EXPLAINING CHINA’S COMPROMISES IN TERRITORIAL DISPUTES

BY M. TAYLOR FRAVEL

Much analysis of China’s ambitions ignores history. Most writers assume that China, like most states, will simply take what territory it can. Not so, says Assistant Professor and China specialist Taylor Frael. In this examination of the People’s Republic of China’s territorial disputes, excerpted from a forthcoming article in International Security, Professor Frael shows that historically, China has generally compromised in its territorial disputes.

Following the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis, scholars and policymakers have become increasingly concerned about China’s territorial ambitions. For instance, a 2005 Pentagon report on Chinese military power expressed concern that “conflicts to enforce China’s [territorial] claims could erupt in the future with wide regional repercussions.” Yet China has frequently used cooperative means to manage its territorial conflicts, revealing a pattern of behavior far more complex than many portray.

Since 1949, China has settled seventeen of its twenty-three territorial disputes, usually offering substantial compromises.

To explain why and when states might compromise in territorial disputes, this article presents a counterintuitive argument about the effects of domestic conflict on foreign policy. In territorial disputes, leaders are more likely to compromise when confronting internal threats to regime security, including rebellions and legitimacy crises. Facing these internal threats, leaders are more likely to trade territorial concessions for assistance from neighboring states, such as suppressing rebels or increasing bilateral trade.

Regime insecurity best explains China’s many attempts to compromise in its territorial disputes. Most of China’s disputes are on its long land border adjacent to frontier regions where the regime’s authority has been weak.

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Ethnic minorities dominate these frontiers, which comprise more than half the country and were never governed directly before 1949. During periods of regime insecurity, especially in the event of ethnic unrest near its international boundaries, China’s leaders have been much more willing to offer concessions in exchange for cooperation that strengthens their control of these areas, such as denying external support to separatists or affirming recognition of Chinese sovereignty over these regions.

Regime Insecurity and Cooperation in Territorial Disputes

For many state leaders, especially in authoritarian regimes and new democracies, the most pressing threat to their political survival emanate from internal political challenges such as rebellions and coups. To enhance their political security in the face of these internal threats, leaders may augment domestic tools such as repression with foreign policy tools, including alliances with external adversaries. They may cooperate with adversaries: (1) to gain assistance in countering internal threats, such as denying material support to opposition groups; (2) to funnel resources for domestic priorities, not defense; or (3) to bolster international recognition of their regime, leveraging the status quo bias of the international system to delegitimize domestic challengers. Leaders may also cooperate to enhance their external security and preempt other states’ attempts to profit from their domestic woes. These effects of regime insecurity are paradoxical: efforts to consolidate political power at home, often through repression, produce efforts to cooperate abroad. While such behavior is peaceful, its source is not necessarily benign.

In active territorial disputes, leaders choose among three general strategies. A delaying strategy involves doing nothing. Leaders maintain their state’s claims through public declarations. An escalation strategy involves the threat or use of force over disputed territory. A cooperation strategy excludes the threat or use of force and involves an offer to compromise by dividing control of contested land or dropping outstanding claims.

When regime survival is at stake, conceding disputed territory for assistance to enhance regime security often outweighs the benefits of maintaining a claim. State leaders are more likely to offer concessions to manage two types of challenges to regime security. The first, internal threats to territorial integrity occur as unrest or rebellions challenge a regime’s control of the territory claimed by the state. When a rebellion erupts near international boundaries, territorial disputes adjacent to the area of unrest become much more costly to pursue because neighboring states can support the rebels or intervene in the conflict. The second challenge to regime security, internal threats to political stability, refers to social unrest, like continued on page 14
PERSIAN GULF INITIATIVE GOES TO WASHINGTON, NEW YORK

On October 3 and 4, 2005, CIS Executive Director John Tirman chaired two panel discussions in Washington, D.C., on behalf of the Center’s Persian Gulf Initiative, one at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and another on Capitol Hill.

The forum at the Wilson Center, “Iraq: Making a State During Civil War: A Colloquium on Iraq’s Constitutional Process,” featured an impressive panel: former U.S. Ambassador to Yemen Barbara Bodine, Executive Director of the Governance Initiative in the Middle East at Harvard’s Kennedy School; Rajiv Chandrasekran, Public Policy Scholar at the Wilson Center and former Washington Post Baghdad Bureau Chief; Brendan O’Leary, Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania, a constitutional adviser to the Kurdistan Regional Government; Robert E. Looney, Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School; and Isam al-Khafaji, Professor at the University of Amsterdam, a former member of the Iraqi Reconstruction and Development Council under the Coalition Provisional Authority.

The group discussed the merits of the Iraqi constitution, the contributions to democratization by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq’s ethnic groups, notions of identity in Iraq, and the relationship between Iraq’s economy and state-building efforts. The same group, without Professor O’Leary, reprised their presentations the next day in a U.S. Senate conference room, for a gathering of congressional staffers.

At a hotel near the United Nations on November 2, Dr. Tirman led another discussion, “Iran and the Nuclear Question.” The speakers were Vali Nasr, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School; Ali Mostashari from MIT’s Iran Studies Group; Hadi Semati, a Visiting Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center; and Fatemeh Haghighatjoo, an Iranian human rights activist and a former member of Iran’s Parliament.

The Persian Gulf Initiative—a series of workshops and public forums—was launched last spring as a means of gathering leading scholars from the region, Europe and the United States to examine particular problems in Gulf states. The Initiative’s three spring 2005 workshops at MIT focused on the crisis of government in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran.

For more information on the CIS Persian Gulf Initiative, see http://web.mit.edu/cis/act_pgi.html.

IRANIAN ACTIVIST JOINS CIS AS A VISITING SCHOLAR

Fatemeh Haghighatjoo, a leading advocate of human rights and democratization in Iran, has joined CIS as a visiting scholar. Ms. Haghighatjoo, a psychologist with a PhD in counseling, resigned from Iran’s Parliament in February 2004 following a crackdown on reformers. Called fearless and outspoken, she was a member of the 6th Majlis, Iran’s reform parliament, president of the student movement faction, and a deputy in the Mosharekat Party.

Ms. Haghighatjoo was sentenced in 2001 by Iran’s judiciary to 20 months in prison, for “inciting public opinion and insulting the judiciary;” she had criticized the arrest of a female journalist and had claimed that Iran’s government tortured prisoners. Her sentence—which she terms illegitimate and undemocratic, and which she has not served—was later reduced to 10 months.

While at the Center for International Studies this year, Ms. Haghighatjoo will write about human rights and democratization in Iran and the Middle East. She will also speak (in Farsi) at venues around the U.S.
DRUGS AND STATE-BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN

BY VANDA FELBAB-BROWN

In the Fall 2005 edition of the Washington Quarterly, MIT Political Science PhD student Vanda Felbab-Brown challenges the idea that combating drug production is essential to counternursis-

gency and counterterrorism in Afghanistan. She argues that the opposite is true—that combating
drug production in Afghanistan impedes U.S. security objectives and may undermine state-building.

Today’s counternarcotics chic advances the idea of a fundamental synergy among curbing
the international drug trade, fighting the war on terrorism, and promoting democracy.

In Afghanistan, presumably consistent counternursis-
gency, democratic stabilization, and counternarcotics measures have become the cornerstone of the interna-
tional community’s policies. The explosion of opium poppy cultivation since the fall of the Taliban has
led Afghan President Hamid Karzai, the United
States, and the United Kingdom—the lead
nation responsible for counternarcotics activity
in Afghanistan under the U.N. Assistance
Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) framework—
to declare that drugs now constitute the greatest threat to Afghanistan’s democratic consolidation and economic development. The resulting strategy has been intensified coun-
ternarcotics efforts. President Karzai has declared war against poppies, describing the Afghan opium trade as a worse “cancer” than ter-

rorism or the Soviet invasion of 1979.1

In March 2005, the Pentagon expanded the
mission of U.S. military forces in Afghanistan to include support of counternarcotics operations. Counternarcotics efforts frequently complicate counterterrorism and counternursis-
gency objectives, however, and can undermine democratiza-
tion. Counternarcotics measures compromise intelligence gathering, alienate rural populations, and allow renegade elites successfully to agitate against the central government.

There are three common counternarcotics strategies: eradication, interdiction, and alterna-
tive development. Eradication poses disastrous
risks for Afghanistan’s political stabilization and economic reconstruction. Interdiction complica-
tes counterterrorism objectives. Alternative
development, the best strategy, faces enormous
obstacles.

