim communities. Hence, regions particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, containing large repositories of hydrocarbon energy resources, or subject to demographic transformations in the context of rising population pressures, have become the focus of state security planning in the context of counter-terrorism operations abroad. The intensifying problematisation and externalisation of Muslim-majority regions and populations by Western security agencies – as a discourse – is therefore not only interwoven with growing state perceptions of global crisis acceleration, but driven ultimately by an epistemological failure to interrogate the systemic causes of this acceleration in collective state policies [which themselves occur in the context of particular social, political and economic structures]. This expansion of militarisation is thus coeval with the subliminal normative presumption that the social relations of the perpetrators, in this case Western states, must be protected and perpetuated at any cost – precisely because the efﬁcacy of the prevailing geopolitical and economic order is ideologically beyond question. As much as this analysis highlights a direct link between global systemic crises, social polarisation and state militarisation, it fundamentally undermines the idea of a symbiotic link between natural resources and conﬂict per se. Neither ‘resource shortages’ nor ‘resource abundance’ [in ecological, energy, food and monetary terms] necessitate conﬂict by themselves. There are two key operative factors that determine whether either condition could lead to con- ﬂict. The ﬁrst is the extent to which either condition can generate socio-political crises that challenge or undermine the prevailing order. The second is the way in which stakeholder actors choose to actually respond to the latter crises. To understand these factors accurately requires close attention to the political, economic and ideological strictures of resource exploitation, consumption and distribution between different social groups and classes. Overlooking the systematic causes of social crisis leads to a heightened tendency to problematise its symptoms, in the forms of challenges from particular social groups. This can lead to externalisation of those groups, and the legitimisation of violence towards them. Ultimately, this systems approach to global crises strongly suggests that conventional policy ‘reform’ is woefully inadequate. Global warming and energy depletion are manifestations of a civilisation which is in overshoot. The current scale and organisation of human activities is breaching the limits of the wider environmental and natural resource systems in which industrial civilisation is embedded. This breach is now increasingly visible in the form of two interlinked crises in global food production and the global ﬁnancial system. In short, industrial civilisation in its current form is unsustainable. This calls for a process of wholesale civilisational transition to adapt to the inevitable arrival of the post-carbon era through social, political and economic transformation. Yet conventional theoretical and policy approaches fail to [1] fully engage with the gravity of research in the natural sciences and [2] translate the social science implications of this research in terms of the embeddedness of human social systems in natural systems. Hence, lacking capacity for epistemological self-reﬂection and inhibiting the transformative responses urgently required, they reify and normalise mass violence against diverse ‘Others’, newly constructed as traditional security threats enormously ampliﬁed by global crises – a process that guarantees the intensiﬁcation and globalisation of insecurity on the road to ecological, energy and economic catastrophe. Such an outcome, of course, is not inevitable, but extensive new transdisciplinary research in IR and the wider social sciences – drawing on and integrating human and critical security studies, political ecology, historical sociology and historical materialism, while engaging directly with developments in the natural sciences – is urgently required to develop coherent conceptual frameworks which could inform more sober, effective, and joined-up policy-making on these issues.