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BRIC and the road to superpowerdom

Zachary Keith Ochoa
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BRIC and the Road to Superpowerdom

A Project Presented to

the Faculty of the Undergraduate

College of Arts and Letters

James Madison University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

by Zachary Keith Ochoa

May 2014

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Political Science, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts.

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Dedication

This manuscript is dedicated to my grandparents, Janet Kay Arnold and David Milton Arnold, for all of the love and support they have given me.
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Abstract

Despite the fact that the United States has reigned as the global hegemonic power since the fall of the Soviet Union, the concept of the superpower is still very relevant today. With the perception that U.S. global dominance is waning, there are those who are waiting to see who the next dominant power may be, with many expecting states like China to fill the power vacuum. There are many countries that can project power on a global scale, known as great powers, such as Germany and Great Britain, but there has not been much if any comprehensive analysis on what causes a great power to become a modern superpower. The BRIC countries have been identified as the most plausible candidates for this status. Since Goldman Sachs identified them as today’s fastest growing economies, many have predicted that either Brazil, Russia, India or China will be next to challenge the United States for its position in the global order. Whoever rises to superpowerdom may determine what kind of world we live in, what languages are globally dominant, what international institutions have the most power, what form of money we use and even what form of government is given international priority. It is entirely feasible that a new superpower may rise which does not look at democracy favorably, despite the pro-democracy preference of the international community today. Due to the impact that a new superpower could have on global politics, it is critical that we understand how a country becomes a superpower. First, I will examine the ascension of the historical superpowers and how they came to fulfill that role. Afterwards, I will take what I have learned and apply it to the modern-day nations that have been proposed as possible candidates for superpowerdom. By doing so, I hope to make an accurate prediction on what the future of superpower politics may hold for the international system and world as a whole.
Chapter I
Introduction and Literature Review

Section I: Introduction

International Politics during the late 20th Century were almost entirely defined by the existence of two states. The U.S.-Soviet Union rivalry dominated the world stage and the way we viewed the international system. The rivalry between these two powers was present in nearly every crisis, every conflict and every struggle that took place between 1945 and 1990. The power and influence that they wielded was eventually defined with the coining of the term superpower. Superpower was the foreign affairs concept of the century, for if a country held this label it meant that its actions could reshape the world that we live in. Although the term fell out of use with the fall of the Soviet Union and ascension of the United States into the global hegemon, the concept has slowly been returning to international relations.

Despite the fact that the United States has reigned as the global hegemonic power since the fall of the Soviet Union, the concept of the superpower is still very relevant today. With the perception that U.S. global dominance is waning, there are those who are waiting to see who the next dominant power may be, with many expecting states like China or the European Union to rise and fill the power vacuum. Today there are many countries that can project power on a global scale, known as great powers, such as Germany, France and Great Britain, but there has not been much, if any, comprehensive analysis on what causes a great power to become a modern superpower. Whoever rises to superpowerdom may determine what kind of world we live in, what languages are globally dominant, what international institutions have the most power, what form of money we use and even what form of government is given international priority. It is entirely feasible that a new superpower may rise which does not view democracy as
the most desirable form of government, despite the pro-democracy preference of the international community. These possibilities emphasize the importance of understanding the process through which a new superpower may rise.

Due to the impact that a new superpower could have on global politics, it is critical that we understand how a country becomes a superpower. The purpose of this project is to determine what a rising superpower would look like in the 21st Century. An effective way to do this is to examine the ascension of the historical superpowers and how they came to fulfill that role. Afterwards, I will attempt take what I have learned and apply it to the modern-day nations that have been proposed as possible candidates for superpowerdom. By doing so, this study hopes to make an accurate prediction on what the future of superpower politics may hold for the international system and whether or not we will see another superpower appear.

**Expectations of this Study**

I begin with an examination of the four historical and failed superpowers: the United States, Great Britain, Soviet Union and Germany. I will conduct case studies on all four of them and identify ten independent variables that allow a great power to be considered a potential superpower. These hypotheses are domestic stability, democracy, capitalism, ownership of natural resources, possession of an advanced economic sector, military spending, military technology, population trends, presence of local rivals, and development of a new global ideology. I will then test them against each of the BRIC states (Brazil, Russia, India and China). These four countries were identified in a Goldman Sachs report as the fastest growing developing economies, and that global economic power will eventually shift to them (O’Neill 2001). My results conclude that none of these rising powers can be considered a rising superpower. Brazil still has to develop a formidable military before it can project power beyond
South America. Russia has become too autocratic under Putin to take full advantage of the resources within its control and develop a free and prosperous society. India has made a lot of gains recently but is located in a part of the world that is incredibly unstable. Finally, China has too many long-term domestic and international issues it must contend with for its current rise in the international system to last. My final conclusion is that there is no state in the international system today with the ability to challenge the United States’ position as the global hegemon.

*Defining a Superpower*

The difference between an international superpower and global hegemon is relative, not absolute. A superpower typically exists in a bipolar system, when there are two countries running the international system and competing against one another. Superpowers are the most powerful countries in the world that meet the qualifications for superpowerdom as defined by this project. A country becomes a hegemon when there is no other country that can meet the standards for superpower status. In other words, a hegemon is a superpower that does not have any other international superpowers to compete with.

*Section II: Literature Review*

International Affairs is a popular field within liberal arts, and as such there exists a wealth of research and theory on the subject. With the international system being defined by its most powerful players, there exists an extensive amount of research on superpowers, great powers and power politics. Since this research project is designed to examine the international superpower, it is important to first define what being a superpower means. This literature review will collect the research and identify the characteristics of superpowerdom.

*Military*
When considering a superpower in international relations, the first thing that typically comes to mind is a strong military. Whether it be the Royal Navy, the Red Army or the military forces of the United States, a strong military has always been viewed as essential to becoming a superpower.

In a study of superpowers done by Paul Sharp, he declared that the United States and the Soviet Union were considered superpowers because they were stronger than any other country (1992). This notion is reinforced in another superpower study done by Jörg Kammerhofer that concluded that the essential criterion for superpower status has always been one thing, might (2009). This strength is characterized by both the size and wartime capabilities of the nation’s military in question. The idea that military strength is the preeminent aspect of superpowerdom has also been suggested in a book by Paul Kennedy in 1987, who declared that a large element of the superpower saga of the twentieth century was the military buildup and arms race between the two global powers (1987, 383). This research is supported by the ideas of William Fox, the scholar who originally coined the term superpower when describing the British Empire, United States and Soviet Union. In his book, ‘The Superpowers’, he declared that these three nations had military strength well beyond anyone else’s within the global community, and as such were the only ones with the influence and ability to maintain stability and resolve conflicts on a global scale (Fox 1944, 24). Additionally, studies indicate that the possession of a top-class military does more for the superpower than grant the ability to intervene and influence events anywhere in the world; it also provides an element of security not enjoyed by other nations. Dominant states in the international system enjoy a sort of security where they simply do not need to worry about their own protection as much as lesser powers (Lake 2009, 94; Waltz 1979, 194). In other words, a superpower enjoys not only unique offensive capabilities, but a unique defensive
position as well. When taken together, these studies and scholarly works promote the idea that a state cannot become an international superpower without the possession of a large and advanced military. This fits in with the classification of the United States as a superpower, which possesses more than 1.5 million military personnel, 8000 tanks, 15,000 military aircraft and 10 aircraft carriers (GFP 2012). However, it is not enough to simply have the strength, in order to become an international superpower a state must be able to project hard power on an international scale.

_The man who_ envisioned superpowerdom, William Fox, declared that being a superpower means having not only great power but also great mobility of power (Fox, 21). This means that not only must a superpower have a substantial military in its possession, it must also be able to use it globally, as evidenced by the United States’ deployment of almost 386,000 military personnel beyond its own borders (Kane 2006). Barry Buzan and Rosita Dellios supported this hypothesis when they declared that superpowers must be militarily outstanding and with global reach (Buzan 2004, 69; Dellios 2005). To support this theory, we need to look at examples of accepted superpowers and their military capabilities. The most prominent example is the United States, who William Pfaff cited as a superpower with global military capabilities, using its deployments in the Middle East as an example (1990). Another superpower one can examine is the British Empire. One study declares a central theme to British superpowerdom being its ability to intervene militarily nearly anywhere in the globe (Clayton 1986). These works support the idea that global military reach is a central component to becoming a superpower. However, one does not need to simply look at historical superpowers to determine if this trend is still true today. Since the fall of the Soviet Union analysts and scholars have kept their eyes open to see what other nations may possess the military capabilities that may lead to its becoming a superpower. These studies and reports support the hypothesis that without a military that can act
in the global theater, a nation cannot become a superpower. Additionally, it may not even be enough to be able to simply have a large military with global deployment capabilities in order to reach this level of international power, there are also specific technologies that every nation needs if superpower status is to be attained.

Studies have suggested that there is one capability that all superpowers after 1945 must possess: nuclear capability. Nuclear weapons changed the scope of power in international relations and may be mandatory in order to be considered a superpower. This is because a country that possesses a nuclear weapon also possesses a nuclear deterrence. Michael MccGwire defined nuclear deterrence as the concept of ‘I will destroy you with nuclear weapons if you attack me’ (2006). Nuclear deterrence is present with the United States, which possesses a ‘nuclear triad’, consisting of bombers, ICBM’s and SLBM’s, all of which possess the capacity to deliver a nuclear payload to any potential threat (Spring 2012). William Pfaff concluded that this capability eliminated the concept of great power invulnerability, and has now become a requirement in order to join the club of great powers (1990). This theory is built upon by Michel May, who suggested in his research that Japan may eventually become a superpower due to the possibility of it developing and fielding nuclear forces (1993). What this means is that nuclear weapons have changed the way the international system is perceived, and are now a necessity in order to join the upper echelons of global power.

International Standing

Superpower is a term used to describe a level of power within the international system. As such, it is important to understand that there are benchmarks that must be met internationally before a nation can become a superpower. The first benchmark that will be examined is where
the potential superpower stacks up against some of the most important players in the international system, the great powers.

Before a nation can become a superpower, research indicates that it must first be recognized as a great power. It is important to note that the concept of great power is much older than that of superpower, as is declared in the research of Jörg Kammerhofer (2009). That same study concluded that the sign of a great power is the requirement that it be consulted before any decisions are made, regardless of the presence of a direct interest by the great power or not. This fits with current international tradition, which recognizes any country with a U.N. Security Council seat as a great power (Kelsen 2008, 272). Paul Sharp builds on this in his own 1992 study, concluding that what makes a great power is capability, prestige, experience and influence in international institutions (1992). Support exists for this theory in the acceptance of Germany as a likely great power due to its influence within Europe (Bolsinger 2004; Lynch 2011). In his study he also supported the hypothesis that great powers must be accepted as such in order to grow into that role. Research points out that they must not only be accepted as the leaders within the international system, but be able to act for its sake (Waltz 1979, 195). However, it is important to discern what separates them from superpowers. Great powers must be major players in a category of great power, such as the categories of military and economy, but to be a superpower, studies show that a nation needs to possess imposing strength in every one of these categories (Layne 1993). Further research indicates that a superpower need not only possess the prerequisites for great-powerdom but also wield extensive influence with other established great powers.

A superpower needs more than just strength and power, it needs influence. This influence usually takes the form of an international alliance, such as NATO, or client states like the
Warsaw Pact. It is within this influence that the superpower in question is able to enhance its own security, and studies show that alliances have traditionally been used as an extension of political power and influence (Nye 1997, 70; Osgood 1968, 21). Perfect examples of this are present in the United States’ alliances with Japan, South Korea and Colombia (Smith 2012; Bajoria 2011; Hanson 2007). Paul Sharp supported this theory through his examination of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. marshaling alliances containing the wealthiest and most developed states (1992). When taken together, these studies suggest that an important element to international power politics is the sphere of influence. In regards to superpower politics specifically, these spheres of influence are built around a single dominant power that uses them as an extension of their own influence and reach. This hypothesis is supported by several studies that examined American power when supplemented by that of its Western allies (Krauthammer 2002; Layne 1993; Snidal 1985). These networks will be created using several justifications, including support against a perceived threat (Schweller 1997). What is important to understand is that despite its reasons for building one, a superpower will need its own sphere of influence in order to serve as its foundation for promoting its own rules and influences.

Another important mark of a superpower is being a rule setter. Superpowerdom is a political concept, not one of international law (Kammerhofer 2009). However, despite the lack of any official leadership, research supports the belief that superpowers are critical to the regulation of global affairs (Nijman 1992). Examples of regulation would be the United States’ influence and voting power within powerful global organizations such as the IMF and World Bank (Foot 2003). There are several theories of international relations that support this hypothesis, one being Hegemonic Stability Theory. One study of Hegemonic Stability Theory states that the international system is most stable when there is one dominant power setting the rules (Webb
Lemke describes an alternative to Hegemonic Stability Theory in Power Transition Theory, which supports the hypothesis that within the international system, the dominant power establishes the international order with rules that direct international interactions, while deriving the benefits of these rules in the form of wealth, security and prestige (1997). Several scholarly books have cited examples of American rule setting in the international system through its influence on the Atlantic Charter, UN Charter, human rights laws, the global trading system and international financial institutions (Schiffer 2009, 11; Halperin 2007, 5). These examples support the hypotheses established within Hegemonic Stability Theory and Power Transition Theory, referencing the dominant power as the loudest voice behind the establishment of international laws and norms. Something important to note however is that this by no means subordinates the superpower in question to its own laws. Studies have concluded that even though a superpower is the primary rule setter within the international system, its overbearing strength and ability to act unilaterally grants it the ability to ignore the system when it suits it is convenient to do so (Gordenker 1980; Kammerhofer 2009). The research referenced here establishes superpowerdom as the primary parent of international regulations. This means that a nation could become a superpower only if it wielded the influence and prestige that would allow it to play such a role within the international system.

Whether or not a nation is capable of becoming a superpower also depends on the international system that is currently in place. Even if the variables listed thus far are all fulfilled by a specific country, it would potentially have one or more superpowers to contend with before it is ever able to rise to this category of international power. Research has identified three categories of international power polarity: multipolarity, where there are several dominant powers called great powers, bipolarity, where the international system is split between two
dominant powers called superpowers, and unipolarity, where the international system is dominated by a single dominant power known as a hegemon (Hafeznia 2010). The system that is established at any one point in time is determined by whom, if anybody, the international community has accepted as their international leaders (Buzan 69). Research has concluded that the international system was bipolar during the Cold War, with two superpowers (The U.S. and U.S.S.R.) dominating the international system (Sharp 1992). Further studies have also concluded that when the collapse of one superpower ended the Cold War in 1991, the international system become unipolar with the only remaining superpower rising to the status of international hegemon (Wohlforth 2009; Krauthammer 2002). Research shows that depending on what system is in place, a new power can either rise peacefully and seek adoption by the international community as a leader, as China is currently attempting to do, or it can attempt to wage systemic war against the dominant power for its position, the course that Germany pursued through the world wars (Lemke 2003). What these studies tell us is that whether or not a new superpower can be born depends heavily on what dominant powers have already been established.

Economy

Although it is an international concept, becoming a superpower also depends on several domestic factors. A state that is suffering at home has little chance of excelling abroad. There are many domestic variables that must be met in order for a nation to rise to superpowerdom, but perhaps none more so than the economy. Indeed, scholars like Muto Ichiyo and Andrew Sobel have declared American hegemony and power to be economic and market based at heart (Ichiyo 2002; Sobel 2012, 174). Dr. Ketevan Rostiashvili built on this with his own research, citing examples of American economic power in the form of its information age economy, heavy
investment and consumption (Rostiashvili 2012). What these studies imply is that superpowerdom is more than just militaristic and influential, it is economic.

There have been studies suggesting that the size of a nation’s economy is directly proportional to its international strength and power projection capabilities (Soysa 1997; Kammerhofer 2009). After the end of World War Two, when the United States had been reborn as a superpower, it possessed one of the largest GDP’s in the world (Chantrill 2013). This massive economy continued to be hegemonic in scope, as evidenced by the United States’ 700 billion dollars spent on military expenditures, accounting for 42 percent of world military spending (SIPRA Dataset; SIPRI 2012). What this implies is that economic hegemony leads to military supremacy. This line of thought led Michael May to predict Japan’s eventual rise into superpowerdom due to its rapidly growing GDP in the nineties (May 1993). It has also encouraged writers like Geir Lundestad to view not just the United States as the dominant international power, but has also led to an increased reverence for Chinese power due to the two states possess the two largest economies in the world (2012, 89). Indeed, China’s economic rise is the principal theme behind the perception of China as a potential superpower, with its economy growing at an average rate of 9.4 percent per year and accounting for four percent of the world’s economy (Bijian 2005; Subramanian 2011). John Mearsheimer built on this prediction in his book, ‘Tragedy of Great Power Politics’, when he concluded that China’s development into a regional hegemon will depend largely on its ability to maintain its economic growth (2003, 401). The research available provides strong support for the theory that superpowerdom is determined just as much by economic variables as it is by variables of internationalism and strength.
If the economy is a major factor behind a nation’s rise to superpower status, then economic stability also plays a large role and this is supported by the research available. The most prominent example of how domestic stability affects the superpower concept lives in the story of the Soviet Union, since it collapsed from superpowerdom in the most visible and outstanding way. When Kristian Petrov did a study on the Soviet Union’s collapse, it was determined that domestic instability played a large role in its fall from grace (2008). This lesson is still very relevant for superpower politics today, with Dr. Rostiashvili declaring the greatest threats to the United States being not in the form of a military adversary or international rival, but in the form of income inequality and debt that may lead to domestic unrest (2012). The research cited here declares that unrest and social upheaval are among the greatest threats to a nation’s economy, and any nation’s chances of becoming a superpower will be directly tied to its ability to maintain domestic peace.