The Opium Boom

 Afghanistan’s legal economy was ruined, first in the
1980s when Soviet counternursis-
gency policy attempted to deprive the mujahideen of
resources and popular support by destroying rural agriculture and depopulating the country-
side, then by the civil war of the 1990s, and subsequently by the Taliban’s neglect of eco-

nomic development and brutalization of women. The Taliban profited immensely from
drug production in territories it controlled, as did the Northern Alliance.

After trying to eradicate poppy cultivation in
1994–1995, the Taliban decided that eradication
was both financially unsound and politically
unsustainable. The fundamentalist religious
movement shifted to tolerating poppy cultura-
tion, then to levying a 10-20 percent zakat, or
tax, on cultivation and processing, and finally to actively encouraging poppy cultivation and even teaching farmers how to achieve greater yields.2

In 2000–2001, when the Taliban finally declared
poppy cultivation illegal to placate the interna-
tional community, boost opium prices, and pos-
sibly also consolidate its control over
Afghanistan’s drug trade, it had already stored
enough heroin to maintain its money supply without new poppy cultivation for many years.

Today, Afghanistan supplies more than 75
percent of the world’s heroin and more than 95
percent of the European market. Profits from
the drug trade are the equivalent of more than 40 percent of Afghanistan’s GDP. Opium poppy cultivation increased 64 percent from 2003 to 2004 and had spread to all 32 provinces. Opium production was up by 17 percent, totaling 4,200 tons. These numbers are very high, but they are still far lower than the potential opium resin harvest from 131,000 hectares. This “limited” production was the result of unfavorable weather conditions, not counternarcotics measures.

In a country where 70 percent of the population lives in poverty, drugs are a primary source of livelihood. The majority of microcredit available in Afghanistan is based on opium. Creditors advance money to peasants to buy next year’s seed and food and clothes to withstand winter, in return for the peasants’ agreement to grow a determined amount of opium. Credit for other forms of economic activity is almost nonexistent. The expense, perishability, and dearth of fertilizers and irrigation make legal crops unprofitable.

A large portion of the economy depends on the drug trade. Itinerant laborers work during harvest times. Durable consumer goods, fuel, and medicines are purchased with drug profits. Drug profits underwrite other enterprises. Teashops and rest houses serve traffickers. Even the real estate boom and business activity U.S. officials point to as progress are largely financed by drug profits.

Afghanistan’s opium poppy cultivation boom has many negative effects. First, it damages Western nations’ efforts to lower their domestic drug consumption. Second, drug profits fund regional warlords and their militias. Third, drug production allows criminals to enter politics, undermining democracy. Politicians bankrolled with drug money push more politicians to seek drug money, leading to endemic corruption. Finally, large-scale drug production has negative economic impacts, contributing to inflation, real estate speculation and currency instability.

One possible negative effect of Afghanistan’s drug trade—the frequently mentioned connection between Al Qaeda terrorists and the drug trade—is murky. Belligerent groups can profit from drugs in several ways: taxing production or processing, providing protection for traffickers, or money laundering. Taxing production and processing requires at least partial control of the territory engaging in cultivation, which Al Qaeda does not have in Afghanistan today. With competition from local warlords and pressure from U.S. forces, Al Qaeda is in no position to offer protection to traffickers. And while Al Qaeda could profit from drug-related money laundering, there is little evidence of this activity.

**Eradication: The Wrong War**

U.S. counternarcotics policy in Afghanistan has evolved from not dealing with the drug situation to adopting the most counterproductive counternarcotics strategy: eradication. In mid-2002, the Pentagon decided that, to avoid diverting U.S. forces in Afghanistan from their primary anti-Al Qaeda and anti-Taliban missions, troops would not participate in drug interdiction and eradication. Under the UNAMA framework, counternarcotics efforts were delegated to the United Kingdom. Britain tried several approaches, from paying farmers to destroy illicit crops to a governor-led provincial eradication program, neither of which made a dent in drug production and trade. Although large-scale, comprehensive alternative rural development was supposed to accompany eradication, it has been slow to begin.

In the summer of 2004, facing widespread criticism, the Bush administration changed strategies and took up counter-drug missions. U.S. officials faulted both Karzai and the British for the failure to eradicate more acres. In March 2005, the Pentagon directed U.S. forces in Afghanistan to assist in drug interdiction and eradication. Both eradication and interdiction are extremely problematic in Afghanistan, however.

Eradication seeks to disrupt the drug trade by destroying illicit crops. If peasants face the destruction of their crops, theoretically, they...
will have greater incentive to switch to legal crops. Traffickers will have no drugs to sell. Terrorists and warlords will be starved of drug profits.

But eradication is unpopular among Afghans. Eradication deprives populations of their livelihood. The inability of peasants to repay their creditors as a result of eradication drives them deeper into debt, pushing them to grow even more poppy in the subsequent year. Some are forced to flee to Pakistan, where they may end up in the radical Deobandi madrasas that fed the Taliban. "Afghan government eradication teams that actually attempted to carry out their orders, rather than simply accepting bribes, have frequently met with armed resistance from peasants."

The amnesty for the Taliban announced by the United States and Afghan governments in January 2005 further complicates eradication efforts. Taliban activists returning to their villages will remind the population of the "good times" before 2000 when the Taliban sponsored the illicit economy and poppies bloomed. The Taliban can thus exploit popular frustration with eradication and agitate against the Karzai government and the United States.

Despite these realities, the United States has foolishly prodded Karzai to step up eradication. Despite the political repercussions for his government, Karzai has mostly complied with this demand. He has promised unrealistic outcomes, including the eradication of all poppy fields in two years. The United States cannot ignore political realities in Afghanistan: in the absence of large-scale rural development, eradication is politically explosive. Strong-fisted measures to suppress the peasant resistance will further fuel unrest. Such actions will undermine the Karzai government as well as Afghanistan’s stabilization and democratization.

Neither is compensated eradication a viable solution. Compensated eradication schemes provide peasants with monetary compensation for the destruction of their illicit crops. The problem is that even when actually delivered and not simply promised, such financial compensation has always been a small, one-time payment that requires peasants to forgo large, long-term profits. Moreover, much of the money dispensed by the British in their 2002–2003 compensated eradication scheme in Afghanistan ended up in the hands of regional strongmen, while many peasants who agreed to eradicate their plots never saw any money. Finally, even if corruption were eliminated from the process, the traffickers could simply outbid the government’s compensation for next year’s crops.

Interdiction, lab busting, and the prosecution of traffickers carry fewer negative consequences than eradication, as they do not directly harm the local population. Nevertheless, interdiction and lab busting are problematic in Afghanistan. First, without larger economic development, interdiction, like eradication, is only marginally effective in reducing drug production. The adaptability of traffickers, coupled with the vast territory and difficult terrain in which interdiction teams must operate, make it difficult to intercept any substantial portion of drugs. Moreover, interdiction will cause the warlords, the main source of U.S. intelligence, to withhold intelligence critical to U.S. counterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts. These efforts require local human intelligence. Warlords are unlikely to provide such intelligence to those who are destroying their business.

The Best Bad Strategy

Alternative development is meant to reduce drug production by offering economic alternatives to a rural population otherwise dependent on growing drugs. Alternative development cannot mean only crop substitution. Even though alternative crops may be lucrative, price profitability is only one factor driving the cultivation of illicit crops. Other structural econom-
ic conditions, such as the state of infrastructure, market instability, and availability of credit, play crucial roles. Successful alternative development schemes require building infrastructure, distributing new technologies such as fertilizers and better seeds, marketing assistance to help the rural population sell their products, and developing local microcredit.

Although essential, alternative development has rarely been successful in substantially reduc-

**Doctrinaire adherence to standard counternarcotics policies will likely heighten Afghanistan’s drug crisis and contribute to the state’s destabilization.**

ing a country’s drug cultivation. Internationally, most alternative development schemes have been limited and short-term. Apart from requiring substantial funding over many years, one crucial condition for the large-scale success of alternative development is a stable security situation. The government must disarm warlords and insurgents, either by defeating them or integrating them into the political process, and the state must be present in rural areas to provide security and social services.

Unfortunately, there is no quick solution to the narcotics problem in Afghanistan. After the Taliban fell, the United States minimized its forces in there to preserve troops for Iraq, which undermined reconstruction and counternarcotics efforts. Despite heavily armed warlords and vast amounts of small arms, Afghanistan has the lowest ratio of international peacekeeping troops to population and to territory among post-conflict regions.11 The central government remains absent from most areas. Had the United States deployed more troops, it would not have needed to rely on local warlords to help capture Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. Washington could have helped Kabul subjugate the warlords early on, leaving both the Kabul government and the international community better equipped to undertake comprehensive counternarcotics policies, including eradication.