Section III: Conclusion and Methodology

There is a substantial amount of research on what a superpower is. However, there does not appear to have been a comprehensive study on what causes a great power to ascend and become a superpower. As a result, this research project will seek to break new ground in the search for an explanatory approach to superpowerdom. In order to answer the research question, this thesis will rely on the use of case studies. I will examine the two historically accepted superpowers: The United States and the British Empire. There will also be case studies on Germany and the Soviet Union, the failed superpowers, in order to discern why they failed where others succeeded. I will analyze the decades before these states became superpowers, specifically analyzing their growth in the areas of military strength, economic power, and international influence. For example, in regards to the United States I will examine the growth of its GDP,
military expenditures, military deployments, and international relations relative to other great powers in the decades preceding its ascension into superpowerdom at the end of World War Two. Once this is done for both historical superpowers, I will compare and contrast their rises with each other, Germany and the USSR, identifying the independent variables correlating to a nation’s rise to superpower status and develop hypotheses answering our research question. The next step in this project is to use the independent variables from the study to analyze the BRIC nations that appear to be in a pre-superpower stage (Brazil, Russia, India and China), using what I’ve learned to make a prediction on whether or not any of these rising powers may go on to attain superpowerdom.
Chapter II
The United Kingdom: The First Superpower and Hegemon

Introduction

Throughout history, there have been many states that possessed a great deal of power. The Roman Empire, the Han Dynasty, and the Napoleonic Empire are just a few states that fit into this category. However, it was not until the nineteenth century that the first true international superpower first came into existence. The British Empire was the first country in the world that fit the bill for international superpowerdom. It was the first state that not only possessed great power, but was able to use said power to design and implement an international system on a global scale. Therefore, the British Empire will serve as the first case study this project will perform in order to analyze the differences between the development of a superpower and the development of any other state.

Historical Background

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was the world’s first international superpower and hegemon. When thinking of a superpower, it is more than likely that the first thought that comes to mind is the British Empire. While England on its own is a small country, it eventually ascended to global dominance and founded the largest empire in human history. It started with the conquest of its northern neighbor, Scotland, and its neighboring island, Ireland. England’s rule over its island would be finalized with the founding of the United Kingdom of Great Britain in the early 1700s (Bromley 1970, 278). In doing so, the Englishmen established Great Britain as the British Empire, a preeminent power in Europe. Despite the fact that the British faced several powerful rivals on the European Continent, most notably in the form of the French and Spanish Empires, they would eventually come to surpass them all.
If it were possible to nail down the moment where the British Empire was born, it was during the reign of the woman who is quite possibly the most widely recognized monarch in history, Queen Elizabeth I. By the time of her coronation in 1559, the Protestant Kingdom was increasingly at risk by the two dominant Catholic powers of Europe: Spain and France (Ergang 1939, 246). However, Spain was a much more direct threat to English sovereignty than France was at the time. The King of Spain at the time sought to depose Elizabeth from the throne and instate the Catholic friendly Mary, Queen of Scots in her place (Ergang 1939, 249). Despite the fact that Elizabeth eventually had Mary executed, Spanish hostility did not subside (Ergang 1939, 249). The Spanish built a mighty fleet known as the Spanish Armada and deployed it to conquer England. Unfortunately for Spain, their armada met with tragedy and was destroyed before it could accomplish its mission (Ergang 1939, 252). Furthermore, the construction and subsequent defeat of the Armada wreaked havoc on Spain’s wealth and military strength, removing Spain as a direct threat to Great Britain for the remainder of its rise. As a result, Great Britain took its place as the dominant power in Europe and thus the British Empire was born.

The British Empire spent the next two centuries building a vast and powerful global empire. Without the Spanish Armada to contend with, the British Navy rose to global prominence as the most powerful naval force in the world. That, as well as exploration of the New World, allowed the British to expand their domain and establish colonies throughout the globe. However, supremacy over the Spanish was not enough, and the United Kingdom still had a formidable adversary in the form of the French. If Great Britain ever had an archenemy, it was France. The two kingdoms had been fighting wars against one another almost since their founding, and at the same time that Britain was building its empire in the Thirteen Colonies and parts of Canada, France was building a colonial empire of its own in Quebec and other parts of
North America. This rivalry finally culminated in a massive conflict known as the Seven Years’ War. This war can accurately be described as the true first world war, for it was fought on nearly every end of the globe with massive armies between two coalitions (Ergang 1939, 592). It ended in 1763 with a decisive victory for the British Empire, seizing the rest of Canada from the French and reducing the French Empire in the New World to nearly nothing. At this moment in time, the United Kingdom possessed no serious external threats to its power and had been firmly established as the top power in the international system. Unfortunately for them, it would not be an external threat that would serve as the first major setback for the British Empire; it would instead be an internal one.

The first serious threat to British sovereignty came in the form of rebellion. Dissension in Britain’s Thirteen Colonies eventually culminated into total revolution against English rule, which even brought the empire back into conflict with its ancient French and Spanish rivals. By the time the war had ended in 1783, England had lost its prized colonies on the east coast of North America, and now it had to contend with a new rising power in the Western Hemisphere (Ergang 1939, 607). While the loss of the Thirteen Colonies certainly dealt a blow to British morale and prestige, it was not a crippling blow in any sense of the word. Great Britain, even after the American Revolution, still stood as the primary trading partner of the United States. In a sense, the British Empire was still reaping the economic benefits of colonization without the responsibilities of administration. Truthfully, the loss of the United States did not pose any fatal risk to English dominance. The greatest risk to British hegemony took the shape of its old enemy, the French.

It was not the American Revolution that posed the greatest threat to British power; it was instead the French Revolution. The French Empire, reborn under Napoleon Bonaparte, began a
conquest of the entire European Continent that brought nearly every major power in Europe to its knees. For the first time in many years, England lived under the threat of invasion. There was a fear in London that eventually Napoleon would cross the English Channel and ravage the heart of the empire. Fortunately, this nightmare never came to pass for the British. In a foolish attempt to subjugate the Russian Empire, Emperor Napoleon organized his Grand Army and invaded. This act proved to be his undoing, and the Russian Winter devastated Napoleon’s forces, forcing him to retreat (Ergang 1939, 738). Following this, a coalition of European powers including Great Britain deposed the French leader and sent him into exile. While Napoleon did attempt a recovery in France, the European Coalition reorganized and defeated him one final time at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 (Ergang 1939, 748). The Battle of Waterloo was the event that sealed British hegemony in the international system for the next century. At this point, Great Britain would have no serious international opponents until the First World War. For the purposes of this case study, the next half century (1815-1850) will be identified as the rise of the British Empire into hegemony in the international system. In the same way that this project’s literature review was divided into the categories of economy, military and international standing, it is by that standard that this project will analyze the rise of the United Kingdom into superpower status.

The British Economy

From the year 1815 into the mid-nineteenth century, the British economy grew into the strongest economy in the world. International economics teaches one powerful lesson, money is power. A powerful state can only maintain said power for as long as it has the wealth to back it up. This becomes a much more complicated task with the opening up of the world and introduction of globalism. Nevertheless, it was a concept that Great Britain mastered to great effect. Eventually the British Empire would possess a system of investments and finances that
connected London to its colonies all over the world (Christopher 1988, 66). It began with the Industrial Revolution to the British economy. England is a very small country, and as a result does not possess many natural resources of its own for the purposes of production. In addition to that, many imperial governments saw it as their duty to assume control of their commercial interests, which would eventually lead to the Second Wave of Imperialism (Hyam 2010, 123). This ideology was a primary motivator in England’s pursuit of new overseas colonies. Britain would establish colonies and use them as a source of raw materials, importing them to the homeland and thus using them in the manufacture raw goods for export. British exports came to account for 20 percent of revenue for the central government (Crouzet 1980).

Including the Industrial Revolution, the other concept that helped to bolster the British economy was the introduction of liberal policies to their economic system. These policies called for the reduction of government intervention in the economy and introduction of more freedoms for the individual citizen. The effects were very generous, securing the place of capitalism in Great Britain. That, coupled with the Industrial Revolution, created a formula for an economy that would outpace any competitor. By the time Great Britain had completed its rise to prominence in 1850, it had the largest and wealthiest economy among Europe’s great powers (See Tables 1 and 2) (Maddison 2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1820</th>
<th>1830</th>
<th>1840</th>
<th>1850</th>
<th>1860</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom</strong></td>
<td>1,706</td>
<td>1,749</td>
<td>1,990</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>2,830</td>
<td>3,190</td>
<td>3,447</td>
<td>4,009</td>
<td>4,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.A.</strong></td>
<td>1,257</td>
<td>1,376</td>
<td>1,588</td>
<td>1,806</td>
<td>2,178</td>
<td>2,445</td>
<td>3,184</td>
<td>3,392</td>
<td>4,091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Germany</strong></td>
<td>1,077</td>
<td>1,328</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,428</td>
<td>1,639</td>
<td>1,839</td>
<td>1,991</td>
<td>2,428</td>
<td>2,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Russia</strong></td>
<td>688</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>943</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td>1,135</td>
<td>1,191</td>
<td>1,428</td>
<td>1,597</td>
<td>1,892</td>
<td>1,876</td>
<td>2,120</td>
<td>2,376</td>
<td>2,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spain</strong></td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,079</td>
<td>1,236</td>
<td>1,207</td>
<td>1,646</td>
<td>1,624</td>
<td>1,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Austria</strong></td>
<td>1,218</td>
<td>1,399</td>
<td>1,515</td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>1,778</td>
<td>1,863</td>
<td>2,019</td>
<td>2,443</td>
<td>2,822</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See Tables 1 and 2) (Maddison 2007)
Table 2: GDP of the Great Powers during Great Britain’s Rise  
(In 1990 International Geary-Khamis dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1820</th>
<th>1825</th>
<th>1830</th>
<th>1835</th>
<th>1840</th>
<th>1845</th>
<th>1850</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>36,232</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>42,228</td>
<td>48,517</td>
<td>53,234</td>
<td>57,951</td>
<td>63,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>12,548</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18,219</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27,694</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>42,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>26,819</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>37,250</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>37,678</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Maddison 2007)

The heart of the British economy was comprised of two parts. The first part was its incredible industrial sector. The British had seized the message of the Industrial Revolution and capitalized on it. As was mentioned earlier in this case study, the life blood of England’s economic might was imported raw goods from its colonies. This remained true throughout the entire life of the British Empire. As its colonies continued to spread and expand throughout the world, so too did its ownership of the world’s natural resources. By the time the rise of the United Kingdom had climaxed in the mid-nineteenth century, it was producing 53% of the entire world’s iron supply, 50% of its coal supply and 50% of its ignite supply (Kennedy 1987, 151). These resources served as a massive source of income for the United Kingdom as it cornered the global market in manufacturing.

During Great Britain’s rise, it experienced a rapid industrialization of its homeland. By the year 1830, just over halfway through its development into superpowerdom, the empire was responsible for two-thirds of Europe’s entire industrial share of output (Bairoch 1982). This development allowed it to utilize its natural resource imports to produce manufactured goods and capitalize the world’s manufacturing market. As a result, by the time Great Britain had completed its rise it was accounting for an entire fifth of the world’s manufacturing production (Kennedy 1987, 151). This allowed the British Empire to dominate the market for manufacturing...
and account for an entire 40 percent of all global trade in manufactured goods (Kennedy 1987, 151).

What makes these statistics so profound is not solely their value, but the circumstances under which they came to be. Great Britain was the nerve center of the British Empire, and yet its entire population accounted for only two percent of the world’s population (Crouzet 1982). Despite this fact, it accounted for roughly half of the globe’s manufacturing potential and consumed more energy than any other major power at the time of its rise (Kennedy 1987, 151). This is no small feat for such a small population, and is a significant factor when comparing the people of the British Empire to any other great power in the world. It would be surprising for a large country to in turn naturally possess a large economy due to the size of its population. However, for a country of significantly fewer people to possess an economy just as strong if not stronger than a much larger country expresses a much tighter hold on the global economy. This results in the conversion of a tiny population from an underrepresented social group to a wealthy class of global citizens in the international economy.

If Britain’s industrial sector was the first half of the heart of its economy, then its financial sector formed its second half (Kennedy 1987, 156). Following the Battle of Waterloo, Great Britain saw a surge in investment both at home and abroad that revitalized the English economy following the Napoleonic Wars. Now that the international system had become much more stable, the British people were able to invest abroad. For the half century after Waterloo international investment by English citizens had increased by almost 600% (See Table 3). The stability and strength of England’s financial institutions served as an invaluable resource for the British, and ensured a swift and steady rise to global economic prominence.
Table 3: Annual Investment Abroad by British Citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual Investment (British Pounds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>6 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>35 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>75 Million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kennedy 1987, 156)

The strongest aspect of Great Britain’s rise was the vastness and incredible strength of its economy. This had far reaching effects beyond the mere economic influence. Economic prominence also determines what the central government is able to invest its wealth in, namely its military. The size, strength and mission of the British Military were heavily influenced by the rise of industrialization and assimilation of laissez-faire economics.

*The British Military*

The rise of Great Britain after 1815 saw substantial changes to the scope and mission of its armed forces. Historically, England had been forced to maintain a substantial military in order to protect itself and its colonies from its European rivals. However, the defeat of Napoleon gave birth to a century where the United Kingdom faced no serious threats to its interests, power and sovereignty. Additionally, the new laissez-faire policies that the English had incorporated into their society depended on a peaceful international system that allowed for the stability of global commerce. Therefore, neither the British public nor its government felt a compelling need to maintain a strong military in relation to the other great powers of the world (French 1982). What is noteworthy is that while the economy of Great Britain was incredibly modern in relation to the nation’s rivals, this did not necessarily translate into a modernized military (Kennedy 1987, 152). Since the public mood did not favor war and conflict, there was little to compel them to take on the costs of upgrading their armed forces with the latest weaponry. Instead, the island nation
opted to focus its time, money and resources on the growth of their economy, and only spent two to three percent of its Gross National Product on the military (Peacock 1967).

When the rise of Great Britain first started in the early nineteenth century, it possessed the second largest military among the other world powers (See Table 4). However, by the time it reached its zenith in the mid-to-late 1800’s, its military stood as one of the smallest fighting forces among the world’s most powerful nations. It is no exaggeration to say that the British Empire was completely unprepared to fight in a major war during its rise and subsequent hegemony in the international system (Kennedy 1987, 152). Fortunately, perhaps even luckily, no major international crises ever took place in the world during this British Century, and the empire was allowed to get away with maintaining a massive empire with a negligible army.

Table 4: Military Personnel of the Great Powers, 1820-1900 (Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1820</th>
<th>1830</th>
<th>1840</th>
<th>1850</th>
<th>1860</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>1142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Singer 2010)

Something that is important to note is that while the British did not maintain a formidable army during its rise to power, it took an entirely different approach to its navy. The Royal Navy had always been the pride and joy of the British Empire, and this remained true during the half-century that made up the rise of the United Kingdom (Kennedy 1987, 154). Great Britain entered its development stage with the largest navy in the world, possessing more ships of the line than any other great power (See Table 5). While the subjects of the empire did indeed lose their taste for armed intervention throughout the world, they knew that the continued rise of their economy...
depended on the maintaining of British control of the seas. Trade was the heart of the imperial economy, reflected in Britain’s possession of more than an entire third of the world’s merchant marine force (Kennedy 1987, 151). As a result, control of the oceans was an invaluable interest to the Crown, and as such it continued to maintain the strongest naval force in the world.

Table 5: Size of European Navies, 1815

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ships of the Line</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom</strong></td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Russia</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spain</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kennedy 1987, 99)

The British Empire saw a drastic change in both the scope and scale of its military power. During the time period between 1815 and 1914 that make up what is now called the British Century, gone were the days of the frequent wars against the French. The multipolar world that had come to define British history from the days of the Spanish Armada until the end of the Napoleonic Wars no longer threatened English interests, and this was accurately reflected in the lack of major conflict that took place up until World War One. For the first time in its history, Great Britain was safe to project its primacy in the international system without any serious contender for its position.

*The British and the International System*

From the days of the Battle of Waterloo until the outbreak of the First World War the British Empire sat neatly atop the world in the international system. The world was a unipolar one, with British dominance in economics, territorial expansion and the high seas leaving it with no true rivals. The United States and Spain were too busy competing with each other, France was still recovering from Napoleon’s reign and the German Empire would not form until after 1870 to challenge the other great powers. Perhaps it can be attributed to pure luck, but Great Britain
was enjoying a time period of peace and prosperity during its rise that allowed it to reign as the global hegemon.

The nineteenth century gave birth to the second wave of imperialism. With the unification of Italy and Germany, imperialists were convinced that the future lie in the hands of large and powerful states (Porter 1999, 348). The United States was quickly becoming the dominant power on the North American Continent, and had established the Monroe Doctrine to deter any other major power from interfering in its affairs. In a nutshell, any European power that thought to expand its empire once more into North America, like the French attempted to do in Mexico, risked an outbreak of war with what was quickly becoming one of the fastest growing nations in the world. Fortunately for Europe, there were plenty more territories ripe for the plucking. The empires of Europe began to expand into Africa and Asia, dividing every territory of the world amongst themselves. Great Britain was quickly losing ground in America to its former colonies, but this served as merely a road bump to their influence. They began to expand into the Indian Subcontinent, Africa and China. It is important to note that while the great powers competed for colonies, it was an overall peaceful expedition. The only adversaries that Great Britain had to face in its acquisition of territory were the indigenous peoples of its new lands, and even this was not much of a factor.

During its rise between 1815 and 1865, the British Empire was growing at a pace of 100,000 square miles a year (Shaw 1970). This is a remarkable number, both in its scope and in its status as a peaceful expansion. It is also important to note that the lack of international opponents permitted the British to employ a negligible colonial military for the defense of its new acquisitions. In summation, the peaceful international system put England in a position where it was able to secure huge swaths of land and its reserves of natural resources, while at the
same time saving it from the financial costs of maintaining a large army to defend it. These conditions proved to be much more advantageous for the British than for any other great power, since it was not plagued with war recovery or the risks of local expansion. The British recognized that the current system worked well in their favor and were keenly interested in maintaining it.

International politics during this time period came to be defined by its balance of power approach to peace. The coalition of powers that defeated Napoleon Bonaparte was made up of all of the great powers of Europe, minus France of course. As time went on however, even France would come to join its former adversaries in the new system of checks and balances that would prevent the outbreak of major war for almost a century until the outbreak of the Great War. Britain depended on this system and the alliances that came with it to maintain its hegemony in international politics. For just under a century that is exactly how it would work out, and the British Empire sat atop the first unipolar international system as its reigning hegemon.

Analysis and Conclusions

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was the first great power in the international system to ascend to superpower status and rein as the international hegemon. Its history since the reign of Queen Elizabeth I was one of almost endless struggle and competition with its European neighbors. Eventually however, England would secure itself as one of the strongest great powers with its total victory over France in the Seven Year’s War. Despite the fact that it lost a very prestigious section of its territory in the aftermath of the American Revolution, Great Britain still stood as a first among equals in international politics. While its position would be threatened once more by Napoleon’s France, Britain and her allies would finally lay waste to his dreams of conquest in the Battle of Waterloo.
Great Britain’s rise to international dominance was fueled by economic momentum. The growth of the United Kingdom during the half century that followed the Battle of Waterloo would be characterized by its rapid industrialization. There are many factors that appeared to play into this development. The first is that Great Britain emerged from the Napoleonic Wars as the only European power that had not suffered from invasion. As a result, Britain’s political and economic infrastructure remained unscathed and did not have to undergo a reconstruction period. With the United States having also recently concluded its Civil War, the United Kingdom had an edge against every one of its competitors. The results were a dominant share in the world’s manufacturing market, control over many high-demand natural resources and a wave of international investment by the Crown’s subjects.

The second factor was Britain’s democratic system. That the United Kingdom was a constitutional monarchy put checks on the kind of corruption and abuse of power that act as a drain on a developing economy. It also allowed for the transparency and accountability within the government that allowed for well-informed decision making process. Finally, the switch from a mercantilist system to a liberal one opened up the British economy to expanded growth. The final nail in British mercantilism’s coffin came with the repeal of the protectionist Corn Laws (Thomas 1929, 53). Afterwards, Britain’s became a superpower as a fully capitalist country.

The half-century after Waterloo also saw substantial changes in the military forces of the British Empire. The people of England were no longer interested in the type military intervention across the globe that had become a historical trademark of British foreign policy. Now that their interests had switched to economics, the British government was not keen on military spending. As a result the empire did not maintain a large military force, despite the fact that they continued to possess the strongest navy on the seas. Therefore, it can be concluded that British hegemony
and superpowerdom was not dependent on its army’s potential, for it barely had any during its century of dominion. The fact that the U.K. had no regional threats to its territory is what permitted them to do this. Despite the fact that Great Britain was located geographically close to the great powers on the continent, the English Channel protected them from invasion by any potential aggressor. This allowed Britain to focus on outward expansion into its colonies instead of being paranoid about unpredictable neighbors.

After the Napoleonic Wars, Europe was experiencing a whiplash. There was no desire for another war to take place on the European continent, and that is when the United Kingdom stepped in with a new structure for the international order. A balance of power system was put in place that allowed the British Empire to sit firmly at the top while the other major powers suffered from local rivalries, recovery in the aftermath of war, and late modernization. The peace that this system created for the British allowed it to expand its colonial holdings at an alarming rate, seize control of valuable natural resources and build a massive economy for its tiny population.

The British Empire as a superpower is very unique. Due to the times that they lived in, they were able to rise in a peaceful manner, with barely any army to speak of. Their power was based on economics, not the military might that typically defines superpowerdom today. This case study has identified economic liberalism, territorial expansion and peacetime benefits as the primary variables in relation to British hegemony. What will be interesting to note however, is how this economic hegemon will compare to the superpowers that would appear only half a century after its peak.
Chapter III

The United States of America: Towards the Dawn of the American Century

Introduction

The second candidate for a case study on international superpowers is perhaps the most obvious: the United States. This country has been a superpower the longest, and is the only superpower that still exists today. In addition to that, its rise into superpowerdom is very similar to that of the United Kingdom’s.

Historical Background

The United States of America is an extraordinary example of a great power that rose to superpower status, eventually ascending into the role of the current international hegemon. A rather young nation, the U.S. took less than three centuries after its founding to rise to the very top of the international system. It originally served as the colonial possession of the superpower before it, the British Empire. The United States of America is a unique nation, having started out as a mere set of colonies, and eventually rising to the top of the international system.

For the purposes of this case study, we will begin the historical overview of the U.S. from the moment of its birth. The history of the United States as an independent nation began with its revolution against its former ruler, Great Britain. Discontent with British rule went so far as to unite the thirteen colonies into one force, eventually expelling the English from their borders in a successful rebellion (Morris 1953, 109). Having secured peace terms from England, the United States entered the international stage as one of its largest nations, with territories ranging from the East Coast of North America to the shores of the Mississippi River. This was the first domino in what would very soon result in American hegemony over the continent and hemisphere.
George Washington, revolutionary general and first President of the United States, built his foreign policy on isolationism. In his mind, the way to ensure American longevity was to keep the new country out of the international arena for as long as possible (Washington 1796). This would be no easy task, not least of which due to a second war with Great Britain and the rise of Napoleon in France. Nevertheless, the United States practiced an isolationist policy and avoided taking a direct role in any major international conflict until the outbreak of the Great War in 1914. This sense of non-intervention allowed it to focus on domestic issues and territorial expansion.

Over the course of the next century, the United States of America would experience an unprecedented surge of expansion that would grow its territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts. The Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon Bonaparte, the division of Oregon, the annexation of Texas and Mexican Cession would transform the U.S. into one of the largest countries in the world with almost undisputed mastery over North America (Morris 1953, 132). It would not be an overall peaceful expansion, bringing the young nation into conflict with Great Britain once more, as well as with Mexico and the indigenous Indians. However, the United States would avoid being dragged in to any global wars for nearly a century.

The American Civil War would temporarily distract the U.S. from foreign affairs (Morris 1953, 230). However, once reunified, the Americans were again able to set their sights outward. With French influence absent from the region since the Louisiana Purchase and tensions with the British cooling down, Spain was the only European power left in the area. According to America’s Monroe Doctrine, which states that the U.S. shall be the only major power in the Western Hemisphere, the Spanish presence was a direct threat to American interests (Morris 1953, 161). Eventually, the two powers would fight a war in 1898 that would result in the
American seizure of Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Now, the United States had taken its spot as the sole major power in the Americas. Additionally, the conquest of Spain’s colonies in Asia had transformed the U.S. from an isolated great power to a major player in international politics. It would serve as the beginning of the end for U.S. isolationism.

While the United States experienced almost endless expansion since its independence from the United Kingdom, it was never a sure thing that it would become a great power. After the American Revolution, it had fought wars against two major empires: Great Britain in the War of 1812 and Spain in the Spanish American War of 1898. The War of 1812 was viewed by the United States as a victory, and in their eyes cemented their independence from England forever (Morris 1953, 152). However, it wasn’t until the Spanish-American War that America began to open up to the world and establish itself in the international system of great powers.

The Spanish-American War gave the United States its own colonies both in the Caribbean and in the Pacific (Morris 1953, 290). It was a decisive victory for the Americans over an imperial power of Europe. In every sense of the word it was an awakening for the major powers that the United States was now at the same table that they were. The half-century that would follow saw the U.S. grow exponentially economically, militarily and diplomatically. When it ended with the conclusion of World War Two, the United States had emerged as an international superpower. It would toss away its isolationist policies and begin to join in alliances that are still alive and well today. It would transform its military from a force of a few dozen-thousand soldiers to an army of several million. It would not only sit at the same table as the powers that have steered world events for centuries, it would surpass them, cementing its place at the top of the international order that still lasts in the new millennium. Based on these facts, this case study has identified the time period between 1898, the Spanish-American War, and 1945,
the end of World War Two, as period that saw the rise of the United States into superpower status.

*The United States Economy*

The time period that has been identified as the rise of the United States saw the U.S. grow economically in an extraordinary way. Like the British Empire, the United States had completely embraced the industrial revolution. Now that the domestic situation had been stabilized after the conclusion of the Civil War, and Spain had been ousted from the region at the turn of the century, the United States had been blessed with local peace and stability. It also put the U.S. in a position to replace the United Kingdom, which the twentieth century did not bless with the same advantages.

When the rise of the United States had begun, Great Britain was sitting firmly at the top of the economic world. It was the world’s largest consumer of energy, largest manufacturer, and possessed the wealthiest population. Unfortunately for them, these blessings would not last for too long. The founding of the German Empire in 1870 changed everything for British hegemony in the international system. The Germans were not pleased with the current international system that had been in place over 50 years before they founded their empire, and they were determined to rise to a higher position within it. Germany would instigate two world wars by 1945 in a bid for systemic change in the current world order. While they never succeeded in conquering Britain, the wars were enough of a burden on the British military and economy to disrupt the economic growth that had come to define nineteenth century Great Britain. However, things would be different for the United States of America.

Other than the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the American homeland went largely untouched during the two world wars. As a result, while the people of England were suffering
from total war, bombings and an unstable region unsuitable for economic growth, the United States was quickly replacing the British Empire as the manufacturing and resource monolith of the era. It was also continuing its rapid industrialization and modernization undeterred by local conflict. By the year 1928, the United States had replaced Britain as the nation with the highest Per Capita Industrialization (See Table 4). At the same time, it had also replaced England as the state with the largest industrial potential (See Table 5). In other words, the U.S. used the peaceful regional situation in North America to continue its development and surpass the British Empire, which was too busy focusing on its own survival.

| Table 6: Per Capita Levels of Industrialization of the Great Powers, 1880-1953 (Relative to G.B. in 1900=100) |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1880   | 1900    | 1913    | 1928    | 1938    | 1953    |
| U.K.   | 87      | 115     | 122     | 157     | 210     |
| United States | 38  | 126     | 182     | 167     | 354     |
| France | 28      | 59      | 82      | 73      | 95      |
| Germany | 25   | 85      | 128     | 144     | 144     |
| Italy  | 12      | 26      | 44      | 61      | 61      |
| Russia | 10      | 20      | 20      | 38      | 73      |
| Japan  | 9       | 20      | 30      | 51      | 40      |

(Bairoch 1982)

| Table 7: Total Industrial Potential of the Great Powers, 1880-1953 (U.K. in 1900=100) |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1880   | 1900    | 1913    | 1928    | 1938    | 1953    |
| Britain | 73.3  | 127.2   | 135     | 181     | 258     |
| United States | 46.9 | 298.1   | 533     | 528     | 1373    |
| Germany | 27.4  | 137.7   | 158     | 214     | 180     |
| France  | 25.1   | 57.3    | 82      | 74      | 98      |
| Russia  | 24.5   | 76.6    | 72      | 152     | 328     |
| Italy   | 8.1    | 22.5    | 37      | 46      | 71      |
| Japan   | 7.6    | 25.1    | 45      | 88      | 88      |
| Spain   | 5.8    | 11      | 16      | 14      | 22      |

(Bairoch 1982)

Other than regional stability, what explains this exponential economic growth for the United States? A large factor is its size. In the same way the Great Britain’s colonies gave it incredible access to valuable natural resources, the United States was one of the largest countries
in the world, and thus had many resources at its disposal within its own territory. By the year 1938, the United States had the second largest population of the great powers, granting it access to a substantial workforce (Kennedy 1987, 199). Additionally, it had replaced Great Britain as the largest consumer of energy worldwide. The U.S. was also a major producer of steel, becoming the dominant steel producer by 1940 (See Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8: Iron/Steel Production of the Great Powers, 1890-1950</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Thousands of tons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Singer 2010)

These statistics demonstrate that industrialization was a major contributor to economic growth for the U.S. in the same way that is was for the U.K. After the Industrial Age, the countries that would surge economically would be the countries that industrialized the quickest, and had the resources necessary to feed into that industrialization. What is interesting to note is that, unlike the United Kingdom, trade did not form a substantial part of American income. In fact, foreign trade only made up a small percentage of the American economy (Kennedy 1987, 244).

Therefore, what appears to have defined economic growth in the United States during its rise to superpower status was its embrace of industrialization and regional stability. By the year 1940, the manufacturing industry accounted for more than a quarter of total United States employment (Engerman 1986, 130). While the country did raise armies for combat during both of the world wars, it never suffered from bombings, occupation, blockades and threats of
invasion like the other great powers in the international system. The economic crises that it suffered, such as the Great Depression, did serious damage to the American economic system but did not result in long term instability, possibly due to the requirements of total war that resulted from the American entries into the European theater.

Finally, it is important to take note of one important aspect of international power. As has been demonstrated on multiple occasions in this case study, power is always relative. It doesn’t matter how big and strong an economy is for any one state, it only matters how well it stacks up against the rest of the world. The American people enjoyed an income unlike that of any other nation during its rise (See Table 9), and this advantage was surely reflected in the international system. It was this perception of wealth and prosperity that fed into the concept of the American dream, that the United States was the nation to go to in order to find one’s fortune. Immigration was another aspect of American power, since intellectual capital is much harder to create, and in some ways more valuable, than any natural resource. A perfect example of this is Albert Einstein, who fled persecution in Germany to find refuge in the United States. This refugee would come to make the greatest advancement ever conceived in military modernization, granting the United States Military access to the most powerful weapon imaginable and sealing its position as a preeminent global power.

Table 9: National Income, Population, and per Capita Income of the Powers in 1914.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Income</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$37 Billion</td>
<td>98 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kennedy 1987, 243)
The United States Military

The armed forces of the United States withstood drastic changes during its rise between 1898 and 1945. Up until the Spanish-American War of 1898, the U.S. had chosen to maintain a miniature army, one of the smallest of the great powers of the world. This dates back to the days of United States Presidents like Thomas Jefferson, who saw a large military as a threat to democracy and peace. However, the war with Spain had changed all of that. The government of the United States suddenly realized that it was in need of a more powerful army if it were to maintain its position as a dominant power in the region as well as deter any powers that might seek to encroach on its sphere of influence. This need, coupled with the industrial power of the United States up until World War Two, would allow it to produce a mighty war machine (Matloff 1969, 527). No branch of the military saw more extreme changes to itself than the United States Navy.

Between the years of 1898 and 1945, the U.S. Navy was transformed from a miniature fighting force into an immense fleet, replacing the Royal Navy of the British Empire as the most powerful navy on earth. The fighting against Spain near Cuba and the Philippines demonstrated to American decision makers that the Navy had much more potential than was being utilized. In addition, its success in the Philippines and Caribbean had afforded it a great deal of popularity with the American people (Sprout 1967, 223). Therefore, the United States started a military buildup that would soon culminate in President Theodore Roosevelt sending his Great White Fleet on a tour around the world in 1907, demonstrating the arrival of the United States as a major naval power (See Table 10). Now, the U.S. was in possession of its own blue-water navy with the capability of deploying anywhere in the world.
This trend towards naval supremacy continued throughout the rest of its rise. Surrounding and during World War Two, the United States was building an incredible naval force consisting of powerful battleships and aircraft carriers. By the time the Second World War had ended, the U.S. was operating more than a dozen of its massive Essex-class aircraft carriers (U.S. Navy). This gave it an immense advantage over any other navy in the world, and was one of the most important factors in its victory over the Imperial Navy of Japan.

The U.S. Army was also experiencing several changes during this time period. After the Spanish-American War the government immediately began to expand the ranks of the army (See Table 11). This trend would continue and explode after the outbreak of the world wars. In a short half-century, the Army had seen its personnel numbers go from mere thousands to over a million.

Despite all of these developments, the most far reaching changes were taking place not in troop numbers, but in technological advancements. Unlike the British Empire between the Battle
of Waterloo and the turn of the century, the United States was able to convert economic growth into technological advancement. Among these were America’s developments of the flying fortress bomber, its expansion of its carrier fleet and most importantly, its development of nuclear weapons. In fact, it could be said that the United States rose out of World War Two with the mightiest Air Force in the world (Dupuy 1956, 249). The addition of the nuclear bomb was truly the single greatest event in both American military history and international relations. Without losing a single soldier, the U.S. Military was able to completely destroy two Japanese cities. The development of nuclear weapons made the United States into an invulnerable country.

Finally, it is important to note the wide range of troop deployments that the United States had facilitated by the end of 1945. Soon after the surrender of Japan to the U.S., American troops were occupying West Germany and Japan. Soldiers were also stationed all throughout Western Europe and East Asia. This, in addition to American positions that already existed in the Pacific and Central America, gave the United States worldwide military reach (Sprout 1967, 242). While the British Empire did have a blue-water navy capable of deploying anywhere it pleased, it did not possess the manpower needed to project power on a global scale, something that the U.S. was not lacking.

The dispensing of isolationism that started with the annexation of Spain’s Caribbean and Pacific colonies resulted in substantial changes to the United States Military. At that point, the U.S. had openly declared itself as a world power, and for that it needed a great power military. The subsequent changes that would occur over the course of the next fifty years would transform the army from a meager force of less than fifty thousand to an army of millions. Additionally, the U.S. Navy evolved from a local power to a blue-water fleet, capable of deploying globally. They also adopted a sense of invulnerability with the addition of nuclear weapons. That, coupled with
the worldwide deployments that resulted from the end of war gave the United States a military reach that far surpassed that of all of its competitors. Surely, the United States of America emerged from the Second World War with a first-class military like no other, suitable for the strongest nation in the international system.

*The United States in the International System*

The international system that resulted from the World Wars was just as chaotic as the system that survived the Napoleonic Wars. The world was afraid of another breakdown into war, and wanted a leader that could maintain peace in order. In the end, the West would choose the United States as its leader and enforcer. The international community chose to follow the United States as a result of the new international system that it was promoting. In response to World War One, the U.S. proposed a system of global cooperation in the form of the League of Nations. It also sought the establishment of a liberal economic order that focused on trade expansion and the reduction of protectionism. The Atlantic Charter is a perfect example of this new order, encouraging the major powers to reduce their trade restrictions in order to rebuild Europe after World War Two (Roosevelt 1941). This new focus on peace and economics was very appealing to a world that had been ravaged twice by global war, and set the stage for an international system that revolved around the U.S.

Another powerful trait of the United States in the international system during its rise is its establishment of territories throughout the world beyond its own homeland. Starting with the Spanish-American War, the U.S. began to establish overseas territories and military bases ranging from Cuba to Panama to the Philippines. Despite the fact that the United States had advertised itself as the antithesis to European imperialism, by 1900 it had begun to build an
empire of its own. It was the hegemonic power in the Americas and a dominant great power internationally.