Today, U.S. counternarcotics policy options are highly contingent on U.S. counterterrorism and stabilization efforts. As long as the United States relies on warlords enmeshed in the drug trade to provide intelligence on Al Qaeda and Taliban members, it should not urge eradication. The Afghan government should halt eradication until the security situation is stable nationally. Interdiction should be left to Afghan counternarcotics units, despite their limited capabilities.

Although government officials claim that narcotics are impeding the development of the Afghan state, that diagnosis confuses symptom and cure: state building must come before counternarcotics. Today’s anti-drug efforts should concentrate on strengthening the Afghan state’s capacity, through its own military and police, to subdue any uprisings and renegade warlords, enforce prohibition of drug processing and trafficking, and promote judicial capacity to indict and prosecute traffickers. Speeding up economic reconstruction efforts, especially rural development, should be central to this strategy. An alternative microcredit system using local banks, NGOs, or charities would help undermine poppy cultivation.

When the United States concludes that it no longer needs the Afghan warlords for counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan, it can support Afghan units in interdiction and lab busting. In fact, Pentagon mission directives of March 2005, coupled with the recent offer of amnesty for the Taliban, indicate that U.S. policy has already shifted in this direction. However, the Taliban’s renewed insurgency may again increase the importance of warlord-generated intelligence and complicate drug interdiction. Meanwhile, disarmament of warlords must proceed swiftly. Only after the state has removed the warlords and their militias, gained control throughout Afghanistan’s territory, and secured the ability to put down uprisings, should Afghan or international forces undertake large-scale eradication. Of course, even then, eradication will only be effective if reconstruction has provided enough economic alternatives for the population.

Finally, the Karzai government and the international community should consider legalizing Afghanistan’s opium production for pharmaceutical purposes, namely the production of morphine, codeine, and thebaine. This policy would **continued on page 19**
Précis Interview Series

CATHERINE ELTON

Catherine Elton joined the Center for International Studies in the fall of 2005 as the first recipient of the Elizabeth Neuffer Fellowship, which was established in memory of Ms. Neuffer, a Boston Globe reporter who was killed while on assignment in Iraq in 2003. The fellowship is administered by the International Women’s Media Foundation (IWMF) in Washington, D.C., and is awarded to women journalists with a demonstrated interest in human rights and social justice. Recipients spend an academic year at CIS and are given access to reporting opportunities at the Boston Globe and the New York Times. CIS Director Richard Samuels, a friend of Ms. Neuffer, helped to organize the fellowship (http://iwmf.org/programs/neuffer/fellowship.html).

Before coming to Cambridge, Ms. Elton was a freelance reporter in Latin America for more than seven years, including in Peru and Guatemala. Her work appeared in the Miami Herald, the Houston Chronicle, Time, the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor and the Washington Post. Her reports from the region have aired on National Public Radio, CBS News, Radio Pacifica and Voice of America. From 1996 to 1997, Elton was a reporter and researcher at The New Republic. While at CIS, she can be reached at celton@mit.edu.

Précis: What will you be doing as the first Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow?

Catherine Elton: The idea of the fellowship is to combine reporting and research for a reporter who has interest in human rights and social justice issues. There are a couple of components. The first is academic. You pursue research on the topic of your choice, and your academic home is at CIS. You can also collaborate with the Boston Globe or The New York Times. I am hoping to spend some time reporting for the Globe and the Times. It would be good to get experience working in a newsroom, since I’ve always worked as a freelancer.

On the academic side, I’m interested in looking at neoliberal economic reforms in Latin America in the last couple of decades and how they’ve affected employment and migration flows. I spent a lot of time writing and thinking about migration in Central America. It’s going to be interesting to look at how often economic policies that are promoted to reduce migration have served to increase migration. You saw increased migration from Mexico after NAFTA. Central America just signed a free trade agreement with the United States. It’s important to look at the roots of migration in international economic policy and see how they have affected migration flows.

Précis: Nine years ago, you were a writer at the New Republic. Why did you leave and go to Central America to become a freelance reporter?

CE: I had a temporary reporter/researcher position at the New Republic. I did a lot of grunt work, but I also had the opportunity to write articles for the magazine. It was a good opportunity to get some powerful clips that would serve me well in my career. Eventually, though, I was ready to leave. My feeling was that after spending a year working in Washington, I needed more experience before I could write about policy issues. There are a lot of people in Washington who write, for instance, about poverty, and they’ve never talked to a poor person. I felt I needed to learn on the street before I could write in that kind of voice—that before I started spouting an opinion, I needed to be more informed. Also, I had been in Latin America before. I did a semester abroad in college. Spanish was my minor in college. I thought I had to see a bit of the world and get information from the street level.

I haven’t had a traditional journalism trajectory. At one point, I just picked up and moved to Peru and went about finding freelance work. I decided to go for one year; that was eight years ago. I wound up being in Peru for three years and Guatemala for almost five years.
précis: How did you get started? What did you do?
CE: I packed two bags and bought a plane ticket. I had a little work lined up. I had sent out my résumé and a cover letter to a number of different AP bureaus. In Peru, I was told that they needed someone to fill in two weekends a month, so I moved down and did that for over a year. I also got a job at an English language publication. After a couple months, I started freelancing, writing for the Christian Science Monitor, Time, and other magazines, and doing some radio work.

précis: How did you come to write such a range of stories, everything from soccer-playing prostitutes in Guatemala, lobster divers in Nicaragua, legal fights over luxury islands off Nicaragua, the legacy of kidnapping in El Salvador, and prison fashion shows in Peru?
CE: My specialization was geographic, so I had to cover a little bit of everything. There’s not great interest for news out of Latin America, or especially Central America. I couldn’t limit myself, being restricted to a region that’s not generating a lot of news that U.S. papers want to cover.

I always tried to tell stories that reveal things about everyday people and everyday life. Or to tell stories through everyday people about everyday life, stories that reveal bigger issues.

Take the island story. It’s a crazy story about a Greek tycoon and people buying islands over the internet, but it’s really about indigenous land rights, one of the biggest issues in Latin America right now. Indigenous people are found on land that mining companies want, that people want for tourism, and they base their claims to these lands on a completely different idea of property rights and even a parallel legal system.

précis: Was safety ever an issue for you in Central America?
CE: Sure. Guatemala is a dangerous country. It’s a beautiful, wonderful country, but there is a lot of violence. Many people are armed, and armed people get on buses and rob people. People get shot for cellphones. You can be in the wrong place at the wrong time. I spent some time in some pretty shady border towns between Guatemala and Mexico. When I was in Peru, I did a trip into the Amazon on the border of Peru and Ecuador, where there are a lot of highway assaults. It was a dangerous place for me to travel alone.

précis: You’re the first to hold the Neuffer Fellowship. What meaning does that have for you?
CE: Elizabeth Neuffer was an excellent journalist. From reading her stories, from reading about her, and from applying for this fellowship and trying to figure out who she was, I realized I shared a lot of the ideals and beliefs that she had about the power of journalism: to give a voice to the voiceless, and to try to get people to pay attention to issues that they should pay attention to around the world. I don’t want to sound too idealistic, but I do believe in the power of journalism to move people and change their opinions—even policymakers.
SEMINARY XXI CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

The twentieth anniversary of Seminar XXI, the Center’s executive education program, was marked at a gala at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on September 12, 2005.

Speakers at the dinner included Seminar XXI Director Robert Art, Christian A. Herter Professor of International Relations at Brandeis University and a Senior Fellow at the MIT Security Studies Program; Suzanne Berger, Raphael Dorman and Helen Starbuck Professor of Political Science at MIT; retired Navy Captain Jake Stewart and Mitzi Wertheim, members of the program’s Executive Committee; and Seminar XXI alumnus Rear Admiral Robert Willard, Vice Chief of Naval Operations. The Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Andrew Natsios, another alumnus, gave the keynote address.

The Seminar XXI program—a key part of the Center’s outreach to the Washington policy community—provides senior military officers, government and NGO officials and executives in the national security policy community with enhanced analytic skills for understanding international relations. It features monthly meetings throughout each academic year at locations in and near Washington, D.C.—six Monday evenings and three weekend retreats. Each session features talks by and discussion time with leading academics and policymakers.

About 1,200 fellows have completed Seminar XXI since the program began. Prominent graduates include General George W. Casey, Jr., commanding general of U.S. forces in Iraq, and Coast Guard Rear Admiral Joel R. Whitehead, a leader in cleanup efforts following Hurricane Katrina.

Prominent guest speakers have included Condoleezza Rice (when she was a professor of international relations at Stanford University); Ambassador Robert Gallucci, Dean of the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and chief negotiator of the 1994 Agreed Framework with North Korea; Indiana Senator Richard Lugar; political scientists John Mearsheimer, Anne-Marie Slaughter, Stephen Walt and Kenneth Waltz; the French academic Gerard Prunier, an authority on the genocide in Rwanda; MIT political science PhDs and Iraq specialists Daniel Byman and Kenneth Pollack; and other experts on such topics as democratization, globalization, political economy, national security policy, political Islam, ethnic and religious conflict, and terrorism.

Professor Berger, who founded Seminar XXI in 1985 with the help of Jake Stewart and Mitzi Wertheim (a former civilian executive in the Navy), has been surprised by its success. “My expectations at the beginning were that the military community would not allow its best people to participate in an activity where the speakers were chosen entirely at the discretion of MIT faculty. I was entirely wrong. There has been enormous enthusiasm from the services, the NSC, the CIA and the State Department. The problem is that we can’t accept many of the people who want to participate.”

Other CIS faculty members who have steered or participated in Seminar XXI include professors of political science Barry Posen, Richard Samuels, Kenneth Oye, Edward Steinfeld, the late Myron Weiner, Chappell Lawson and Roger Petersen. Professor Stephen Van Evera, Acting Director of CIS, has been the program’s MIT faculty advisor in recent years; Professors Oye and Posen serve on its Board. Tisha Gomes is the program’s executive director. For more information about Seminar XXI, see web.mit.edu/semxxi/.
CIS AUDITS THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

U.S. foreign policy and the public debates that surround it are often based on untested assumptions. For example, that democracy brings peace and stability, that U.S. military dominance is virtually unlimited, that Iran is a rogue state, that terrorists armed with WMD are a grave threat to all of us, that a draft could solve the Army’s manpower shortage. These notions too often escape the close scrutiny of academicians, policymakers and other interested parties. In an essay series launched in the spring of 2005, CIS scholars, affiliates and students take on some of these assumptions.

The “Audits of the Conventional Wisdom” series, organized by CIS Executive Director John Tirman and Director of Public Programs Amy Tarr, is brief, readable essays published online at web.mit.edu/cis/acw.html and distributed in print form to members of the media, academic and think tanks.

According to Dr. Tirman, the aim of the Audits project is to “inject a very incisive perspective into the foreign policy debate. There is so much that passes without examination and becomes codified in policy and law.” The essays are intended to provoke debate about foreign policy issues.

Covering the Horizon

The essays published so far cover the horizon. Ford International Professor of Political Science and CIS Director Richard Samuels and Assistant Professor of Political Science Taylor Fravel argue that U.S. power in Asia is shrinking. Acting CIS Director and Professor of Political Science Stephen Van Evera writes that winning the war on terrorism requires Israeli-Palestinian peace. Ford International Professor of Political Science Barry Posen contends that while the U.S. military has command of the commons—the seas, space and air—in close fighting overseas, the United States is far less dominant. And Associate Professor of Political Science Chappell Lawson argues that the most critical states for U.S. foreign policy are neighbors Canada and Mexico, not China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, or Japan.

In her essay, Dr. Cindy Williams, Principal Research Scientist in the Security Studies Program, argues that while the public will not support a draft for the Iraq war, the Army has several options for averting a staffing crisis. Dr. Les Roberts, a Lecturer at Johns Hopkins University, holds that American policymakers fail to appreciate how civilian casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan undermine American objectives in those nations. Visiting Fellow Robert Vickers argues that European unity is more rhetoric than reality, while Dr. Gary Treoller, CIS Research Associate, contends that the U.N.’s many accomplishments are underappreciated. And Dr. Ali Mostashari, a U.N. development program official who edits MIT’s Iran Analysis Quarterly, contends that Iran is not a rogue state.

In other Audits, Research Associate Allison Macfarlane argues that calling chemical, biological and nuclear weapons “weapons of mass destruction,” leads to policies that over-invest in defenses against chemical and biological weapons and encourages states to seek these weapons, and CIS graduate student Benjamin Friedman claims that the threat posed by terrorists is overrated.

More essays are on the way, and possibly, a collection in book form with an appendix of research data. For additional information about this new series of CIS publications, contact Amy Tarr at atarr@mit.edu / 617.253.1965. To read pdf versions, see http://web.mit.edu/cis/acw.html.
FIRST ‘MISTI WEEK’ A SUCCESS

From September 20-23, 2005, the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) Program organized a range of activities around campus to highlight the key role MISTI plays in fostering international education at the Institute.

MISTI Week featured everything from a soccer tournament, a photography contest, a cultural fair in Lobby 10 (featuring a different international cuisine each hour as well as changing music and dance presentations), showings of films from Mexico, Japan, Italy and India, and lessons in Sanskrit and Catalan, to panel discussions featuring both MIT faculty members and guest speakers.

Europe, Communications and Cars

MIT’s Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures contributed to the celebration with a panel called “Is there a global communications culture?” It was organized by FL&L Research Associate Kurt Fendt and hosted by FL&L Head Jing Wang, Professor of Chinese Cultural Studies and S.C. Fang Professor of Chinese Languages and Culture. MIT-Germany Director Bernd Widdig was a panelist. Another panel, called “What Europe?,” featured MIT Professors Suzanne Berger and Barry Posen as well as Harvard’s Glyn Morgan. It addressed recent difficulties with European integration. A third panel brought together a MISTI graduate student, several MIT faculty members and an executive from DaimlerChrysler to talk about their visions of mobility and the car of the future. The general consensus was that to combat fuel consumption and traffic congestion, cars must work more like living things and less like living rooms on wheels.

MISTIWeek also featured a talk by Professor Wang on “Youth Culture, Music, and Cell Phone Branding in China,” and another by Pulitzer Prize-winning MIT historian John Dower called “Asian Promise/Yellow Peril,” on Japan’s rise in the early 20th century.

Moon-viewing and Soccer

On its final day, MISTI Week wound down with a barbecue and the judging of a MISTI student photo contest (the winner, Joel Sadler, from the MIT-Singapore program, won a plane ticket to Europe). It also featured the final of the week-long soccer tournament (won by the graduate team), and a Tsukimi (moon-viewing) party at Ashdown House.

According to MISTI Director Suzanne Berger, Raphael Dormian and Helen Starbuck Professor of Political Science, “MISTI Week was a terrific idea, because by combining a great number of activities over a short period of time—from fun activities like soccer to a panel on the future of the European Union—it showed how international education has moved into all facets of MIT life. And we saw a big increase in the number of students who showed up for the first meeting of our internship programs.”

The MISTI program has placed more than 1,500 MIT students as interns in labs and offices in China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico and Singapore. Before their departure, interns are trained in the language and culture of the country they will be visiting. MISTI’s chief goals include teaching MIT students to build enduring professional relationships across national and cultural boundaries, and to understand the similar and different ways in which knowledge is created around the world. It also fosters working relationships between MIT scholars and their counterparts from other countries.
MIT-MEXICO CELEBRATES ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY

MIT-Mexico, the newest MISTI program, celebrated its one-year anniversary on July 19, 2005 in Mexico City with a gala sponsored by the Mexican bank Banamex. More than 100 alumni and guests, including the MIT Clubs of Monterrey and Mexico City and friends from Mexican industry, government, and universities, gathered at the historic Palacio de los Condes de San Mateo de Valparaiso. The celebration was organized to thank those who initiated the program and to draw new sponsors and participants.

MIT-Mexico has benefited greatly from the support of MIT alumni from Mexico who worked with leaders in Mexican industry and government to provide financial backing for MISTI’s seventh country program, the first in Latin America. Adrian Gonzalez, SM ’97, former president of the MIT Club of Mexico, led efforts to secure funding and find companies with needs that fit the skills of MIT students. MIT-Mexico offers internships for MIT students in Mexico and encourages Mexican nationals to participate in joint research with MIT, as visiting scholars.

This year, nine students are working in companies such as Banco de México, the Comisión Federal de Electricidad, Metalsa, and Macimex—up from just one student during the program’s first year. In addition, some students are performing research at the U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Science and the prestigious Tecnologico de Monterrey.

Mexican researchers who become visiting scholars at MIT are supported by the Mexican government through Mexico’s Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT), which is similar to the U.S. National Science Foundation. This year, the MIT-Mexico Program awarded grants to support five research projects in diverse fields: biology, biological engineering, civil engineering, computer science, and physics.