*Analysis and Conclusions*

The United States can be seen as the successor superpower to the United Kingdom. During its rise between 1898 and 1945, it underwent a process that resulted in its replacement of Great Britain as the economic hegemon in the international system. Within half a century, the U.S. had replaced England as the global leader in industry, manufacturing, and energy consumption. In other words, like the British Empire, the strongest trait of the American superpower was its economic might and all the benefits that came along with it. There are several reasons for this. Safe across the Atlantic from the world wars, the American homeland went largely untouched during World Wars One and Two, allowing it to construct an industrial economy unhindered by war and invasion. The democratic system also set the United States apart from Europe’s empires. Its two-party system fostered a spirit of competition that resulted in a drive to perform well in order to secure public support. This ensured that whoever was in power had an incentive to perform well, as opposed to country’s like Russia that had subjugate its population in order to stay in control. Finally, the market-based economic model worked just as well for the U.S. as it did for Great Britain. The biggest difference was that America did not rely on colonies for resources and manpower. The country was large enough that it had access to a variety of natural resources and human capital that could feed the booming economy.

The economic growth of the U.S. came gradually as its domestic and regional position stabilized in the wake of the Civil War. However, one aspect of American power that saw much more abrupt change was the United States military. While it would take several decades, the U.S. Navy saw an explosion of growth following the demonstration of its necessity after the Spanish-
American War. With the addition of battleships and supercarriers, the Navy would eventually come to surpass even the British Royal Navy as the most powerful force on the sea. This expansion would not be limited solely to the Navy; the U.S. Army would also experience vast growth during its country’s rise.

In a short fifty years, the U.S. military had gone from an army that had never conducted major military operations overseas to an occupying force in two former major powers. However, the transformation of the military took place in more ways than just numbers. The Americans had managed to turn their economic prosperity into military modernization. It had spent the years during its rise acquiring the most advanced weaponry available. This would finally culminate in the expensive but successful development of the nuclear bomb, which would help to launch the United States from a mighty great power into the preeminent superpower. This was in no small part due to the U.S. spending more money on its military than any other great power by the time it became a superpower in 1945 (Singer, 2010).

No nation in history has ever been able to conquer its way to the top. Every country that became a superpower rose to that position was accepted as one by the international community. The United States secured this position by pursuing a new international order that could create peace and prosperity out of the ashes of war. The appeal of this new direction was so great that the United States emerged from World War Two as the dominant Western power. Also serving the U.S. was its convenient position on the world map. Unlike the great powers of Europe, who were placed so close to one another that foreign affairs seemed like a zero-sum game, the United States had no regional rivals. Mexico and Canada never came close to America in terms of relative power, and there were no great powers in the Western Hemisphere to buffer its global influence. These conditions allowed the United States to focus its foreign policy on global affairs.
rather than on securing the home front. Neither Germany, Russia nor the United Kingdom were blessed with these advantages.

The United States’ rise to superpower status was not unique. It was very similar to the rise of Great Britain in terms of economic growth and prosperity. What is interesting to note is that while the United States emerged as a superpower following a systemic war, the war was not fought by the U.S. with the goal of ascending in the international system. World War Two, the event that placed the United States on the top of the world order, was started by Germany with the hopes of exterminating the British system and replacing it with one of its own design. While it succeeded in removing Britain as the master of the international order, it only created a vacancy that would be filled by the United States and Soviet Union.
Chapter IV
The Soviet Union: The Superpower That Never Was

Introduction

In regards to international superpowers, the Soviet Union is one of the more obvious candidates for consideration. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was the primary rival of the United States in the wake of the Second World War, signaling the birth of bipolarity in the international system. It possessed a massive army with an arsenal that included some of the deadliest weapons imaginable at the time, and citizens of the U.S. lived in fear of nuclear war between the two states. As a result of this conception, the U.S.S.R. was selected as a case study for this project. However, the results of this study resulted in a challenge of the popular conception of the Soviet Union standing on near-equal footing with the U.S. in the world order.

This case study will explore how while the Soviet state was one that possessed immense power, it never wielded the relative power necessary to be considered a true superpower. In other words, it was a world power, and certainly ranked second place in terms of power relations. However, this case study will examine how while it was certainly incredibly powerful and the primary U.S. opponent, the international system was never truly bipolar. In order to fully understand the power and international status of the Soviet Union, it is important to understand the conditions that prevented it from becoming a true superpower.

Historical Background

The event that marked the birth of Russia as a great power occurred during the reign of Peter the Great. When he rose to power in the late seventeenth century, Russia was already a massive state. However, it did not come close to the great powers of Europe in terms of strength, modernization and global reach. In response to this, Peter did something rather unorthodox. He
took a tour of Europe that took him all across the continent (Tsarevskaya 2007). With each country that he visited, he would learn everything available about the modern world, such as shipbuilding, he would then take back to Russia and use to upgrade his nation (Tsarevskaya 2007). It was his dream to create a truly modern state that stood on par with the likes of France, Britain and Prussia. When he returned, his lands underwent a rapid modernization that would give birth to the true Russian Empire.

Fast-forward a few centuries, and the more relevant history of Russia can be examined. By the time that Great Britain had emerged as the international hegemon in the early-nineteenth century Russia was already a great power in its own right. It was the largest state in existence, and possessed one of the world’s largest armies (Singer 2010). It had a direct hand in the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte and his French Empire, granting it a good amount of prestige. The czars of Russia stood as relative equals with the many European monarchs. However, events in Russia would reach a rapid pace with the eruption of the Second World War.

After the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, the outbreak of war between the great powers was all but a certainty. Germany had granted the Austrian Empire a blank check, and when the Austrians declared war on Serbia the Russians had no choice but to get involved due to a treaty obligation (Raff 1988, 214). Unfortunately, this event would prove to be the downfall of the Russian Empire. Its forces were soundly defeated by the more advanced German Military and the Central Powers were set to annex a massive section of Russian territory (Raff 1988, 227). While the Allies eventually defeated Germany and its allies, this did not end the troubles facing Russia.

When World War One came to a close, the Russian Empire was in turmoil. Revolution had come to the country, and the communists were making a bid for power against the
monarchists (Dmytryshn 1965, 71). After a revolution and a civil war, the czar was dead, the monarchists defeated and the communists were in firm control of the state. In place of the Russian Empire, 1922 saw the birth of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, more commonly known as the Soviet Union (Aragon 1962, 203). This event marks the beginning of the rise of the Soviet Union into perceived superpower status.

The next major event in the rise of the U.S.S.R. was the leadership of Joseph Stalin. Under Stalin, the U.S.S.R. was transformed into a quasi-totalitarian state. Political purges were common, even among the elite of the communist party itself (Dmytryshn 1965, 178). The economy of the Soviet Union also underwent many significant changes, as the Soviets took direct control of every aspect of life within their territory. In addition, the new Red Army underwent a significant expansion, emerging as one of the largest militaries in existence at its peak (Singer 2010). As the years went by, the Communist Party would establish itself as the vital organ of the Russian system, and it would not be long before it would enter another world war.

When Hitler’s army crossed the border into Russia at the height of World War Two, it almost ended the Soviet Experiment (Dmytryshn 1965, 216). However, a mixture of Nazi overreach, tactics, and luck allowed the Russians to push back against their invaders, eventually taking Berlin itself. When the war ended, the Soviet Union possessed half of Europe, a massive army and a spot at the top of the international system. The world had entered a bipolar age that pitted the United States of America against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. For the purposes of this case study, the founding of the Soviet Union in 1922 and subsequent reforms of Russian society represent the beginning of its rise to alleged superpower status. By the year 1955 the nation had developed nuclear weapons and established its own realm of client states in the form of the Warsaw Pact (Dmytryshn 1965, 290). I have identified 1955 as the peak of Soviet
development, since it signifies the birth of the Warsaw Pact, which was the last big expansion of Soviet influence after China’s revolution. Therefore, this case study will examine the time period between 1922 and 1955 in order to determine what factors contributed the most to the rise of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Economy

The economy of the Soviet Union underwent several massive changes with the fall of the Russian Empire and victory of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War. During the years of the Czar, the Russian Empire was composed mainly of an agricultural economy (Reynolds 1916, 257). The manufacturing sector was almost nonexistent and the Russian state lagged behind its international rivals in terms of modernization and development. This changed rather rapidly under the new communist administration. The Soviet leaders instituted a reform of the U.S.S.R. into a command economy, with the state making all of the major decisions. This act would allow the Russians to direct the conversion of the Soviet economy from an agricultural focus to one of the party’s choosing. With the rise of Germany, Great Britain and the United States, the Russians could not have helped but see the signs that portrayed the Industrial Revolution as the future for great power politics.

With the economy firmly in the control of the communists, they converted the economy was converted from agriculture to industry. One major obstacle to this directive was the state’s past focus on agriculture, leaving the Russians without many laborers who were skilled in manufacturing. To build on that, the many purges that were undertaken by Stalin’s regime would deepen the wound, resulting in a shortage of skilled laborers (Case Study). However, this disadvantage would not hurt the economy forever, and the goal of a command economy with a growing industrial sector would soon be met.
Moving the economy into a rapid industrialization relied on an increase in the urban population of the Soviet Union, which would be complicated by Russia’s agricultural past. In the decades following the founding of the country, the per-capita level of industrialization in Russia would nearly double (See Table 12). Additionally, the total industrial potential of Russia would double between the years of 1928 and 1938 (See Table 7). What these figures represent is rapid conversion of the economy that would come to be the Russians’ greatest strength and their greatest weakness.

Table 12: Per Capita Levels of Industrialization in Russia, 1913-1953

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Level of Industrialization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bairoch 1982)

Table 7: Total Industrial Potential of the Great Powers, 1880-1953

(U.K. in 1900=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1913</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1953</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>[100]</td>
<td>127.2</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>127.8</td>
<td>298.1</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>1373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>137.7</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bairoch 1982)

While the industrialization of Russia would prove to be its greatest economic success, it would also lead to what would become its most catastrophic failure. As was noted earlier, the creation of an industrial economy depended on the movement of people from rural areas to urban cities. The movement was a success, and by the end of the 1930’s the Soviet population was more urbanized (Bushkovitch 2012, 367) (See Table 13). By 1940, the Soviet Union was the
world’s third most industrialized nation on earth, with small towns transforming into large industrial centers (Bushkovitch 2012, 368). This would also result in a growth of the nation’s population (Kennedy 1987, 199). This would result in a greater need for food, a product of the agricultural sector, and the sector that the Soviet leadership had taken great strides to circumvent. Therefore, the communists needed to come up with a solution to their food needs, and that answer was collectivization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population (Thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>5,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>5,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>13,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>25,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>33,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>29,189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Singer 2010)

Collectivization consisted of the removal of private farms and the assignment of farmers to collective farming land owned and administrated by the state. The thinking was that this would solve any food shortage issues and provide the Soviet people with more than enough food to fuel their urban development. Unfortunately, this could not have been further from the truth. Collectivization was a complete disaster for the Soviet economy, and resulted in food shortages so great that a famine took place (Bushkovitch 2012, 354). It would be many years before the communist state would recover from the failings of collectivization and wound to the Russian population.

This leaves two important things of note in regards to the economy of the Soviet Union. First, as has been noted before, power is all relative. It is true that the Soviet economy underwent exponential growth during the two decades that followed its founding. However, when stacked up against the other major powers, there was much to be desired. The Russians may have possessed one of the most industrialized economies at the time, but their per-capita income
lagged behind that of basically every other major power (See Table 14) (Kennedy 1987, 243).

What this indicates is that the Soviet Union did not possess a first-rate economy, and all of the benefits that it brings with it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 14: Per Capita GDP of the Great Powers, 1920-1955</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(In 1990 International Geary-Khamis dollars)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Maddison 2007)

Second, the purges of Joseph Stalin had an effect on the Soviet economy that may not have been initially foreseen. His purges knew no bounds or restrictions. They targeted military officers, peasants, officials and even communist party members (Case Study). What this represents is a severe loss of intellectual capital that is vital for the development of an international superpower. It’s very possible that these purges and their consequences are a contributing factor for the failure of the Soviet Union to fully modernize and develop a first-world economy.

The Soviet Military

The Red Army of the Soviet Union was perhaps the most public face of the state during any point in its history. It was, frankly, a goliath of a fighting force. This could hardly come as a surprise given the massive territories under the control of the Soviet Union, and the human capital that would come along with it. Regardless, the Red Army would grow to be the most visible symbol of the U.S.S.R. in global affairs, with soldiers deployed everywhere from Eastern Siberia to East Germany. It was able to achieve this level of expansion by following the doctrine that had dominated the Russian military-industrial complex from the beginning.
The military of the Soviet Union, and the Russian Empire before it, was built on a philosophy of brawn over brains. The primary focus was on numbers as opposed to sophistication. The Russians had always had a large military, and emerged from World War II with the largest army of the great powers (See Table 15). This way of thinking had dominated the minds of Russian leaders long before the communists ever took over, with the Russian Imperial Army fielding the largest Allied army during the First World War (Kennedy 1987, 274). However, where the Russians excelled in numbers they lacked in modernization, and the overwhelming forces of the Russian military were not enough to prevent its defeat by the German Empire in World War One. However, if the leadership of the Soviet Union learned any lessons from its historical defeat, it was not reflected in the actions of the Joseph Stalin.

Table 15: Military Personnel of the Great Powers in 1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>12,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>12,123,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>5,090,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>578,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>477,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Singer 2010)

Under Stalin’s leadership, the Red Army followed the same doctrine of size equals power that had defined the Russian military since its founding. Soviet military doctrine traditionally relied upon overwhelming numbers and rapid advances in order to defeat an opponent (Headquarters 1984, 45). The primary difference, however, was the addition of the new industrial sector of the Soviet economy. Now that the Soviet Union was in the possession of new industrial centers and modern factories, it was able to supply the military with more sophisticated technology, such as tanks and aircraft. The communist state quickly became the leading producer
of aircraft (Kennedy 1987, 324). By the time that World War Two had come to a close, it was also the leading producer of tanks (Kennedy 1987, 353).

There is one aspect about the mechanization of the Red Army that is very important to note. While it is true that the military had undergone a great deal of sophistication during the rise of the Soviet Union, it would be a stretch to claim that it was in fact a modern fighting force. As was mentioned earlier in the case study, size was the primary piece of the Soviet Armed Forces. The U.S.S.R. produced large numbers of tanks, planes and other forms of weaponry; however, these tools were based on older designs that did not stand on equal terms with the weapons of the other great powers (Kennedy 1987, 325). Put simply, the strength of the Red Army was in its size and scope, not in its sophistication or modernization. However, this hardly seemed to matter following the end of World War Two and the apparent emergence of the Soviet Union as a superpower.

Perhaps it did not matter that the U.S.S.R. did not possess an advanced fighting force. In the end, the sheer overwhelming numbers of Soviet soldiers were enough to drive the Germans back to Berlin and conquer half of the European Continent. In short, the Red Army wasn’t the fighting force that any global power would want, but it was the force that the Soviet Union needed. The Soviet military was occupying everything from East Berlin to the new Soviet Border, which was now extended to include a part of East Prussia. The occupying force consisted of over a hundred divisions, and tens of thousands of tanks and aircraft (Kennedy 1987, 363). Modernization was no longer a factor in the maintaining of Soviet power in the international system, since all it required was an army large enough to hold on to its newly acquired territory.
The final military aspect took place in the Soviet Union’s development was the obtainment of nuclear weapons. Russia tested its first operational nuclear device in 1949, making it the second power after the United States to develop nukes (Long 2007). This was the single greatest expansion of Russia’s military capability. It accomplishes two things. The first was that it provided the Soviets with an aura of invincibility, since any country that attacked the USSR could see done to them what the United States did to Japan. Second, it signified the end of the Soviet Union’s military development into superpower status. It was at this point that the Red Army joined the U.S. military as one of the top two most destructive-capable forces in the world.

*The Soviet Union in the International System*

When World War Two was over, the Soviet Union was enjoying a seat at the international table that it had never enjoyed before. To be sure, the sheer size of the U.S.S.R. gave it a form of global access that no other state enjoyed, except perhaps the United States of America. The borders of the Soviet Union post-World War Two stretched from the edge of East Prussia to the Pacific Ocean. To put it more in perspective, the Soviet Union consisted of half of Eastern Europe, the whole of Central Asia and all of Siberia. It was the largest state that existed in the modern world. This would provide many benefits for the country beyond that of simple manpower. Empires like Great Britain, France and Spain had to establish colonies all across the globe in order to collect the resources that they would need to feed their industries. However, Soviet possessions in Central Asia and Siberia gave the communists access to a wealth of natural resources (Reynolds 1916, 249). Unfortunately, however, the U.S.S.R. was severely lacking in other aspects of international power.

In international relations, influence is just as vital a tool as strength and wealth. However, the Soviet Union emerged from the war without any true allies. It had allied with the United
States and Great Britain during the war itself, but this was done purely out of necessity and everybody knew it. As soon as fascism in Europe had been rooted out, the former allies instantly turned their sights upon one another. While the Soviets would eventually find close allies among the communist states that would later emerge, these relationships did not come all at once. Therefore, the U.S.S.R. was in desperate need of a sphere of influence if it were to maintain its own security.

Since it was obvious that the Soviets would not find the sphere of influence it needed in the form of friendly relationships, the only path available to it was to create its own. Fortunately for the state, it finished the war with its soldiers occupying nearly all of Eastern Europe and the northern half of the Korean Peninsula. The Soviet Union would not withdraw its soldiers nor free the territories that it had ‘liberated’. Eventually, it would organize each of its occupied territories into a new communist state that would align firmly with Soviet interests. The culmination of this pursuit would take place in 1955, when the Warsaw Pact was established (Dmytryshn 1965, 290). The Warsaw Pact was a military alliance between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and represented the last big Soviet expansion of foreign influence (Dmytryshn 1965, 290). This, along with the communist takeover in China and North Korea, represented the peak of Russian diplomatic power (History Channel).