MIT-Mexico’s director is Professor Michael Piore, David W. Skinner Professor of Political Economy. For information about the program or to apply for an MIT-Mexico internship, contact Amy Kirkcaldy, the program’s coordinator, at (617) 252-1483 or kirkcald@mit.edu. Additional information about MIT-Mexico can be found at http://web.mit.edu/mit-mexico/.

POSEN TO LEAD SSP

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advocated a phased withdrawal. (See the January/February 2005 issue of the Boston Review.) Professor Posen’s research topics include EU defense policy, Army innovation, and the role of force in U.S. foreign policy.

“I am honored to have been chosen by my colleagues to direct the Security Studies Program. SSP has been my intellectual home for nearly twenty years. I could not have found a better one,” Professor Posen said.

“I have profited greatly from the diverse community of senior scholars and motivated graduate students who have made this institution one of the premier places in the United States to think about and to learn about all aspects of the role of military power in international politics, and the problems of disciplining that power. Two generations of extraordinary leaders precede me: Jack Ruina created this institution, and Harvey Sapolsky nurtured it to adulthood. Harvey has been a great friend, a terrific mentor, and an unbelievably committed and responsible director. As I face the many challenges that lie ahead, I do not think I can go far wrong by emulating him.”

When Professor Sapolsky announced earlier this fall that he would step down as SSP Director at the end of the academic year, he also said he would retire from teaching. (He has taught at MIT for forty years and has spearheaded SSP for fifteen.) A leading scholar of organizations and U.S. defense politics, he plans to continue writing and working with students and colleagues.
large-scale protests that question the legitimacy of the regime. When such threats arise, even far from borders, territorial disputes become much more costly to pursue because they distract leaders from addressing domestic unrest.

A key variable is the salience of the contested land. The greater the importance of the territory at stake, the larger the magnitude of the internal threat necessary to make compromise more attractive than delay.

**Explaining China’s Compromises**

China has offered substantial compromises in seventeen of its twenty-three territorial disputes active since 1949. In fact, China has often agreed to accept less than half of the territory being disputed. By contrast, China has never offered to compromise in six of its twenty-three disputes, adopting a delaying strategy instead. Regime insecurity best explains the variation in China’s use of cooperation and delaying strategies.

In China, ethnic geography has shaped the regime’s vulnerability to internal threats. Ethnic geography refers to the density and distribution of ethnic groups within a state. China’s is an “empire state,” with an ethnic majority core surrounded by a large periphery of minorities. Han Chinese constitute over 90 percent of China’s population. They live mostly on roughly 40 percent of the landmass along the coast, an area known as “China proper” or the “inner land” (neidi). By contrast, ethnic minorities such as Tibetans or Mongols comprise less than 10 percent of China’s population. They reside on the other 60 percent of the landmass enveloping China proper, regions known as the “borderlands” (bianjiang) or “outer lands” (waidi).

This ethnic geography reflects the varied challenges to maintaining territorial integrity that China’s leaders confronted when founding the PRC in 1949. The state’s institutions were strong in the core but weak in the frontiers. China proper was relatively easy to govern because the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) inherited from the Ming dynasty a provincial system of direct rule, which integrated townships and provinces with the central government. As the civil war was waged mainly within China proper, the CCP also cultivated a large pool of Han cadres to staff the new government.

By contrast, the institutions of the new state were weak in the frontiers, the regions adjacent to China’s land borders. Many ethnic groups in the borderlands did not identify themselves as members of the PRC and had previously sought independence. Unlike China proper, the CCP inherited no institutions of direct rule through which to govern these areas. As the civil war was waged largely in China proper, the CCP also lacked ethnic minority cadres, which further limited their ability to extend authority in the frontiers.

**Homeland Disputes**

China has disputed three areas linked to the Han Chinese core. In these disputes, the main challenge to territorial integrity has been to regain those parts of China proper not under PRC control in 1949. These disputes include China’s contentious conflicts over Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. China’s leaders view these territories as key to completing national unification that began with the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911. The overriding importance of completing national unification suggests that these conflicts are basically nonnegotiable and concessions unlikely. Few threats, internal or external, would be great enough to make any territorial compromise appear more attractive than delay and the achievement of unification.

China has never attempted to compromise in a homeland dispute. Disputes over Hong Kong and Macao were settled when Britain and Portugal concluded that the costs of maintaining these disputes, especially after the expiry of a ninety-nine-year lease for the New Territories in Hong Kong, far exceeded whatever benefit they still derived from their possession. While China did agree to maintain existing political institutions in both territories, this did not represent much of a compromise because, since the 1970s, China had indicated its desire to maintain the political status quo to facilitate investment from these territories.
Frontier Disputes

China has disputed sixteen areas along its land border adjacent to its borderlands. These disputes stem from the challenge of consolidating control over vast frontiers through the implementation of direct rule. Frontier disputes arose from the ambiguity surrounding China’s land borders when the PRC was established. China has pursued mostly status quo goals in these disputes to secure the boundaries of the late Qing dynasty.

Internal threats create incentives to compromise in frontier disputes. The weakness of the state increases the potential influence of neighbors within these regions, creating an opportunity to trade territorial concessions for support in governing the frontiers. Securing one of the longest land borders in the world poses a logistical challenge for China’s armed forces even under optimal conditions. The presence of ethnic minorities, many of whom aspire to secede, intertwines territorial integrity with political stability. Before the establishment of the PRC, many of these groups enjoyed much stronger ties with neighboring states and did not see themselves as members of the new regime. As Deng Xiaoping explained presciently in 1950 when describing China’s southwestern frontier, “on a border this long...if the issue of ethnic minorities is not resolved, then the matter of national defense cannot be settled.”

When internal threats arise, neighboring states can provide assistance to help China’s leaders maintain frontier stability. While separatist unrest near borders challenges the integrity of frontiers, political instability at the core also creates concerns about control of these regions, given the potential for separatist movements and the need to focus state resources elsewhere. With its military strength, however, China’s territorial claims create suspicion among neighbors, which limits the development of bilateral ties. China’s leaders can then offer territorial concessions to improve relations with its neighbors and strengthen frontier control.

China has compromised at least once in each frontier dispute since 1949. Chinese sources, especially doctrinal studies produced by People’s Liberation Army (PLA) scholars, link the defense of frontiers with internal political stability. These studies assert that insecure borders promote ethnic unrest by increasing external influence within China and reveal suspicions that neighbors may manipulate ethnic tensions to create instability. Diplomatic relations with neighboring states are seen as a way to maintain internal control over frontiers.

Offshore Island Disputes

China has disputed four island groups. In these disputes, China’s leaders sought a maritime frontier that previous governments lacked. Offshore island disputes arose from the ambiguity of sovereignty over small islands, rocks and reefs, which had never been administered by any claimant state, including China. Today, the islands’ value stems mostly from maritime rights to resources in adjacent waters and as bases for naval forces for surveillance and securing sea lanes.

Regime insecurity is unlikely to create incentives for cooperation in offshore island disputes. Far from the mainland, these small, desolate, and unpopulated islands have little influence on regime security. In addition, during periods of regime insecurity, the only assistance that neighbors might offer in exchange for China’s concessions would be diplomatic support. As a result, external, not internal, factors are most likely to produce efforts to compromise. Furthermore, as these islands are cheap to dispute, requiring few troops to maintain a claim, states are most likely to adopt a delaying strategy.

China has only compromised in one offshore island dispute since 1949, White Dragon Tail. In its disputes over the Paracel (xisha), Spratly (nansha), and Senkaku (diao-yu) island groups, China has consistently adopted a delaying strategy and never offered to compromise. It has held limited talks with individual states

China’s growing military and economic power has not yet translated into increased territorial revisionism.
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over the Spratlys, but these talks have never touched upon sovereignty, emphasizing instead escalation control.¹

Regime Insecurity and Territorial Compromise

Since 1949, China’s pattern of compromise and delay has varied with the presence or absence of threats to regime insecurity: China has attempted compromise in response to these internal threats; otherwise, it has pursued delay.

Unrest among minorities near international boundaries has occurred during three distinct periods since 1949, each of which produced efforts by China’s leaders to compromise in its territorial disputes. When a revolt peaked in Tibet in 1959, China moved to compromise in disputes with Burma, Nepal, and India. After ethnic unrest in Xinjiang in 1962, China pursued compromise with Mongolia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Soviet Union. In the 1990s, sustained separatist violence in Xinjiang produced compromises in disputes with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Political instability has also occurred during three periods. Two produced attempts to compromise. In the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward in the early 1960s, concerns about political stability throughout the country created additional incentives to compromise in disputes with Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Soviet Union, as well as North Korea. Following the 1989 Tiananmen crisis and worries about the viability of its socialist system, China attempted compromise in disputes with its socialist neighbors Laos, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam, and it reached confidence-building agreements with India and Bhutan. A third period of political instability during the early phase of Cultural Revolution (1966-1969) failed to produce efforts to compromise.