As a result of the Soviet Union’s large army and territorial possessions, it had risen to the position of second place in the international state system. Save for the United States, no other country on Earth was in possession of such a fearsome military, nor did any other state come close to the Soviet Union in terms of sheer size. Unfortunately, however, it did not possess the economic resources that the United States did that allowed it to quickly rebuild its allies and its military, and this would later serve as a disadvantage.
Analysis and Conclusions

The Soviet Union always lagged behind the other great powers in economic terms. This was the case even after its development stage had reached its peak in 1955. There are several explanations for this. The first is that the USSR built a communist system that proved to be much less viable for growth. Absent the competition and entrepreneurship that a capitalist economic system entails, the Soviets were unable to keep up with the United States economy until its collapse in 1990. Communism also failed as an approach to government. The authoritarianism and cult of personality that surrounded Joseph Stalin placed loyalty above the ability to deliver results. This led to corruption in government that drained Russia’s productivity. The second reason is that Russia had recently been devastated by the German invasion during World War Two. The Nazis had conquered everything between Germany and Moscow, the heartland of the Soviet industrialization and population. After the war the Russians had to focus on a reconstruction effort while its adversary, the United States, had emerged from the war with its industrial heartland unscathed.

Russia’s military was the central pillar of its international power. What it lacked in power-projection capabilities it made up for in sheer size. When the war ended in 1945 the Russians had the single largest army in terms of troop numbers. It also managed to develop the ultimate expression of military power, the nuclear bomb. This drastically raised the cost of any aggressive action against the Soviet Union and gave it flexibility to focus its attention outward. While it was never able to project power on a global scale during its development, the occupation of Eastern Europe gave the USSR some breathing room without having to worry about another foreign invasion.
The Soviets made large gains in the international community during their development. After the fall of Germany and Japan, Russia was left with no more serious rivals on its border. After the Chinese Communist Revolution in 1950, all of Russia’s neighbors were members of their communist bloc. When the Warsaw Pact was established in 1955, the USSR now had a sphere of influence where it could project its own power freely. However, Russia’s most powerful international tool was its communist ideology. Communism was a stark contrast to the West’s pursuit of capitalism and globalism, and was a rallying beacon to anybody who opposed either. States that were anti-western quickly flocked to the Soviet Union, effectively dividing the international system into two. Russia’s veto-power in the United Nations Security Council gave it a considerable amount of influence in the foreign affairs of every other great power, ensuring that nothing could happen with an international consensus without its approval.

Russia had every international trait and most military traits of a superpower during its development. The reason it has been identified as a failed superpower is not because it lacked any of the prerequisites for superpowerdom, but because of how fragile it was. When the Soviet economy collapsed in the early 1990s, the entire thing came crashing down. So while it may have seemed like a normal superpower at the time, we know now that this was not the case. Being a true superpower means being able to withstand pressures both externally and internally, and Russia was never able to do that.
Chapter V  
Germany: A Dream of Hegemony

Introduction

In this section, there have been three case studies of nations that at one point or another were considered an international superpower. However, to perform case studies solely on success stories in superpower development would not be enough to accomplish the goals of this research. The objective of this project is to determine what sets the development of an international superpower apart from the development of any other country. To do this, a multigroup design is necessary in order to help differentiate these requirements. To that effect, the U.S. and U.K. have been chosen as successful superpowers, and the Soviet Union was chosen as a quasi/almost superpower. The state of Germany has been selected to perform the role of failed superpower, both in its inceptions as the German Empire and Third Reich.

Germany has been selected to fulfill this position because it possesses a very unique role in the history of international relations. In the modern age, no other nation on Earth has gone to such great lengths to take a direct hand in the shape of the international order. Whereas Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union all rose to their perspective positions either through natural economic growth or outright necessity, Germany is the only country in recent history that attempted to rise to the rank of superpower through outright ambition. Since their founding, it appeared that the Germans had their sights on the head of the international order. By the time it was over, these ambitions had resulted in the outbreak of two world wars, the near complete destruction of Europe, and the deaths of untold millions of people from every corner of the globe.
Historical Background

Germany had existed as a concept for many centuries. During the medieval era it was known as the Holy Roman Empire, but in truth it was a loose confederacy of German kingdoms and principalities (Raff 1988, 18). It would remain this way for many centuries, and the Germans would not pose any serious threat to the great powers of Europe for many years. Traditionally, the shape of international politics had been dominated by countries such as France, Great Britain and the United States. However, the late nineteenth century would see the birth of a new nation state right in the center of the continent that would shake the balance of power for close to a century.

While there were many small kingdoms that would eventually combine to form Germany, there was one kingdom in particular that stood out against the rest. Prussia stood out among the German states as a result of both its size in comparison to the other German states and its strong military culture (Raff 1988, 111). It is possible that these qualities convinced King Wilhelm I of Prussia to make a gambit for the unification of all the German kingdoms into one unified empire (Holborn 1969, 180). Working with the future Chancellor of Germany, Otto von Bismarck, Wilhelm I launched a series of small conflicts that would bring the states of Germany together under one banner (Raff 1988, 143). Unification was achieved after the Franco-Prussian War of 1871, which resulted in the fall of Paris to the Prussians and the birth of the German Empire (Howard 1969, 17).

Suddenly there was a large, powerful and heavily industrialized empire in the middle of the European Continent. In one dramatic event, the entire international system was shaken up in a way that had not occurred since the American Revolution (Sturmer 2000, 79). The main difference was that this new state was clearly a great power from the very beginning. Not only
that, but it had emerged right in the middle of the great powers that had existed up until that point. From that day on, the Emperors of Germany were determined to stand on equal footing with the other monarchs of the world. Thus began a system of balance, conflict and diplomacy that would come to define European history.

Germany’s birth was an added twist to a delicate balance of power system that had existed since the end of the Napoleonic Wars and birth of the United Kingdom’s hegemony. Now that it was a great power in its own right, the Germans began to behave as such. Before long they would come to possess their own colonies from across the globe. In only a few decades, the Germans would achieve what took the other empires of Europe centuries. In light of this fact, it doesn’t come as a surprise that the reach of the Kaiser would exceed his grasp.

Less than half a century after its founding, the German Empire would array itself against all of its international rivals in what we now call World War One. During the course of the war, Germany would crush the military of Russia and penetrate deeply into France itself (Holborn 1969, 416). However, the combined might of Western Europe proved too much and the German Empire surrendered (Holborn 1969, 518). When the smoke cleared, the German Emperor Wilhelm II had been overthrown, his army had been defeated and he left behind him a shattered German State (Holborn 1969, 515).

The Inter-War Period was not kind to Germany, now known as the Weimar Republic. Germany had been shamed by its defeat in World War One, its economy had collapsed and its political system was in chaos (Holborn 1969, 595; 606). In hindsight, the stage had been set perfectly for the rise of fascism that put Adolf Hitler in power as the absolute ruler of a new German Empire. The newly christened Third Reich launched the Second World War, making a second bid for European mastery (Raff 1988, 298). At its height, the Reich was in control of all
the territory between France and Moscow. However, not unlike the ambitions of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Germany stretched itself too thin and it was again defeated by the Allies (Raff 1988, 307). In the end, Germany was divided among the victors of the Second World War, and even after its reunification has not held the power in the international system that it once wielded.

The rise of Germany can be classified as both short and dramatic. In the years between its 1871 founding and 1945 fall, the German Reich went from a weak collection of kingdoms and states to a mighty empire that twice nearly brought the great powers to their knees. While it never achieved its goal of European hegemony and subsequent superpower status, no other state ever came closer through the use of systemic warfare. Based on these observations, this case study will assign the entire time period between 1871 and 1945 as the rise of Germany. It is during these years that the qualities that truly set Germany apart from its rivals came to the forefront of great power politics.

The German Economy

What truly set the German Empire apart from its competitors was its formidable economy. Like Great Britain and the United States, the Germans had fully embraced the Industrial Revolution and converted themselves into a truly modern state with a competitive economy. In addition to that, Germany’s strong central government provided the stability required for a strong economy to develop. After its Civil War, the United States was awarded with stability as a result of its great distance from any other major rivals. In the same way, the United Kingdom gained stability from its isolation as an island. Without these geographical advantages, the German Empire relied on a strong and powerful statesman in order to create the conditions and safety necessary for an industrial machine to flourish. The man who made this happen was Otto von Bismarck, the first Chancellor of the German Empire. His belief that the
parliamentary system was weak and inefficient led him to administer the empire with an iron fist (Sturmer 2000, 80). For the short term, this meant that Germany was able to take advantage of its many assets in order to grow a large and strong economy.

There were several things about the German Empire that made it a viable rival to the rest of Europe’s great powers. First and foremost, Germany consisted of a large population. By the turn of the century, Russia was the only major power in Europe with a population larger than Germany’s (See Table 16). This gave the Germans access to a wealth of human capital. Considering this, as well as the fact that German citizens were highly educated gave the German economy an edge over its competitors (Kennedy 1987, 210). These facts likely contributed to Germany’s GDP, which had outpaced all of its European rivals by the year 1910 (See Table 17).

| Table 16: Populations of the Great Powers, 1880-1945. (Thousands) |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                  | 1880  | 1890  | 1900  | 1910  | 1920  | 1930  | 1940  | 1945  |
| Germany          | 45,500| 47,607| 54,388| 62,884| 60,894| 65,084| 69,835| 67,000|
| U.S.A.           | 50,458| 63,302| 76,391| 92,767|106,881|123,668|132,637|140,474|
| U.S.S.R.         | -     |110,664|124,500| -     |154,607|174,212|195,970|-     |
| U.K.             | 34,623| 37,485| 41,155| 44,916| 46,821| 45,866| 48,226| 49,182|
| France           | 39,045| 40,014| 40,598| 41,224| 39,000| 41,610| 41,000| 39,700|

(Maddison 2007)
Table 17: Gross Domestic Product of the Great Powers, 1800-1945
(Million 1990 International Geary-Khamis Dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>86,626</td>
<td>115,581</td>
<td>162,335</td>
<td>210,513</td>
<td>170,235</td>
<td>258,602</td>
<td>377,284</td>
<td>302,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>160,656</td>
<td>214,714</td>
<td>312,499</td>
<td>460,471</td>
<td>593,438</td>
<td>768,314</td>
<td>929,737</td>
<td>1,644,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.S.R.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>154,049</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>252,333</td>
<td>420,091</td>
<td>333,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>120,395</td>
<td>150,269</td>
<td>184,861</td>
<td>207,098</td>
<td>212,938</td>
<td>249,551</td>
<td>330,638</td>
<td>347,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>82,792</td>
<td>95,074</td>
<td>116,747</td>
<td>122,238</td>
<td>125,850</td>
<td>188,558</td>
<td>165,729</td>
<td>102,154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Maddison 2007)

The second thing that gave Germany’s economy an edge was its embrace of industrialization. After the year 1900, the United States was the only country that Germany had not surpassed in terms of industrialization (Sturmer 2000, 87). Much like the British Empire, it was not long before the Germans were able to acquire an overseas empire of their own. They quickly established German colonies in various locations in Africa and the Pacific. These colonies gave Germany access to raw minerals and materials, and by the year 1910 the German Empire was producing more iron and steel than any other European power (Maddison). In addition to that, they quickly and efficiently expanded their production of coal (Kennedy 1987, 210). Finally, Germany was quickly turning into a serious competitor in the emerging markets. In the industries of electrics, optics, and chemicals, Germany was performing at high levels when compared to its rivals (Kennedy 1987, 210). When put together, these facts paint a picture of a robust and advanced German economy that certainly gave it an edge over the other nations on the continent.

The economy of the Third Reich was vastly different than that of the German Empire. Since its defeat in World War One and the subsequent Great Depression, the economy of Germany was in tatters. What appears to have brought it back from the brink was the rise of
Adolf Hitler and his brand of National Socialism. The Nazi Era saw a surge in Germany of authoritarian government, which gave it a strong hold over the economy (Jarman 1956, 186). Once he rose into power, Hitler began a period of rearmament that transformed the economy of Germany into a war economy (Caplan 2008, 187). It was this rearmament that formed the backbone of the new Nazi economy (Jarman 1956, 193). As a result of the centralization that accompanied fascism, German business became simply another extension of the federal government (Nicosia 2004, 32). In the end, the Reich would not be able to make the gains that it made during the days of the German Empire, and the economy of Nazi Germany did not possess the relative strength of its predecessor (Maddison 2007).

Looking back, it is clear that the golden age of the German Economy took place between the years 1900 and 1914, when the First World War started. During this period, Germany had a clear advantage over every one of its adversaries in terms of production and industry, except for the United States. It was only after the outbreak of total war that their economy would be stretched to its breaking point, and the upcoming Great Depression did nothing to help their case. Therefore, while the German economy certainly played a major role in its rise prior to the Great War, the same cannot be said for the Weimar Republic and onward.

*The German Military*

In the same way that the German Empire emerged with a vibrant economy, it also came into the world with a top-of-the-line military. Germany’s empire was not born solely from masterful diplomacy; it was also born out of war and conflict. When the German states came together to form the empire in 1877, the Prussian Army had just defeated France and occupied the city of Paris. The prestige that would have come from the humiliating defeat of one of
Europe’s great powers made it clear to the whole international system that Germany was a force to be reckoned with.

The German Army was the core of the Prussian machine. It was the force that took Paris as well as the core of Prussian Culture. In the year 1890 it was the highest funded military among the great powers (See Table 18). By the year 1910, the German Army was outnumbered solely by the forces of the Russian Empire, and still the Russians surrendered to Germany during the First World War (See Table 19). Put frankly, the German Army was at an advantage over its neighbors both in terms of quantity and quality. However, this did not make the Imperial Army invincible, and during the Great War it was still overcome by the combined might of the Allied armies after the entrance of the United States. In other words, it took all of Western Europe and the United States of America to bring the Army of Germany to their knees.

(Thousands of current year British Pounds for 1880-1913)(Thousands of current year U.S. Dollars for 1914-1945)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1945</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>19,317</td>
<td>37,457</td>
<td>39,681</td>
<td>60,416</td>
<td>79,025</td>
<td>162,783</td>
<td>21,200,000</td>
<td>10,648,000</td>
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<td>14,788</td>
<td>41,418</td>
<td>55,880</td>
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<td>699,200</td>
<td>1,657,000</td>
<td>90,000,000</td>
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<td>U.S.S.R.</td>
<td>30,408</td>
<td>30,191</td>
<td>43,104</td>
<td>62,099</td>
<td>1,183,426</td>
<td>3,519,631</td>
<td>6,145,214</td>
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<td>119,587</td>
<td>61,417</td>
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<td>512,181</td>
<td>9,948,329</td>
<td>17,002,048</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>32,816</td>
<td>36,771</td>
<td>40,569</td>
<td>49,539</td>
<td>361,910</td>
<td>498,642</td>
<td>5,707,762</td>
<td>1,230,509</td>
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(Singer 2010)
(Thousands)

<table>
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<th></th>
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<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
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<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
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<td>5300</td>
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<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>12123</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.S.R.</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>1142</td>
<td>1380</td>
<td>3050</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>4200</td>
<td>12500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>5090</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>578</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Singer 2010)

The next important aspect of the German Military was its fledging navy. As was mentioned earlier in this case study, the German Empire was quickly able to acquire many overseas colonies of its very own. As a result, it was necessary for the empire to construct a navy capable of meeting the defense needs of its new acquisitions. Additionally, Kaiser Wilhelm II believed that expanding the German Empire would not be possible without a powerful blue-water navy, putting it directly at odds with the Royal Navy of Great Britain (Sturmer 2000, 82). Therefore, the German Navy underwent a massive buildup that took place just after 1898 (Kennedy 1987, 212).

Germany quickly succeeded in the development of a modern navy with global-reach. However, the Kaiser was not able to accomplish his goal of surpassing the Royal Navy. While the fleet of the German Empire had one of the most massive fleets in the world, the British Navy still had more ships (Kennedy 1987, 212). In addition to that, the United Kingdom’s naval force was much more advanced than their German counterparts. When the U.K. introduced the dreadnaught to its fleet, it had all but won the naval arms race (Sturmer 2000, 90). In other words, the German Empire was able to develop an above average navy, but not one that would ever be able to wield hegemony on the high seas.
In summation, the military forces of the German Empire prior to World War One were certainly that of a legitimate great power. The size and quality of the German Army made it a formidable match for any other military force on the continent. Their navy was also a force to be reckoned with, despite the fact that it was never able to surpass the Royal Navy. Taken together, these facts and statistics paint a picture a fighting force capable of challenging any other great power in the international arena. However, it was certainly not strong enough to enforce its will on a grand scale, as was clearly evidenced by its defeat in the First World War.

Germany’s defeat in the Great War signaled great changes to its military. The Treaty of Versailles included a commitment by Germany to maintain an army no greater than 100,000 soldiers (Kennedy 1987, 305). It was also banned from owning a large navy or any form of an air force. In other words, the German military of the early Inter-War Period did not pose a threat to any of its former rivals. This was all to change when the National Socialists came into power.

Hitler’s rise brought with it a new era of German militancy. Once in office, he began to deconstruct, or ignore, the key provisions of the Treaty of Versailles that put restrictions on the German Army. The Fuhrer began to rearm his country, and by 1940 the German Army consisted of more than three million men (Singer 2010). Hitler also developed a top-notch air force, which at its height had more than 300 air squadrons and 4,000 front-line combat aircraft (Kennedy 1987, 305). Once again, Germany had a world-class military capable of bringing war to the great powers of Europe. In contrast to these developments, the Nazis were never able to construct a navy with the capabilities of its predecessor (Kennedy 1987, 305).

Unfortunately for Germany, it was not to last. Hitler would use his country’s newfound might to expand Germany’s borders in every direction, conquering all of its neighbors and invading two other great powers. However, like the Kaiser, Hitler’s reach would exceed his
grasp. His armies would be stretched too thin and brought to bear against too many, by the year 1945 the German Army had been totally defeated, Germany conquered and its territory divided among the victors of World War II. Once again, the military forces of the great power were not enough to cement for it a spot at the top of the international order.

A final important aspect of the German Military to note is its capabilities for power projection. As had been demonstrated by its performance, Germany was more than capable of projecting power within its own region. This was demonstrated by its invasions across the continent during both World Wars. However, what is important to recognize is the failure of Germany to project any serious power abroad. The German Empire could not pose a true threat to the Royal Navy, and as such was not able to deploy the forces it needed to protect its overseas possessions during the Great War. As a result, Germany lost its colonies quickly to Allied forces. During World War Two, the German Navy never caught up to its counterparts in the military during the rearmament process (Kennedy 1987, 305). Due to this, the Nazis failed to hold on to their territories in Africa and were never able to mount an invasion of the United Kingdom. What is made clear by these facts are that the Germans were never able to acquire the critical trait of any superpower: the ability to project power outside of their own sphere of influence.

Germany in the International System

The State of Germany held a unique position in the international state system. It was the only state to possess the title of great power right from its inception. Its appearance right in the center of Europe placed it in the very heart of the state system (Kennedy 1987, 209). However, at the same time, its location was very disturbing both for Germany’s rivals and Germany itself (Sturmer 2000, 93). It meant that any great power interests for the continent would have to pass
straight through Germany. In addition to that, Germany could not expand in any direction without antagonizing at least one or more great powers in the current world order.

It should not come as a surprise that many Germans viewed the current system as incredibly unfair to Germany. The issue at hand was timing. By the time Germany appeared, the system of checks and balances set up after the Napoleonic Wars were already set in place. The world was also being divided among the empires, and Germany wanted its share. Chancellor Bismarck proved to be a remarkable diplomat, and was able to secure a sphere of influence of Germany’s very own in the form of overseas colonies. By the year 1885, the German Empire acquired 95% of all the territory it would ever control (Lloyd 1984, 206).

After the First World War there was nothing left of Germany’s overseas colonies, and therefore any influence it held worldwide. However, this would be remedied in an ulterior way by the Nazi regime. Instead of seeking to reacquire its overseas colonies from its days of empire, the Third Reich built a series of alliances with the other challengers of the international system. Together with the Japanese Empire and Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany formed the Axis Powers. The difference between this alliance and the former Central Powers was that these allies were all authoritarian states. In the same way that the Soviet Union would emerge as the leader of the communist bloc, the Third Reich had taken its place as the leader of a worldwide fascist bloc. Unfortunately, this bloc was incredibly weak in regards to international relations. None of its members were ever able to expand their influence outside of their traditional regions, at least for the long term. Therefore, while the German Empire was well accomplished at diplomacy up until the reign of Wilhelm II, from 1914 onward it was long-term downward spiral.
Analysis and Conclusions

Germany was selected as a case study because it was a great power that failed in its attempt to become an international superpower. During its time as the German Empire, Germany developed an economy that was competitive against the other top players in the international system. It also possessed a military that, before its defeat in World War One, brought the armies of two European great powers to heel. It cannot be denied that Germany was on the rise, so the next thing to do is determine what disrupted that rise and thus prevented it from attaining superpower status.

It is this case study’s determination that Germany’s entry into the World Wars is the event that prevented its rise into superpowerdom. Like Great Britain and the United States during their political evolutions, Germany was well on its way towards dominating the other great powers economically. The wars resulted in the outright destruction of Germany’s economic and political infrastructure, putting a hole in its economic development. The autocratic government also did not do much to help. Historically, autocracy gives birth to corruption. Corruption is a significant drain on an economy, and as a result prevented Germany from fulfilling its true potential. Finally, the Third Reich’s fascist government pursued an economy designed to enhance the power of the government. In other words, it was a mercantilist system. Mercantilism focuses on protectionist policies in order to strengthen domestic firms. While it may make sense from a nationalist perspective, high levels of government intervention in the economy historically result in unintended secondary effects. This took place in Nazi Germany, with Hitler’s focus on the military resulting in shortages for industries such as food.

Militarily, the Germans were lacking. While its military was more than capable of projecting power locally, its failure to monopolize the high seas prevented it from projecting its
power on a significant international scale, a prerequisite for any true superpower. Finally, the German Empire failed to establish a proper sphere of influence and therefore had no safety bubble from which to operate.

The Third Reich succeeded in areas where the Empire failed, but failed in many ways that it had succeeded. Nazi Germany was never able to build an economy of the same quality as the other great powers. While it did build a substantial military force, it still possessed the strategic weakness of not being able to project power outside of Europe. The only domain where the Reich succeeded was in its possession of a sphere of influence. Its emergence as the leader of a global fascist bloc granted it a position of relative safety from which it could strike out against its opponents during World War Two. Unfortunately though, this sphere of influence evaporated in the waning years of the Second World War and Germany was left with no allies that it could depend on for support.

If Germany’s rise can be compared to the rise of any other power, it would likely be that of the Soviet Union. This is because had Germany won either of the World Wars, it would likely have attained superpower status. Systemic warfare is what gave birth to the alleged superpowerdom of the U.S.S.R., not because it initiated it, but because it emerged on the winning side. However, Germany would prove to not be so lucky, and its final attempt at systemic conflict resulted in its defeat and subsequent division. Therefore, the lesson of this case study is that when a great power attempts to attain superpower status through the use of systemic war, it had better win or risk losing everything.
Chapter VI
Analysis and Hypotheses

Section One: Analysis

Now that the historical and failed superpowers have been properly introduced and reviewed, this section will analyze exactly how the four countries were able to develop, or not develop, into superpower status. Each case study from the previous four chapters was divided into three sections. Space was allotted for the economic, military and international relations aspects of national power. This chapter will be divided in a similar way. The analysis section of this chapter will split into those same three dimensions, with each covering one or more explanations for how the case study states were able to get where they were. Once this has been completed, the hypotheses section will begin. This second half of the chapter will take what was learned from the first and apply it to the world today. I will take what set the United States and Great Britain apart from the other great powers of the time, and then apply it to the twenty-first century.

Economic Factors

Stability

The first economic factor that stood out was domestic stability. Domestic stability, for the purposes of this research project, is defined as how safe the political and economic infrastructure is from foreign and domestic threats. For example, Poland during World War Two would be classified as a country with low domestic stability, since it was invaded from all sides and saw its government and domestic infrastructure almost completely destroyed. A country like Canada, which hasn’t been invaded nor had a domestic revolution at any time in the modern era, would be classified as a country with a high level of domestic stability. This was a trait that clearly separated the successful superpowers from the failed ones. Russia experienced two domestic
stability crises during its development into potential superpowerdom. The first took the form of a civil war during World War One. A civil war is the perfect example of a domestic threat to a country’s stability, since it is an open conflict that takes place entirely within a nation’s borders. It also puts a lot of strain on the political infrastructure, such as the effectiveness of domestic institutions and strength of the state’s infrastructural power. In the case of Russia, the Communists prevailed, and as a result restructured both the economic and political system according to their own ideology. This put the newly christened Soviet Union back to square one in terms of economic and political development and as such put it behind countries like the United States and Great Britain in economic size and strength. Further compounding the problem was World War Two, with the German invasion virtually destroying everything between Moscow and Poland, which was the industrial heartland of the USSR. These events were huge setbacks for the Soviet economy, and the communist state was never able to fully recover from it. As a result, the Soviet Union always lagged behind the United States in terms of economic clout, and continued to do so until its collapse.

Germany had a very similar experience to the Soviet Union. The First World War resulted in a domestic revolution that removed the Kaiser from power. In its place was established a young and weak republic. The years that followed were so economically unstable as a result of war reparations, uncontrollable inflation and the Great Depression. These factors kept the Weimar Republic weak and incredibly unpopular with German citizens. Odds are however, that eventually the German state would come to grips and restore order and prosperity to Germany. However, the rise of Adolf Hitler prevents us from ever finding out. When he unleashed World War Two against the rest of Europe, the resulting invasion from all sides by the Allies destroyed everything Germany had left both in terms of governance and economic
capability. Just like the Soviet Union, Germany was set back to almost having to start all over from scratch in regards to its economic development.

The United States and Great Britain had almost the exact opposite experiences during their development. During the years that have been established as their ascent to superpower status, neither country experienced a local revolution or a foreign invasion. In fact, the British Empire only started to decline after World War One, which threatened their colonies. Since an empire’s colonies are an extension of its economy, they will be regarded as a part of a country’s domestic territory. The only nation from the case studies that experienced no strain on its domestic stability was the United States, and it was also the country that experienced the greatest economic prosperity. Therefore, it can be concluded that a country’s domestic stability is a large factor in its development into a superpower.

*Form of Government*

The second factor that separated the successful superpowers from the failures is its form of government. Government types can be separated into two categories, authoritarian and democratic. With Great Britain as a constitutional monarchy and the United States as a representative democracy, these two states can be classified as democratic countries. Since Germany went from monarchy to fascism, and Russia going from monarchy to communism, they can both be labeled as authoritarian states. Now that all four of the case studies have been categorized based on government type, the question then becomes how each category performs in relation to economic prosperity.

Germany and Russia both existed as authoritarian states, with absolute power residing in the hands of the few (Jarman 1956, 186). This had several side effects which bled out into their economies. The first is the lack of accountability. Without the independent judiciary system that
is a pillar of democratic society, corruption is left uninhibited. In authoritarian states, loyalty tends to take precedence over the ability to get results. A perfect example of this is found in Nazi Germany, where officials would rather lie and get Hitler’s approval than reveal bad news and provoke his wrath. This rule holds true for all states where power lies in the hands of a strong man, whether it be a Kaiser, Czar, Fuhrer or General Secretary. Alternatively, a more democratic state is known for transparency and accountability. Both of these things are necessary for economic development because they allow for the reliability of information that is critical when making important economic conditions. For example, if everybody is over-reporting in terms of production in order to avoid angering the state, then the economy will continue to perform below capacity without anybody doing anything about it.

A final advantage that democratic states have is the competition that it encourages within politics. In a democracy, there are always at least two groups competing for popular support. In order to win votes and win political office, these groups will constantly try to outdo one another. They have an incentive to perform well, and thus will constantly be looking for ways to strengthen the economy, build a more efficient state and make sure that good governance occurs at the federal, regional and local levels. It is this competition that will ensure that the economy is always being fed by new ideas with the incentive to grow. In an authoritarian country, this competition does not take place. These countries are typically one-party states that have purged, banned or exiled any political opposition. They are secure in their power and as a result do not have too much of an incentive to focus on performance. If the party in power is willing to use force to ensure its continued rule, citing examples like Hitler’s Night of the Long Knives and Stalin’s periodic purges, then this rule applies even more (Case Study). There is little risk of the people voting them out of power, since it is unlikely their votes carry any weight, and if there is
any opposition it can be violently put down. Competition vanishes and takes the incentive to perform with it. As a result, the democratic states performed better in the long term than their autocratic rivals.

*Economic Model*

The countries that I examined in my case studies all followed one of three economic models during their development. These models were capitalism, communism and fascism. Whichever model they subscribed to determined the relationship between the state and the economy. In a fascist country like Nazi Germany, the economy is seen as an extension of the state’s will (Nicosia 2004, 32). The Soviet Union, which pursued a communist ideology, saw the economy as a possession of the people and thus encouraged public ownership of everything from industry to property. Alternatively, capitalist countries like the United States and Great Britain believed in a degree of separation between the state and the economy. The most significant aspect that a country’s economic model had in relation to its rise into superpower status is its degree of market intervention.

States like Germany and the USSR frequently practiced market intervention when trying to accomplish their short term goals. Germany did this when the Nazis focused their economy on wartime production, and Russia did this when Stalin nationalized the agricultural industry to establish collective farming (Caplan 2008, 187). Interventions such as these disrupted the natural course of the economy, and could result in unforeseen consequences that could leave the economy worse off. This was proven when Stalin’s nationalized agricultural sector failed to produce enough food to feed his people, resulting in famine (Bushkovitch 2012, 354). While the United Kingdom and United States did practice mercantilist policies, and occasionally intervene directly in the economy, it was nothing near to the extent of Germany and Russia. Both of these
countries adopted liberalism as an international economic policy by the time their development into superpower status began, and this policy can thus be seen as a prerequisite to their international rise.

**Natural Resources**

There is a reason that a small country like Great Britain was able to build such a large economy, its colonies. While colonies are a good source of human capital, their true value lies in their natural resources (Kennedy 1987, 151). It was this incentive that also drove the German Empire to pursue colonies in Africa. Siberia gave the Soviet Union access to a wealth of oil and natural gas, which formed the backbone of their economy (Reynolds 1916, 249). The United States’ purchase of Alaska and development of the West Coast provided it with a diverse portfolio of natural resources that could fuel their economy. After World War One stripped the Germans of their colonial empire, they lost access to a steady income of capital. This shortage is one of the factors that led Hitler to invade the oil-rich Soviet Union. In the end, a country that can rely on its own natural resources to meet most of its needs will be less vulnerable to economic uncertainty in the event of war, rivalry, or any other international crisis. The less dependent a great power is on other states to maintain its economy, the more flexibility it will have in projecting its own power.

**Military Factors**

*Military Spending*

Having a large and powerful military is not cheap. It costs a large amount of money to both pay for a large military and supply it with top-of-the-line weaponry. Therefore, it is important for a developing superpower to have a military powerful enough to enforce its will on a large if not global scale. A strong military is the most recognizable prerequisite for a modern
superpower. The Soviet Union emulated this when it focused the lion’s share of its economy on military spending. Despite the fact that its population was among the poorest in the world, the USSR was able to develop nuclear weapons and field the largest military in regards to troop numbers in the world. These two factors are why the country was regarded as a superpower for so long. Every nation that was investigated in my case studies met this benchmark for superpower development, although not all of them were able to maintain it (Singer 2010). During the periods of time that were identified as their rise to superpowerdom, all four of the countries were among the top spenders in their military industry (Singer 2010).

This begs the question of how they were able to spend such a large sum on their military. There were two ways that they did this, with the determining factor being the form of government. If the nation in question was autocratic, they were able to do this because there was a separation between the common people and the decision-making processes. So countries like the USSR were able to spend the majority of their annual budget on the military because there were no checks and balances that prevented them from doing so. This same rule also applied to Nazi Germany. In the democratic states, the United States and the U.K. were able to spend large amounts of money in the military-industrial complex because the funds, while large, did not take up the majority of government spending. Therefore, there was no conflict between the needs of the citizenry and the priorities of the state. In the event that such a conflict ever arose, the democratic process would allow the state and its constituents negotiate a reasonable compromise. It is also worth noting that high wealth per capita is not a requirement for this level of spending, only a large economy that the government can invest in defense spending. Finally, neither the autocratic nor democratic method was necessarily more effective than the other. The Soviet Union was able to develop nuclear weapons, Nazi Germany built some of the most advanced war
machines of the era, and the United States built a massive blue water navy. What mattered in the end was the large and constant flow of capital into their military development.

Technological Advancement

No military ever inspired fear and envy with sub-standard technology. For a country’s military to have an edge over its rivals, it has to maintain technological superiority. This is why the Soviet Union and United States’ possession of nuclear weapons propelled them to the top of the international system. The question that must then be answered is how these countries were able to develop weapons that were so advanced in relation to the other countries of the world. Based on the results of my case studies, they were able to do this because they possessed the most advanced economies of the era. All four countries that I examined were among the world’s most industrialized states during their development. This gave them access to the most advanced technology that they could utilize for military purposes. In summation, they had the most advanced militaries because they had the most modern economies at the time.

Local Competition

A critical trait of superpowerdom that has been identified by this research project is the ability to project power. The two countries that did this very well were the two countries that became successful superpowers, Great Britain and the United States. Germany and Russia were not able to project power on a global scale, and this is a major factor in their failure to develop into true superpowers in the international system. What must then be examined is what differentiated these two groups. I have identified the most important factor to be whether or not the state in question had any significant local rivalries. In other words, were there any states close enough to the potential superpower to challenge its ability to export power? For Britain and the United States, the answer is no. The only states that rested on the same continent as the U.S.
were Canada and Mexico, both weak states that never possessed the ability to curb American influence. While Great Britain is located close to Continental Europe and its various great power inhabitants, the fact that there was no land connecting Britain to the mainland protected it from any country that couldn’t field a powerful navy. In addition, the true power of the British Empire lied in its overseas colonies, which were beyond the reach of any other competing European empires until the Second World War.

The German and Russian Empires were not so lucky. Germany came into being right in the center of the European continent (Kennedy 1987, 209). With France to the west, Britain to the north and Russia to the East, the Germans were almost entirely boxed in (Sturmer 2000, 93). They did manage to establish colonies in Africa and East Asia, but were unable to prevent them from being taken early in World War One. Russia was in a very similar situation. The Russians had to contend with Germany to the west and an aggressive Japanese Empire to the East. It would end up selling its only overseas colony, Alaska, to the Americans. Due almost entirely to chance, both of these empires were virtually isolated from the rest of the world. This situation can have a very strong impact on a country’s development into superpower status. While the isolation and competition may lead said country to expand its military, it will prevent it from enjoying the global reach necessary for any true superpower.

*Demographics*

A country’s demographic situation is also very important in terms of military potential. It is important for a military to be technologically advanced, but it is equally important that the military be impressive in terms of size. Apart from its possession of nukes, what made the USSR truly terrifying to the West was the vast numbers of troops it could field at any given time (Singer 2010). Germany and the United States were also able to field large armies (Singer,
2010). They were able to do this because they had largest populations from which they could draw manpower (Kennedy 1987, 199). Great Britain itself may not have had a very large domestic population, but its colonies made up for this with its large domestic colonial armies.

**International Relations Factors**

*Ideology*

In regards to international relations, my case studies revealed one important similarity among all of the countries examined that was not shared by any other major power. That similarity was an ideology that it promoted as a way forward for the international system. For Great Britain, that ideology took the form of the Concert of Europe, which was a balance of power system designed to ensure peace after the devastation of the Napoleonic War. The United States promoted a globalized liberalism that sought free trade on the seas, stronger international cooperation in the form of the League of Nations, and a reduction in economic trade restrictions. After the Russian Civil War, the Soviet Union established itself as the bastion of communism, and wanted to spread it to every corner of the globe. Germany was unique in that it did not promote a global ideology that could be shared equally by all. Instead, Germany’s singular goal was to establish a hegemonic system with itself as the dominant state. In other words, Germany’s international ambitions revolved solely around Germany.