China’s senior leaders, however, created this chaos deliberately, which did not initially reflect a threat to the regime’s security from society. Moreover, during the most acute phase, much of the central government ceased to operate, including the foreign ministry.

In the absence of internal threats to regime security, China’s leaders have adopted a delaying strategy instead. China attempted compromise only twice in disputes before 1960. China did not offer to compromise in any territorial dispute from the mid-1960s until the late 1980s.⁹

In addition to regime insecurity, China’s relative military power has influenced its willingness to compromise in frontier disputes. With a large standing army, China has more leverage in disputes on its land border where it can most easily project military power. While the authority of the state remains weak in the frontiers, China’s relative strength decreases the risk that other states will perceive concessions in frontier disputes as weakness. By contrast, China has faced real limits to projecting power in offshore island disputes and faces greater risks that any concessions will be perceived as signaling weakness. Nevertheless, while military power increases the likelihood that China might compromise in a given frontier dispute, it cannot explain the variation in China’s efforts to compromise nor the motivation for compromise.

On land, its relative power has been largely constant since 1949, while attempts to compromise have varied widely.

Status Quo Goals

China’s cooperation in territorial disputes reveals a pattern of behavior far more complex than a singular view of China as a territorially ambitious state. China’s growing military and economic power has not yet translated into increased territorial revisionism. In the past two decades, China has not issued new territorial demands nor increased the scope of land claimed. Since 1949, China has pursued revisionist claims in its homeland disputes and in offshore island disputes over the Spratlys and Senkakus. These claims reflect a vision of what ought to constitute a modern Chinese state, not ambitions conditioned by China’s position in the international system. China, weak or strong, has sought to unify Taiwan with the mainland.

In its other territorial disputes, China has pursued mostly status quo goals. The handling of the nineteenth century unequal treaties that often ceded vast tracts of land reflects this complex approach to territory. In negotiations with
neighbors since 1949, the PRC has accepted the general boundaries delimited by these very agreements. Not coincidentally, most of these boundaries lie adjacent to ethnic minority regions. The only past agreements that China has sought to overturn are those linked to the territories of Hong Kong and Macao, also not coincidentally the only Han Chinese areas that had been ceded. In addition, by drafting new boundary agreements with neighbors when settling territorial disputes, China has defined the precise location of most of its land borders. These texts, some of them hundreds of pages in length, remove any ambiguity about the extent of the PRC’s sovereignty and raise the costs for pursuing future claims that would breach these agreements.

The prognosis for the settlement of China’s six remaining disputes is uncertain. The PRC is unlikely to abandon its long-standing goal of Taiwan’s unification. In addition, the increasing strength of the state in the frontiers suggests that regime insecurity may be less likely to create incentives for compromise in China’s last two frontier disputes with India and Bhutan. External factors are likely to play a stronger role in the settlement of these conflicts. Offshore, China and the other claimants have little incentive to compromise because these island groups are cheap to dispute and may yield economic or strategic advantages. In addition, the role of nationalism in Chinese foreign policy remains a wildcard that might constrain China’s leaders’ ability to pursue compromise.

China’s compromises also enabled the active engagement of the region since the late 1990s that are the hallmark of China’s “new diplomacy.” By settling disputes and eliminating ambiguity about its borders, China has reassured its neighbors about its potential ambitions. Regional engagement would have been much more difficult to pursue under the shadow of hot territorial conflicts, especially in light of tensions over Taiwan. China’s need to engage East Asia suggests that these settlements will endure in the coming years.


2 As discussed below, disputes over Hong Kong and Macao were settled without compromise when Britain and Portugal agreed to return these territories to China in 1984 and 1987.
3 107 of 135 counties adjacent to China’s international frontiers are ethnic autonomous regions. Bu He, ed., Minzu liliun yu minzu zhengce [Nationality theory and nationality policy] (Huhehaote: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 1995), p. 27.
5 See especially, Mao, Bianfang lun; Li Xing, ed., Bianfang xue [The study of frontier defense] (Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe, 2004). See also training manuals for frontier defense, including Cai Xiru, ed., Bianfang liliun [Frontier defense theory] (Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1996); and Ping Qingfu, ed., Bianying guanli xue [The study of border management] (Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999).
6 Mao, Bianfang lun, pp. 232-234, 256-261.
9 During this period, China held negotiations with the Soviet Union (1969-1978), Vietnam (1977) and India (1981-present).
This fall, the Inter-University Committee on International Migration (IUCIM) re-named its seminar series after the late MIT Professor of Political Science Myron Weiner, founder of the Committee and former Director of the Center for International Studies. Professor Weiner, a political scientist who was a leading scholar of modern India and a pioneer in the study of migration, died in 1999.

Established in 1974, the Inter-University Committee coordinates migration and refugee studies at Boston University, Brandeis University, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Harvard University, MIT, Tufts University, and Wellesley College. Program Director Dr. Sharon Stanton Russell chairs the Committee, which is hosted by CIS and MIT. Each year’s seminars, which are held at CIS, explore international population movements and their effect on sending and receiving nations.

Committee Steering Group member Professor Reed Ueda, a Tufts historian, launched the new Myron Weiner Series with a personal donation. This seed money established a fund that now receives contributions toward an endowment. Those interested in making a donation may contact CIS Administrative Officer Robert Murray at rmurray@mit.edu or (617) 253-8064.

An “Intellectual Mentor”

Dr. Russell, a former student of Professor Weiner and co-editor with him of the book *Demography and National Security*, explained the motivation for re-naming the migration seminar series in Professor Weiner’s honor. “Professor Weiner was the intellectual mentor of many of today’s leading scholars in the field of international migration. He was decades ahead of the curve in recognizing the significance of such population movements for political, economic, social, and cultural developments in countries of both origin and destination. Myron’s recognition of and openness to the insights drawn from many disciplines reflected his deep understanding of the complex nature of international migration.”

Between 1997 and 2005, the Committee sponsored the Mellon-MIT Inter-University Program on NGOs and Forced Migration. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, the Program provided competitively awarded small grants for faculty, graduate students, and research scholars at member institutions. Award recipients presented and often published their work as working papers and conducted applied research and training on policy issues of concern to NGOs working in the field with refugees and the internally displaced.

For the schedule of Myron Weiner Seminars, see: http://web.mit.edu/cis/www/migration/seminars.html.

PoET HOLDS SYMPOSIUM, ADDS CLASSES

The Program on Emerging Technologies (PoET), a multidisciplinary program steered in part by Associate Professor of Political Science Kenneth Oye, a former director of CIS, recently created two new classes and held a two-day symposium on technology assessment.

PoET, which received a $2.9 million, five-year grant from the National Science Foundation in 2003, aims to educate graduate students and scholars on assessing the effects of emerging technologies like genetic engineering, ubiquitous computing, and nanotechnology. Along with Professor Oye, PoET is chaired by Professors Daniel Hastings and Dava Newman of the Engineering Systems Division (ESD), and Merritt Roe Smith of the Science, Technology and Society Program.
face obstacles—diversion of licit opium into illegal traffic paramount among them—but the international community could subsidize the distribution of available technologies that make diversion of opium gum into illicit production very difficult. Yet, even if some illicit activity took place, partial diversion would still be better than the current 100 percent “diversion” for illicit uses.

Doctrinaire adherence to standard counternarcotics policies will likely heighten Afghanistan’s drug crisis and contribute to the state’s destabilization. Only patience, careful calibration of counternarcotics policies to the evolving local situation, and a steady commitment to alleviating Afghanistan’s poverty can result in a sustainable reduction of Afghanistan’s drug economy.


9 Mansfield, “What Is Driving Opium Poppy Cultivation?”

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Program (STS). With four new students accepted this year—Sara Wylie from STS, Mark Avnet and Katherine Steel from ESD, and Hanna Breetz from Political Science—PoET now has 11 doctoral students.

The Program developed two new classes for this academic year. The first, STS.462, “Social and Political Implications of Technology,” centers on how new technologies have altered society, politics, and business since the late 18th century. The second course, ESD.85, “Integrating Doctoral Seminar on Emerging Technologies,” is for students working on dissertations at the interface of technology, policy and societal issues.