Taking up a cause is easy, what is not so easy is convincing others to subscribe to it. After years of war, Europe did not hesitate to adopt Britain’s promise of peace. The economic incentives in American liberalism enticed the Western Europeans, who were wary of going to war again after the two world wars. While communism never became as popular as the Soviets would have liked, it appealed to many poor southern countries who felt exploited by the West. Germany failed to convince the world that it would be better off under German leadership. Going
to war twice to force themselves on the world did not do anything to help their cause either. The Germans failed to learn the lesson of the other superpowers, that international leadership must be bestowed and not taken.

**Conclusions**

My analysis of the four case studies revealed several commonalities between both the successful and unsuccessful superpowers. In the end, the countries that were able to achieve superpower status were the ones that were most stable, prosperous, populous, free, and capitalist. They had to be able to finance a military with a sizable and technological edge. There was also a degree of luck that went into it, since a country’s location on the map can matter just as much as its potential. The countries that were able to rise to the top of the international system were the ones that were not held back by powerful neighbors. Perhaps surprisingly, international politics works a lot like a democracy. Nobody was ever elected president without having an agenda and an ideology that he or she would promote. This rule applies just as strongly to the international system. The only way that a country is going to reign as a superpower or hegemon, short of conquering the world, is to be appointed to the position by the international community.

Something that should be understood is what all of these factors, taken together, really did for the countries that mastered them. When each economic factor is taken into account, they allowed the case study nations to industrialize at a rate faster than that of their peers. At the time, industrialization was the sign of the most modern countries. The countries that industrialized the most were able to feed that potential into their military. Once Britain and America were able to do this, they had the ability both to promote their international systems and back them up with their financial resources.
It also needs to be noted that these findings do not adhere strictly to any theories of international politics. The military factors suggest a realist approach to international relations, where domestic rivalries suggest a zero-sum game and one country’s gain is another’s loss. However, the economic factors focus almost entirely on the domestic front, suggesting an element of liberalism. Whether or not the findings of this paper fall strictly into one category or another, or creates a new category of its own, is a possible topic for future research.

Table 20: Summary of Economic Factors of Superpower Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superpower?</th>
<th>Access to Natural Resources</th>
<th>Stability</th>
<th>Economic Model</th>
<th>Government Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No civil wars, revolutions or invasions.</td>
<td>Market-Based Capitalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No civil wars, revolutions or invasions.</td>
<td>Market-Based Capitalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>One civil war, one invasion.</td>
<td>Communism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>One revolution, one invasion.</td>
<td>Mercantilism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21: Summary of Military Factors of Superpower Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superpower?</th>
<th>Military Spending (Thousands/1940)</th>
<th>Military Technology</th>
<th>Regional Rivals</th>
<th>Population (Thousands/1940)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1,657,000</td>
<td>Nukes, Aircraft Carriers, Juggernaut Warships</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
United Kingdom  Yes  9,948,329  Juggernaut Warships  None  48,226
Soviet Union  No  6,145,214  Nukes  Germany, Japan  195,970
Germany  No  21,200,000  Jet Fighters, Tanks  France, GB, Russia  69,835

Table 22: Summary of IR Factors of Superpower Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superpower?</th>
<th>IR Order</th>
<th>Accepted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Liberal Order</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>Liberal Order Colonialism</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>Communism, Soviet-Hegemonic System</td>
<td>In Part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>German-Hegemonic System</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section Two: Hypotheses

The literature review of this research project was unable to develop any comprehensive hypotheses that could answer the questions of how a great power becomes an international superpower. The reason for this was that while the literature concerning superpowers did a lot to analyze what a superpower looked like, it did not go far in determining how a nation got to that point in the first place. Therefore, the contribution that this paper makes will be developing comprehensive hypotheses designed to answer this important question. Now that the analysis portion of this project has been completed, I have all of the data I need to design them. It is important to understand that the hypotheses will not be mirror images of the conclusions from
my case studies. While some of my findings are certainly still relevant today, many will need to be adjusted in order to apply to the modern era. The second half of this chapter is designed very similarly to the first. My research has been able to divide the aspects of superpowerdom into three categories: economic, military and international relations. This is the template that I used for each of my case studies as well as the analysis section. For the sake of continuity and ease of access, this portion of my paper will be done in the same way. Each hypothesis that I develop will be categorized into one of these three realms.

*Economic Hypotheses*

**H1**: A country with higher levels of domestic stability is more likely to enter the stage of superpower development. If a country is not domestically threatened by either local or foreign adversaries, then it will be able to develop relatively undisturbed. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, the country will be able to develop its economy, institutions and infrastructural power in a linear direction, thus giving it the ability to take the actions necessary to become a full superpower.

**H2**: A country with stronger democratic institutions is more likely to enter the stage of superpower development. My case studies have shown that the transparency and accountability that comes with a democratic society are necessary for an effective decision-making process. It will give a government the data it needs in order to make informed decisions that will be critical to support its rise in the international system.

**H3**: The more capitalistic a great power is, the more likely it is to enter the stage of superpower development. My research has shown that the great powers that embraced capitalism were more economically successful than their counterparts. The competition and incentives that come with a
capitalist model promoted high levels of economic growth in the superpowers that subscribed to it.

**H4:** The more natural resources a great power has access to, the more likely it is to enter the stage of superpower development. Natural resources support a developing great power in many ways. They feed an economy, support a growing population and provide them with a competitive edge in international trade. Additionally, they protect a country from becoming dependent on a foreign nation for energy, supplies or capital. A steady supply of natural resources is therefore a prerequisite for any nation that seeks to sit atop the international system.

**H5:** A great power with an information technology sector is more likely to enter the stage of superpower development. The countries at the top of the international system have always been the ones that embraced modernism the best. At the turn of the twentieth century, these were the countries that took greatest advantage of the industrial revolution. Today, the growth of the information and expansion of the cloud has created a new and advanced industry that not many countries have an edge in. Any great power that can create competitive industry in this field will have a leg-up against its rivals in the international community.

*Military Hypotheses*

**H6:** A state must be either the first or the second biggest military spender to be a potential superpower. The military is the most visible aspect of being a superpower, and therefore any potential superpower needs the ability to invest in it beyond the scope of its rivals. Also noteworthy is that this project is researching superpowerdom, not hegemony. The superpower is an aspect of a bipolar system, when the international order is divided between two nations. Therefore, the most likely contenders for superpower status will be the two states that spend the most on their military relative to the rest of the world.
**H7:** A nation that can produce the most advanced military technology is more likely to enter the stage of superpower development. What really established the United States and Soviet Union as the two superpowers was that they were the original states to possess nuclear weaponry. Additionally, they both had the capability to deploy this weaponry anywhere on earth. This requirement has not changed, and any state that ranks as a potential superpower must have the capability to build and deploy the most advanced weaponry of the day. Common examples are nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, aircraft carriers, stealth technology, and a blue water navy. The country’s ability to build these weapons depends on the advancement of their economy.

**H8:** The larger a nation’s population, the more likely it is to enter the stage of superpower development. A larger population means more manpower available for the military, more workers and more sources of tax revenue. The countries that both came close to and achieved superpowerdom were the ones that sported the largest number of people within its territory.

*International Relations Hypotheses*

**H9:** The fewer local great power rivals a nation has, the more likely it is to enter the stage of superpower development. A sphere of influence is a prerequisite to becoming a superpower in the international system, and building an effective one requires the presence of weak states that are susceptible to a great power’s control. If there are other great powers nearby, they will form a buffer that prevents a potential superpower from exporting both hard and soft power on both the local and international scales. The absence of local great powers also decreases the possibility of a threat to the potential superpower’s survival.

**H10:** A country with a popular new ideology for international relations is more likely to enter the stage of superpower development. The great powers that went on to become superpowers were the ones that had a vision for the international system that gained popularity and popular
acceptance. If the world is going to promote a new superpower from within the ranks of the great powers, then the superpower is going to have to offer a new version of the international system that the world prefers over the one already in place.

**Section III: Conclusions and Testing Methodology**

Now that this section is complete, it is possible to move on to the initial goal of this project. The final step is to use these hypotheses to examine each of the BRIC countries. This project will attempt to determine which of them, if any, is more likely to become a superpower. I will make this determination by examining whether or not any of these countries meets the qualifications set forth in each of these hypotheses. Each test will result in a number between one and five, which will determine the strength or weakness of each country against the hypothesis. For example, if a country has a military that meets the qualifications for potential superpower status, it will receive a perfect score of five. Alternatively, a country that’s military lacks the capabilities and formidability of a potential superpower will receive a score of one. Since each economic, military and international aspect of superpowerdom is necessary for a successful candidate, all ten of the hypothesis factors will be weighted evenly. It is important to note that this challenges some claims of the realists, who see military power as the most important factor in international relations (Waltz 1979). Afterwards, I will add the results for each country into a total score. Since each test can only result in a score between one and five, the only possible total scores lie between 10 and 50. For the purposes of this project, a country will need a total score of at least 40 to be considered a potential superpower.
Chapter VII
The Federative Republic of Brazil

Section I: Introduction

Out of all of the continents of the world, except perhaps Africa, South America gets almost the least amount of attention in international politics. There are several reasons for this. The first is perhaps because the region has traditionally always been dominated by foreign entities, especially during its colonization by Spain and Portugal. Another reason may be because the nations of South America have traditionally been dominated by various dictatorships and economic crises. However, there is a transformation happening in that area of the world that may have a great impact on the global balance of power. Brazil has risen from the ashes of dictatorship and inflation, and today is hailed as a developing great power with enormous potential. Its massive population, combined with its democratic ideals and booming economy, have given birth to a new great power in the international community, the only one to reign from South America. As a result, Brazil has been declared a member of the BRIC countries, and thus is the first nation I will test my hypotheses on.

Section II: Hypothesis Testing

Domestic Stability

Brazil has enjoyed a rather peaceful rise when compared to the other BRIC countries. The CIA World Factbook states that the Latin American country is not currently engaged in any big transnational issues (2013). The only credible threat to Brazil’s borders could come from an aggressive Venezuela to the north, but so far nothing has manifested from these fears and Brazil lives in relative peace on the continent. Based on this information, this country clearly passes the test for domestic stability with a score of five.
Democracy

Brazil is one of the geographically largest democracies in the Western Hemisphere, behind only the United States and India. It is officially recognized as a federal republic, with over thirty political parties participating in elections at every level (CIA 2013). Freedom House classifies Brazil as a free country; the top ranking it gives (Freedom House 2013a). The country is led by a democratically elected president. The legislative branch is known as the National Congress, a bicameral body whose members are elected by Brazil’s citizens. In many ways the Brazilian system mimics that of the United States.

Unfortunately, Brazil still has a ways to go on guaranteeing certain freedoms for its people. The biggest obstacle to true freedom for Brazil is the freedom of the press. While the Brazilian constitution includes strong guarantees for freedom of expression, the reality is very different (Freedom House 2013b). Journalists suffer from sporadic acts of violence, with libel and defamation being classified by the courts as criminal acts. Judicial censorship is a regular occurrence, with publications that say negative things about public officials being frequently banned (Freedom House 2013b). For these reasons, Freedom House classifies freedom of the press in Brazil as only being partly free (2013b).

Press freedoms are an integral part of a fully-fledged democratic state. Without the checks and balances that come with an active press, there are opportunities for corruption to become a serious problem. Brazil still has progress that needs to be made on this front, but there is still no denying that it is a strong democracy subject to the will of its people. For this reason, Brazil scores a four for my democracy test.
Capitalism

A remarkable transformation has occurred within Brazil over recent decades. When it was the International Monetary Fund’s single largest debtor (Rohter 2011, 139). The country used to suffer from terrible inflation until it started capitalist reforms in the early 1990s (Onis 2000). Brazil’s new economy allows for more private enterprise and foreign investment, and has produced amazing results for the Brazilians (Onis 2000). Their economy has formed the backbone of their rise in the international system, and is a big part of why they are predicted to become a serious world power.

Today, Brazil has one of the most balanced and diversified economies in the world. After bringing its inflation under control, a new middle class of consumers has been created (Rohter 2011, 144). In the past forty years alone per capita income has increased by over a thousand percent (Rohter 2011). A new monetary plan that included a new form of currency, the Real, brought in a surge of outside investment (Rohter 2011, 146). Now, more than half of all Brazilians qualify as middle class (Rohter 2011, 163). This has resulted in a wave of new Brazilian enterprises ranging from aircraft to agriculture to the recent purchase of Anheuser-Busch (Rohter 2011 148;149).

Perhaps one of the most valuable aspects of Brazil’s new capitalism was its approach to trade. With its massive cache of raw minerals, energy and agriculture, Brazil is a very valuable trading partner to have. They responded to their new position with an unorthodox policy of international diversification. The Brazilian government has decreed that their trade partnerships are to be split evenly among the different regions of the world (Rohter 2011, 158). In doing so, Brazil would be protected from any regional economic crises, since the most
damage they could do would only affect a fraction of its trade industry. This proved to be a highly intelligent decision, and resulted in Brazil being protected from the impact of the Great Recession, even allowing them to receive the first promoted credit rating since the crisis (Rohter 2011, 158;167).

Brazil’s democratic freedoms, expansion of private enterprise, foreign investment and trade growth has created a strong capitalist economy. While there is some government intervention into the economy, thus far it has resulted in common sense initiatives like its policy for trade division (Rohter 2011, 160). Only time will tell if the success of these policies will continue, but for the time being Brazil’s economy can be accurately classified as capitalist. Therefore, it passes the test for the capitalism hypothesis of my project with a score of four.

Natural Resources

If there were such a thing as an energy and resource superpower, Brazil would fit the bill. The country is completely self-sufficient in oil and gas, and has been able to meet all of its own energy needs since 2006 (Rohter 2011, 171; 175). With the discovery of massive offshore oil reserve, Brazil is in the ideal position to replace both Venezuela and Mexico as a top oil exporter for the region (Rohter 2011, 173; 176). In terms of agriculture, the Brazilians are the literal breadbasket of the world. Rohter described it as an agricultural superpower, with a diversity of agricultural resources that protects it from shifting global markets (2011, 151; 153). These advantages have also fed into a large ethanol industry that may one day shift the global market away from oil (Rohter 2011 182). Brazil also has massive potential for hydro energy, with barely a quarter of its water resources being tapped so far (Rohter 2011, 193).
While Brazil is in possession of massive reserves of oil agriculture and water, none of these form the crown jewel of its natural resource chest. The single most valuable resource at Brazil’s disposal is the world-renowned Amazon Rainforest. The Amazon is the largest rainforest on planet earth, and alone takes up about sixty percent of Brazil’s territory (Rohter 2011, 202). There is no other forest like it on Earth, and the Brazilians control the majority of it. This gives them access to a seemingly endless supply of lumber, water, land and agriculture.

Brazil scores a five for this hypothesis. Its size and location on the map have blessed it with an abundance of natural resources that is feeding into its economy and national development. As a result, Brazil is a completely self-sufficient nation in terms of its energy needs, which protects it from random fluctuations in the global economy. While there are developments that can change this current status, such as the continued clearing of the rainforest and overuse of their oil reserves, for the time being Brazil has a vast supply of resources that can boost it into superpowerdom.

*Advanced Economy*

Brazil is an industrialized nation with several strong and modern industries. The third largest aircraft producer in the world is a Brazilian firm (Rohter 2011, 149). Additionally, Brazil is a world leader in tropical agriculture research, due in no small part to its ownership of the largest tropical rainforest on the planet (Rohter 2011, 155). One of their leading projects right now is the development of ethanol, with the hope of one day making it into the new primary source of fuel (Rohter 2011, 182). It has also developed extensive industries in both energy and service (CIA 2013). However, perhaps the biggest roadblock to a high-technology sector in the Brazilian economy is its lack of an ability to train an advanced workforce.
Brazil needs to make significant advancements in its higher education industry if it is ever going to build a globally competitive workforce. Today, not a single one of Brazil’s universities ranks among the top one hundred worldwide, with the highest ranked university being the University of San Paolo, at 127 (Top Universities 2013). While Brazil’s schools confer degrees on every level from Bachelor’s to Doctoral, they are not considered to be very prestigious (AUCC 2011). The biggest problem facing universities in Brazil is that the quality of education is very poor, especially when it comes to technology-intensive professions (Lulko 2011). This is a serious long-term problem, and will be one of the biggest hindrances to Brazil ever developing a competitive technology sector, which is a prerequisite to becoming a potential superpower.

However, Brazil may be able to make up for this with immigration. The rise of Brazil has resulted in a wave of immigration to the South American country. In 2011 through September, Brazil processed over fifty-thousand work permits to immigrants, a 32.8% increase over 2010 (Castillo 2012). This is a source of joy for the Brazilian government, who wants these foreign workers to feed their growing economy in the short term (Castillo 2012). Illegal immigration has also been increasing in the country, with current numbers of illegal residents in the country totaling as many as two million people (Lulko 2011). There are many new opportunities for immigrants in Brazil, especially with the new massive sports projects that are underway, specifically the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games (Lulko 2011). These trends are a good sign for the attractiveness of Brazil both as a country and an economy. Only time will tell whether or not Brazil is attracting the sorts of immigrants that will help it develop into an international giant.
While they have built many modern-day industries, to date the Brazilians have been unable to construct a high-technology sector (CIA 2013). This is a disadvantage for Brazil in the global economy, because it means that the best products and life-changing advancements will likely not be coming from its own economy. This results in a score of three for Brazil. Until the Brazilians are able to produce the most advanced technologies, rivaling the sort of advancements coming out of the United States today, the Brazilian economy won’t be making any waves for the international community.

Military Spending

Military spending in Brazil is nowhere near what it needs to be for Brazil to have a world-renowned fighting force. In 2012 the Brazilian government spent 33 billion dollars of its budget on the military, making it the 11th top military spender in the world (SIPRI 2013). This spending represents only 1.3% percent of its GDP (CIA 2013). In terms of global rankings, Brazil is the 110th biggest military spender in terms of GDO (CIA 2013). These figures do not reflect a country with competitive military spending, and as a result, Brazil scores a one for the military spending hypothesis of my research project.