Last April, PoET jointly hosted a day-long symposium with the Technology and Policy Program, “Emerging Technologies: Technology Assessment in High-Stakes Settings.” Participants discussed how different sectors assess high-stakes technology decisions—for instance, in corporate R&D funding, venture capital, and technology deployment for military or intelligence purposes. And on November 2, 2005, PoET hosted its annual Fall Panel Retreat at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cambridge. The focus was on emerging technologies in biotechnology. For information about PoET, please visit: http://poet.mit.edu/.
Following is a selected review of Fall 2005 events at the Center. To learn about upcoming CIS events, click on “Calendar” at: http://web.mit.edu/cis/.

Garrett and Lipsitch on Avian Flu

On September 26, 2005, shortly before the U.S. media picked up on the avian flu pandemic story, CIS’s Starr Forum hosted a discussion of bird flu and its implications at MIT’s Dibner Institute. Moderated by Acting CIS Director Stephen Van Evera, the speakers were Marc Lipsitch, an epidemiologist at Harvard School of Public Health and Laurie Garrett, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Senior Fellow for Global Health at the Council on Foreign Relations. Garrett covered science for National Public Radio and wrote The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World Out of Balance.

Though H5N1, the virus known as avian flu, so far has not mutated into a form that can be passed among humans, Ms. Garrett warned that the virus, or one like it, will likely soon achieve that mutation and could then kill millions worldwide. Like most nations, Ms. Garrett said, the United States remains unprepared, lacking stocks of the anti-viral drug tamiflu and capacity to produce vaccine. Dr. Lipsitch said that while it is possible that H5N1 will never evolve to a point where it can pass between humans, the risk requires a more robust response from the federal government. He argued that the heavy investment the United States has made to protect against anthrax and smallpox might have been better spent on protection against the flu, which already kills an average of 36,000 Americans a year. This event and most CIS Starr Forums are webstreamed at web.mit.edu/cis/starr.html.

Yavin on Israeli Settlers

At another CIS Starr Forum on September 28, 2005, Chaim Yavin, evening news anchor at Israel’s Channel One for much of the last 30 years and former director-general of Israel TV, showed an excerpt from his controversial multi-part documentary series, “The Land of the Settlers.” The series, which was critical of Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, set off a political firestorm when it aired in Israel.

Deng on the Sudan Crisis

On September 27, 2005, Francis Deng, Representative to the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons and former Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in Sudan, gave a speech at the Wong Auditorium on “The Sudan Crisis and Human Security.” Professor Deng, Director of the Center for Displacement Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins, spoke about the twenty-five million internally displaced persons worldwide—those forced from their homes who remain within their home countries. Sovereignty makes international efforts to aid these people difficult, but the emerging norm of sovereignty as a responsibility may make it easier, according to Professor Deng, who helped develop the idea of such a norm. Professor Deng also discussed Sudan, detailing the sectarian split between the Arab North and black-African south and their long history of civil war and the separate but related rebellion in Darfur. He said that the current cease-fire will probably hold and that Sudan will survive as a unified whole.

Professor Deng was the first speaker in CIS’s new series on human security, organized by Executive Director John Tirman, who said, “The series is intended to revive and examine the somewhat loosely assembled concepts that human security encompasses.” Future speakers will include George Papandreou, former Foreign Minister of Greece, and peace activist Mary Kaldor.

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Hart, Benjamin and Simon on Terrorism

On October 17, 2005, former Senator and presidential candidate Gary Hart hosted “A Report Card on the War on Terror” with guests Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, whose book, The Next Attack: The Failure of the War on Terror and a Strategy for Getting it Right, critiques the Bush administration’s post 9/11 efforts fighting Al Qaeda and other radical Islamists. Benjamin, a Senior Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Simon, a Senior Analyst at the RAND Corporation, worked on counter-terrorism in the Clinton administration. They argued at this CIS Starr Forum that the United States is losing the war on terrorism, largely because the war in Iraq feeds extremism worldwide. Senator Hart queried the authors about the so-called “start-up” terrorists who have emerged since 9/11, and fielded questions from the audience in the Wong Auditorium.

Kohn on Militarism

On October 12, 2005, Richard Kohn, Professor of History and Chair, Curriculum in Peace, War, and Defense at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill spoke to the Security Studies Program on “Civil-Military Relations in the United States Today,” as part of SSP’s weekly seminar series. Professor Kohn, an American military historian, warned that despite the end of the Cold War, the United States has grown more militarized in the last few decades and military officers more political. He said he worries that the war on terrorism will lead to increasing militarism in the United States, and will threaten liberal values. SSP’s seminars are held on Wednesdays at noon in the sixth floor conference room in E38. Summaries of past seminars and the schedule for future ones can be found at web.mit.edu/ssp/.

Bodine on U.S. Policy in the Middle East

On October 18, 2005, Barbara Bodine, Former Ambassador to Yemen and now Executive Director of the Middle East Governance Initiative at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, spoke at MIT as part of CIS’s Emile Bustani lecture series. Ambassador Bodine spoke critically about the problems in the State Department and criticized U.S. Middle East policy, especially the war in Iraq.

The Emile Bustani Middle East Seminar Series is sponsored by CIS and chaired by Philip S. Khoury, Kenan Sahin Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. The Seminar celebrated its 20th anniversary this fall. For more information see web.mit.edu/shass/temp/bustani/bustani_seminar.htm.

Kristol, Marr, Posen and Schell on Exiting Iraq


Mr. Kristol, a leading proponent of the war in Iraq, argued that history would vindicate America’s decision to invade. He said that the elections in Iraq have galvanized democracy in the region and that the enemy in Iraq is comprised mostly of terrorists who lack popular support and can be defeated. While he criticized Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for his management of the war, he also contended that talk about exit strategies encourages the insurgents.
The United States, Mr. Kristol said, can leave Iraq only once it achieves victory.

Phebe Marr, the author of The Modern History of Iraq, a standard U.S. reference on Iraq, argued that the national debate about Iraq lacks realism. She said that there are no good solutions—only “bad and less bad.” In Marr’s estimation, Iraq has nearly become a failed state and the Iraqi identity is disintegrating as sectarian and ethnic identities and polities rise. The best scenario, she argued, would be for the state to become a loose federation of Shi’ite, Sunni and Kurd entities. A second scenario, which she sees as unlikely (unless the United States precipitously withdraws), is one where today’s sectarian violence explodes into all-out Sunni-Shi’ite civil war, possibly drawing in neighboring states. A third scenario—the most likely in Professor Marr’s estimation—is continued disintegration of Iraq and a continuing insurgency.

Barry Posen, who opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq, outlined a plan that would allow the United States to leave that country within eighteen months. According to Professor Posen, the insurgency is growing in skill and manpower and has broad appeal among Sunni Iraqis. Along with the status reversal Sunnis suffered with Saddam’s ouster, he said, the presence of U.S. troops is fueling the insurgency, and their departure is therefore conducive to its end. The civil war has already begun, he asserted, but Americans are fighting it. A civil war fought by Iraqis, Professor Posen added, will puncture the Sunni insurgents’ illusion that they can still rule Iraq. The best option we can hope for, he said, is a loose but peaceful confederacy.

The last speaker, Jonathan Schell, argued that the war has failed mainly because Western powers’ occupations of foreign states are doomed due to nationalism. Although a civil war is possible if the United States leaves Iraq, Mr. Schell said, keeping troops in Iraq only makes matters worse. He urged the United States to pull its troops out immediately.

**China Starr Forums Continue**

People

PhD Candidate Boaz Atzili gave a talk titled “Border Fixity: When Good Fences Make Good Neighbors; And When They Make Bad Ones,” at the New Faces in Security Studies Conference, held at Duke University’s Triangle Institute for Security Studies in September.

Department of Urban Studies and Planning Professor Diane Davis’s book, Discipline and Development: Middle Classes and Prosperity in East Asia and Latin America (Cambridge University Press, 2004) received the award for Best Political Sociology Book of the Year from the American Sociological Association in July.

In September, PhD Candidate Vanda Felbab-Brown traveled to Kabul, Afghanistan for the 2005 Kabul International Symposium on Drug Policy, to give a talk on drugs and security in Afghanistan. Vanda is Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the International Security Program and the Program on Intrastate Conflict at the Belfer Center at Harvard’s Kennedy School. PhD Candidate Rachel Gisselquist is also a pre-doctoral fellow in the Belfer program.

Jeanne Guillemín, Professor of Sociology at Boston College and SSP Senior Fellow, testified in June before the Massachusetts legislature about the proposed BSL-4 laboratory at Boston University. She has been involved in shaping a new law requiring laboratory oversight and regulation.

This fall, Colin Jackson and Austin Long, PhD Candidates and members of the Security Studies Program, launched the Insurgency and Irregular Warfare Working Group within the Political Science Department. The Working Group will bring together academics from various disciplines as well as U.S. military officers and intelligence officials, to explore current problems related to insurgency and counter-insurgency. Political Science Associate Professor Roger Petersen is the faculty sponsor.

The German Marshall Fund selected PhD Candidates Stephanie Kaplan and Caitlin Talmadge as 2005 Manfred Woener Fellows. In June, as part of a delegation of young Germans and Americans, they traveled throughout Germany and to Brussels as guests of the German Armed Forces, meeting with E.U. defense and foreign policy officials.

Richard Locke, Alvin J. Siteman Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship and Political Science, was awarded the 2005 Faculty Pioneer Award for Academic Leadership by The Aspen Institute.

Robert Lucas, CIS Research Affiliate and Professor of Economics at Boston University, gave talks on migration at conferences in Kenya in May and Ghana in July. He spoke at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm in September, and a workshop in Germany later that month.

Political Science Associate Professor and former CIS Director Kenneth Oye participated in MIT’s response to hurricane Katrina during a forum called “How Can We Improve Disaster Response?” Professor Oye spoke about how FEMA became a “hollow agency” after a post-9/11 reshuffling.

In June, Professor Karen R. Polenske from the Department of Urban Studies and Planning gave a talk on “Land Recycling and Land Scarcity in China” in Beijing to the China Development Forum. She has been appointed to the newly established MIT Energy Council and was recently selected as a Regional Science Association International Fellow.

Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Director of CIS’s Program on Human Rights and Justice, was recently appointed by the National Democratic Institute to an international advi-

On June 20th, World Refugee Day, Dr. Gary Troeller, Research Associate at CIS, gave the keynote lecture at a meeting of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and The Association of State Coordinators for Refugee Resettlement and Health Services in Washington, D.C., titled, “Current Challenges to the International Asylum Regime.” That month he was elected Co-Chair of the MIT-based Inter-University Committee on International Migration, along with Boston University Professor and CIS Research Affiliate Robert Lucas.

Jing Wang, S.C. Fang Professor of Chinese Languages and Culture, became Head of MIT’s Foreign Languages and Literatures Department in July. She received a conference grant from the Ford Foundation in Beijing for “The Third Space of the ‘Commons’ and Reform Policies of the People’s Republic of China,” which took place July 29-31 in Beijing. She has joined the editorial board for a book series on “Media, Culture, and Social Change in Asia” (Routledge Curzon) and the editorial advisory board for a new journal called Global Media and Communication.

SSP Senior Research Scientist Cindy Williams received a two-year, $150,000 grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to undertake a major project on national security strategy and resource planning, entitled “Improving the Nation’s Security Decisions.” Dr. Williams will partner with Gordon Adams, Director of Security Policy Studies at George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs, to produce the first study of how the government sets priorities for national security budgets. In addition, Dr. Williams spoke in October at the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies and Nuclear Freeze 25th Anniversary Symposium, and published an SSP paper titled “Transforming the Rewards for Military Service.”

New Faces

Bob Buderi joined SSP as a Visiting Fellow last spring, working under a grant from the Navy to write a post-Cold War history of the Office of Naval Research (ONR). Buderi is the former Editor-in-Chief of MIT’s Technology Review and the author of two books: Engines of Tomorrow and The Invention That Changed the World, which focused on the MIT radiation laboratory during WWII.

Professor Juan Cole, Middle East historian at the University of Michigan and a leading expert on Shi’ite Islam, joined the Security Studies Program as a Senior Advisor last spring.

Dr. Louise Druke joined CIS full-time this year as a fellow with the Program on Human Rights and Justice. She is also Visiting Professor at the New Bulgarian University, Sofia, and a senior executive with the UNHCR. Dr. Druke is researching human rights and justice in the 20th and 21st centuries in international affairs and refugee policy, with an emphasis on post-communist countries.

Professor Yumi Hiwatari is Visiting Fellow at CIS this year. She is a Professor of International Relations at Sophia University in Tokyo and has written widely on U.S.-Japanese relations and Japanese defense politics.

Jennifer Klein has become the Program Coordinator for Jerusalem 2050, the CIS-DUSP initiative. Jennifer, who is working toward a master’s degree at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, previously worked for the Institute for Middle East Peace and Development.
Kristen Jamison joined CIS last spring as a Program Assistant to the Seminar XXI Program. Before coming to MIT, Kristen worked at a publishing company.

Habib Rahiab joined CIS as a Visiting Scholar this fall. Mr. Rahiab directed a school for refugee girls in Pakistan and headed a human rights documentation group that exposed the oppression of an Afghan ethnic minority, the Hazaras. After the U.S. invasion and fall of the Taliban, he went to work for Human Rights Watch. In August 2003, as a result of his investigations into human rights abuses by Afghan warlords, Mr. Rahiab’s life was threatened, and he and his family were forced to flee Afghanistan. He was invited to Harvard Law School, where he was supported by a “Scholars at Risk” fellowship.

Earthea B. Nance is a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellow this year at the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. An assistant professor of Urban Affairs and Planning at Virginia Tech, she is a licensed professional civil engineer. Her research interests are water and sanitation in developing countries, community participation in development projects, and evaluation research and case study methodology. While at MIT, Dr. Nance is writing a book on Brazil’s experience with participation in urban sanitation and teaching a graduate seminar.

Valerie Thaddeus joined the Security Studies Program this fall as a part-time assistant dealing with events and seminars. She previously worked at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

Carlo Trigilia joined CIS as a Visiting Fellow in November. He is Professor of Economic Sociology at the University of Florence, Italy, and the author of Economic Sociology: State, Market and Society in Modern Capitalism (2002) and Changing Governance of Local Economies: Responses of European Local Production Systems. His current research interests concern the development of innovative economic activities in European and American cities.

Florian Wettstein, a Visiting Fellow with the Program on Human Rights and Justice, is completing his doctorate in business ethics at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. His research while at PHRJ will focus on the moral obligations of multinational corporations.

Miram Zoll, also a Visiting Fellow at the Program on Human Rights and Justice, was a consultant to the United Nations and related agencies from 1999-2005. She is a founding co-producer of the Take Our Daughters to Work program. Her research at PHRJ will address how the enforcement of women’s economic rights should be used as a job creation strategy to alleviate poverty and improve support for orphans and vulnerable children.

The Security Studies Program welcomed its 2005-2006 Military Fellows in September. Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Conner comes to MIT from the Army Human Resources Command, where he was Chief of the Special Forces Branch. He commanded a Special Forces A-Team for three years, and most recently served as Commander of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), leading the Battalion through two combat rotations in Iraq. Commander David Joseph Di Tollo is a Naval Aviator and Naval Helicopter Pilot. Most recently, he served as the Flag Secretary to the Commander and Staff Executive Officer, Naval Special Warfare Command, the Special Operations component of the U.S. Navy. Lieutenant Colonel Adam “A.J.” McMillan is a command pilot, flying T-37, T-38, C-141B, C-130 and C-17A aircraft. He recently returned from the Middle East, where he was Squadron Commander for the 817 Expeditionary Airlift Squadron. Colonel George H. Bristol, comes to MIT from the 1st Marine Division in Iraq. Next summer, he will take command of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group in Iraq.
Published

Professor Suzanne Berger, Raphael Dorman and Helen Starbuck Professor of Political Science

J. Patrick Boyd, PhD Candidate in Political Science, and Richard J. Samuels, CIS Director and Ford International Professor of Political Science

Vanda Felbab-Brown, PhD Candidate in Political Science


M. Taylor Fravel, Assistant Professor of Political Science


Benjamin Friedman, PhD Candidate in Political Science


Jeanne Guillemin, Professor of Sociology at Boston College and SSP Senior Fellow


Austin Long, PhD Candidate in Political Science

Robert E.B. Lucas, CIS Research Affiliate and Professor of Economics at BU
Karen R. Polenske, Professor of Regional Political Economy and Planning, Department of Urban Studies and Planning


Barry Posen, Ford International Professor of Political Science

Joshua Rovner and Austin Long, PhD Candidates in Political Science

Joshua Rovner

Harvey Sapolsky, Professor of Political Science, and Director of the Security Studies Program

Caitlin Talmadge, PhD Candidate in Political Science

“Don’t Count on Merkel to Defrost U.S.-German Relations,” European Voice, September 1, 2005.

Jing Wang, S.C. Fang Professor of Chinese Languages & Culture and Head, Foreign Languages and Literatures
Editor, China: Space, Place, and Popular Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).


Cindy Williams, Security Studies Program Principal Research Scientist

Elizabeth Wood, Associate Professor of History and Director of Women’s Studies

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