Military Technology

Brazil’s military technology leaves a lot to be desired if the goal of Brazil is to become a potential superpower. A report states that 50% of Brazil’s current military technology is obsolete (Latin America Herald Tribune 2011). Recognizing this, Brazil has been taking big steps in an attempt to build a modern army (Sukkareih 2012). A big part of this new modernization has taken place through technology deals with the United States (Agence 2012). The focus of Brazil’s advancements has been in their navy. One of their biggest projects right now is the
development of a nuclear submarine, which has been declared a strategic goal by the Brazilian government (Rousseff 2013). They have also declared their intent to build a new aircraft carrier, bringing them into the small club of countries with the capability of producing this crown jewel of any fleet (Cicalesi 2013). The long term goal is to create a blue water navy, with the potential and power to deploy anywhere in the world to defend Brazil’s strategic objectives (Pratt 2013).

It is easy to have goals, and making the first steps towards those goals is vital to success. Brazil has many goals for its military, and if it meets them all it will surely possess one of the most powerful militaries in the region, which they can potentially build on at the global level. However, the state of its military today is still not at the level of modernity. Therefore, the test on Brazil in terms of military technology has resulted in a score of two. If Brazil is able to accomplish all of its current modernization objectives, there is a decent chance that it may score higher in the near future.

Population

Since Brazil is one of the largest countries in the world, it should come as no surprise that it also ranks as one of the world’s largest populations. With a population of over 200 million, it ranks as the 5th largest population on the globe (CIA 2013). The median age for Brazilians is 30 years old (CIA 2013). More importantly however, is the population growth rate in Brazil of 0.83 percent (CIA 2013). This means that the population will continue to grow, unlike several major powers who are seeing shrinking populations within their borders. That is very dangerous for a national economy, because a shrinking population means a shrinking workforce as well as a larger share of the population held by senior citizens. This increases the burden on government services as well as on industries that rely on a large and thriving working class. However, since
Brazil possesses both a large and growing population, it scores a three the demographic hypothesis for my thesis.

Local Rivals

Brazil, much like the United States, is in a very advantageous position on the world map. The United States has been blessed by weak neighbors, with Canada to the north and Mexico to the South. Neither of these countries are in a position to challenge or buffer the United States, and thus the world’s only superpower has the ability to project its power abroad in relative safety. The Brazilians are in a very similar situation. There are no other great powers currently located on the South American continent. While there have been some historical tensions between Brazil and an increasingly aggressive Venezuela, the massive Amazon rainforest serves as an effective buffer between the Venezuelans and Brazilian heartland. The only other factor in the region may come from the United States, which does not have a strong presence on the continent but could easily do so if provoked. This possibility prevents Brazil from receiving a perfect score on this test. Therefore, Brazil’s proximity to the hegemon and lack of regional rivals results in a score of three.

New Ideology

The Brazilian government and people have never hidden their international goals. It is clear that they are paranoid about foreign intervention into their affairs, and do not want to ever submit to the influence of a great power (Rohter 2011, 158; 205). Rohter stated that the Brazilians are very confident in their destiny for greatness, and want nothing more than respect from the international community as an emerging great power (2011, 233). Brazil does have tangible international goals, however. Right now their most ambitious objective is a permanent
seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (Ians 2013). If they are able to accomplish this, there will be no doubting the ascendancy of Brazil into great power politics.

What is noteworthy is that all of Brazil’s international goals fall within the parameters of the current international system. While they are seeking UNSC reform to include its membership, this hardly reflects a new ideology set to restructure the international community as a whole. Brazil has not offered nor supported any alternative to the current world order. This means that there is no ideology that Brazil can use to rally the world around itself, thus putting it into a position similar to the United States or Soviet Russia. Based on these facts, Brazil only scores a one for this hypothesis.

Section III: Results and Conclusions

Results

Table 23: Results of Hypothesis Testing on Brazil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Test Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>Domestic Stability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>Capitalist Economy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>Advanced Economy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>Military Spending</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>Military Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 9</td>
<td>Local Rivals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 10</td>
<td>New Ideology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score: 31
Conclusions

After testing all ten of my hypotheses, Brazil received a total score of 31. Since the parameters to be considered a potential superpower require a country to score at least a 40, I conclude that Brazil is not currently a potential superpower. It is clear that Brazil has made significant strides both institutionally and economically. The Brazilians possess a strong democracy that guarantees them almost every freedom Westerners enjoy. They have also built a modern capitalist economy with reliable industries that provide them with powerful protections from international economic crises. Unfortunately, they will have to make significant advances in their higher education and technology sectors before they can develop an advanced economy with global competitiveness.

Brazil still has a long way to go in the military realm of international relations. Brazil has an outdated military, and current spending levels will have to increase if this is ever going to
change. The Brazilian government has declared many lofty goals, ranging from developing nuclear submarines to aircraft carriers. However, it remains to be seen whether or not Brazil is capable of meeting these goals. Additionally, having these technologies and knowing how to use them are two entirely different things. Until Brazil can prove that it has the capability to develop, deploy, and maintain a modern and advanced military, it will always be the biggest thing holding them back from potential superpowerdom.

Despite these results, there can be no doubt that Brazil has joined a very small club of global great powers. There is no other country in South America that has met with Brazil’s level of success, which gives Brazil a huge advantage over the other BRIC countries that are surrounded by rivals. While it cannot be considered a potential superpower today, and thus does not threaten the United States’ place in the international system, its democratic and capitalistic ideals put it in a very good position to change this result in the long-term. With the rise of Brazil, it is very likely that the coming years will result in a shift in the global balance of power more towards South America than at any other point in history.
Chapter VIII
The Russian Federation

Section I: Introduction

Since the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the Russian Federation has long sought to reclaim their former glory as a preeminent global power. There is a lot of historical basis for this pursuit. Since the days of Peter the Great, Russia has always had a very public and cultural desire for power in the international system. Recently, this desire has manifested in attempts to reclaim a sphere of influence built on the former client states of the Soviet Union. Vladimir Putin, the current President of Russia, has rebuilt the Russian government into an autocratic state built squarely around himself as its absolute ruler. Recent actions such as the war with Georgia in 2008 and the modernization of the Russian military portray a country desperate to reclaim international ascendency, and a willingness to use whatever means necessary to achieve it.

Section Two: Hypothesis Testing

Domestic Stability

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in a wave of instability for the Russians both within their borders and within their supposed sphere of influence. When Vladimir Putin was elected President of Russia, he had to deal with an open rebellion by the region of Chechnya in the Russian Caucasus. After he was elected, Putin initiated the Second Chechen War, ordering the military to invade an entire state within the Russian Federation (Global Security). This would be similar to the President of the United States ordering the U.S. Military to invade and occupy the Commonwealth of Virginia, and shows that the internal stability of Russia is nothing similar to secure.
Russia has engaged in open interstate war with the Republic of Georgia, invading it in 2008 to prevent the Georgians from reclaiming two separatist territories (CIA 2013). While the war was short and swift, and resulted in a decisive victory for the Russians, it demonstrated that Russia does not have secure national boundaries, and that interstate war is still a very real possibility. The more recent military intervention in Crimea further supports this assertion. These are but a couple examples of the instability that can damage Russian governance, infrastructure and power. For these reasons, Russia scores a four for the domestic stability test.

Democracy

Officially, Russia is classified as a constitutional federation (CIA 2013). However, the reality is very different. The Russian State is in fact very autocratic in nature with very few personal, political and economic freedoms. Freedom House classifies Russia as a not free state, and labels it as a consolidated authoritarian regime (Freedom House 2013b; 2013c). At the center of this regime is the Russian President, Vladimir Putin. A former KGB agent, Putin has organized his government into an organization that does not come close to its publicly stated democratic principles. It began from the moment that Putin was elected in order to fight the Chechen rebels, when he was given extra emergency powers that slowly eroded personal freedoms for Russian citizens (Judah 2013, 38). Since then, Putin has transformed Russia into a centralized hierarchal government as opposed to the federation that its constitution guarantees. As opposed to the various republics of the Russian Federation electing their own leaders, regional governors are nominated by President Putin and are answerable to nobody but him (Judah 2013, 99). The relationship between the central and regional governments is more reflective of an empire and its colonies than a federalist system.
A major obstacle to true democracy in Russia is electoral freedom. Elections in this nation are notorious for being incredibly corrupt and arranged so that certain candidates are guaranteed victory. Nowhere is this more evident than in the recent 2012 re-election of Putin to the presidency, where as many as 14 million votes are predicted to have been stolen (Judah 2013, 233). Another big part of a democratic electoral system is term limits, where a single ruler is not able to retain power for an indefinite period of time. For example, in the United States a president is only able to have two terms in office and no more. Russian term limits have recently been amended so that Putin could return to power after leaving the presidency for one term, which is exactly what he did. Based on current laws, Putin can legally remain the President of Russia until 2024 (Judah 2013, 228). However, it would not be without precedent for the current statute to be changed once Putin runs close to that limit.

The authoritarian nature of the Russian government, electoral corruption and permanency of the Putin administration has resulted in a score of two for my democracy hypothesis. Like many authoritarian countries, the reality of the government does not truly reflect the democratic notion enshrined in their constitution. Until Russia starts to pull away from the strong-man system that has traditionally controlled its government, it will never be able to be a real democracy and enjoy all of the benefits that come with it. Barring any sort of popular uprising or damaging scandal, the next true test of democracy in Russia may not come until 2024 when Putin has to decide whether or not he will step aside or hold onto the reins.

*Capitalism*

While there were some baby steps to capitalism in Russia after the fall of the USSR, recent events have turned that trend into the opposite direction. An increase in privatization
began to pull Russia into a market-based economy during the 1990s, with the government only interfering in the energy and military industries (CIA 2013). This did not last for very long. The Putin administration has taken a level of control over the economy that will prevent it from making the full transformation from a centralized economy to a market one. It is estimated that Putin and his political allies today control about 40% of the Russian economy (Judah 2013, 207). Ministers in the government are able to take positions on the boards of major corporations, shrinking the gap between the public and private sectors (Judah 2013, 125). Putin himself stated that the state must guide Russia’s industries (Judah 2013, 58). This is especially evident in the energy sector, which forms the backbone of Russia’s economy. Oil is Russia’s biggest product and export, and has been nationalized by the Russian government (Frum 2012). These are disturbing facts for Russian capitalists, because it indicates that Russia has a long way to go in both the private and public sectors if the economy will ever reflect capitalist values. Therefore, Russia scores a three for my third hypothesis.

Natural Resources

If Russia is ever going to be in need of anything, access to natural resources is not one of them. Its control over Siberia gives it access to a wealth of resources with no end in sight. The region alone gives the Russians access to oil, diamonds, gas and coal (Ellyatt 2013). This has allowed them to be second highest producer of natural gas and third top producer of crude oil (CIA 2013). Based on these numbers, it comes as no surprise that one of Russia’s top industries is the energy and oil sector. It is also no surprise that Russia passes the natural resources test for my fourth hypothesis with a perfect score of five.
Advanced Economy

Russia still has a long way to go if it is going to have a truly modern and competitive economy. The Russians are well aware that the backbone of an advanced economy in today’s world is a high technology sector, and they have been trying to develop one since 2007 (CIA 2013). Unfortunately, this endeavor has thus far produced very poor results, and the most competitive industries in Russia today are still that of agriculture, defense and energy (CIA 2013). There are many possible reasons for why the Russians are having so much trouble breaking into this industry, with a poor innovation ranking and an unstable political environment being near the top of the list (Cornell 2013). However, the biggest reason for this is most likely the lack of competitive workers available to the Russian economy.

As it stands today, the biggest obstacle to an advanced Russian economy is the inability of the Russians to produce advanced workers. The higher education system in Russia, which would be responsible for training such employees, doesn’t have a single university that ranks in the top 100 worldwide (Top Universities 2013). The only other option, other than training advanced workers, is attracting them from other parts of the world through immigration. While Russia is the second most popular destination for immigration in the world, most of the immigrants are impoverished and looking for lower-level employment (Novosti 2013). Russia is failing to attract high-level scientists, and any that are raised locally are flocking to more progressive countries where the pay is much better (Nuckols 2013). Until Russia is able to produce higher-level scientists and workers, and thus able to build a high-technology sector that makes it competitive with more advanced countries like the United States, the results of this hypothesis test will score lowly at two.
Military Spending

While Russia is spending a tremendous amount of money on its military in comparison to other countries of the world, it falls just short of the bar required of a potential superpower. In 2012 the Russian government spent 90.7 billion U.S. dollars of its budget on the military, making it the third top military spender in the world (SIPRI 2013). In terms of GDP spending, the Russians dedicated 3.9 percent of their GDP on military spending, making it the 25th biggest GDP military spender in the world (CIA 2013). While these numbers are very impressive, they fall just short of the benchmarks for potential superpowerdom. Being a superpower means being one of the top two strongest countries in the international system, which means a potential superpower must be either the first or second biggest spender on the military. In third place, Russia scores a four for my military spending test.

Military Technology

Despite the fact that Russia is the third biggest military spender in the world, this has not translated into a completely modern and advanced military. The Russian arsenal is very out of date, and President Putin has unsurprisingly declared military modernization to be one of his top priorities (Voice of Russia 2013). There are certainly some advanced platforms at Russia’s disposal, including an array of nuclear submarines and strategic bombers (Russia Today 2013). The country even possesses one aircraft carrier, although not a modern ship that comes close to being competitive with the supercarriers of the United States Navy (Kislyakov 2013). However, the country still trails far behind when compared to the current hegemon, the United States. Russia’s arsenal is today characterized to be about 20 years behind that of the United States in terms of modernization (Galeotti 2013). While they are attempting to develop strategic stealth
and drone technology, there are still significant advances that must be made before these weapons are complete and ready to be deployed (Galeotti 2013; Nguyen 2011). Until Russia is able to develop and master these technologies, as well as be able to deploy them effectively in combat, they will only score as high as three for this hypothesis.

Population

The demographics for Russia are very troubling for the long-term. The country certainly has one of the world’s largest populations at 142 million people (CIA 2013). This gives it the 10th largest population of the of the world’s nations (CIA 2013). However, this is not going to be enough to pass the test of my population hypothesis. It would be different if the population trends for Russia were positive, but they are not. The median age in Russia is 38.8 years old (CIA 2013). In addition to that, the current growth rate for Russia’s population is -0.02 percent (CIA 2013). These statistics tell us two things. First, the majority of Russians are middle aged. Second, that the population is shrinking. This means that, if current trends continue, the population of Russia will be shrinking and aging at the same time. For a country that seeks to become a potential superpower, these trends do not bode well. For Russia in particular, it means that not only do they currently meet the bar to score high on the population test, but that the chances for a change are not very good. Therefore, Russia scores a two for this hypothesis test.

Local Rivals

Russia has not been blessed with a clear sphere of influence from within which it can project power on a global scale. There are great power rivals in every direction that Russia needs to push against in order to expand its influence. Western Europe is aligned with the United States through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Any push to expand its power into the
European continent could potentially be pushed back by the great powers of the West. The East does not look much better from the eyes of Moscow. China rests just south of its eastern borders, and is a source of increasing paranoia for the Russian presence in Siberia. Also to the east are Japan and South Korea, two established powers with strong military ties to the United States, and bring American military influence to the region. Since it faces established great powers both to the east and west, Russia will have to contend with several different opponents if it ever wants to reclaim superpowerdom. Without a clear sphere of influence absent of any true rivals, Russia scores a one for this hypothesis.

New Ideology

It is clear that Russia is unhappy with the current state of things. It makes sense that a country that once shared the top spot in the international order would be unhappy with the system once it was no longer helping to direct it. Russia has supported this theory by stating that it would rather have a multipolar world than the current unipolar one (Thomas 2008). However, Russia has failed to take the lead in proposing the terms of a new system that could replace it. When they were a part of the Soviet Union, the Russians maintained a system of international communism that significantly redefined international relations and the shape of the global community. Today, Russia has neither proposed nor supported any such ideology; doing nothing more than expressing discontent with the ideology that currently shapes the world. Until Russia creates some new idea with which to redefine or reshape the international system, it will never become a standard that other nations will rally behind like in the days of the USSR. Therefore, Russia gets a score of two for my tenth hypothesis.
Section III: Results and Conclusions

Results

Table 24: Results of Hypothesis Testing on Russia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Test Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>Domestic Stability</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>Capitalist Economy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>Advanced Economy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>Military Spending</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>Military Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Hypothesis 9</td>
<td>Local Rivals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 10</td>
<td>New Ideology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score: 29

Figure 2: Score Breakdown of Russia
Conclusions

Russia received a total score of 29, below the score required of a potential superpower. On the domestic front, Russia is still dealing with tensions after an internal war with Chechnya and an interstate war with Georgia. In terms of democracy, Russia still has a long way to go. Putin has turned the government from a developing democracy into a strict autocracy where his word is law. The rule of government is very centralized around Moscow, and the federalist system exists only in name. In addition to that, elections in Russia are widely recognized to be very corrupt both in nature and in practice, with votes being stolen and term limits being amended so that the current regime can legally stay in power for at least another decade.

In economic terms, Russia has a lot of potential but is not taking advantage of its blessings. Russia’s control over Siberia grants it access to a boon of natural resources. The oil and natural gas deposits that currently lie there have given birth to a massive energy sector in the Russian economy that has turned country into a leading exporter. However, Russia does not currently have an economic system in place that is able to take full advantage of these blessings. The strict control that the central government has over the Russian economy, particularly the energy sector, has prevented Russia from becoming a fully-fledged market-based economy. The gap between the public and private sectors shrinks every time a minister from the government is placed onto the board of a major Russian corporation. Also, with Putin and his government officials controlling about 40 percent of the economy, Russia is anything but a free-market state. Until Russia institutes more liberalization into its economy, it will continue to be disadvantaged internationally.
The Russian Military still leaves a lot to be desired. While Russia is the third top military spender in the world, this is not leading to the modernization that needs to take place for its army to be globally competitive. In terms of technological advancement, Russia is still decades behind the United States. While the government has been pursuing several lofty goals, such as the development of stealth and drone technology, it still has a long way to go. It also does not bode well that Russia has great power rivals on either side of their state, which would be an obstacle to any attempt to project power both locally and internationally. Finally, without any new big ideas for the structure of the international community in the same league as communism and liberalism, Russia will never serve as a standard for the world to rally behind in the same way that the Second World War did during the Cold War.

It makes sense that a country that used to be a major world power would have a serious desire to regain their former position. The Third Reich tried to do so after Germany’s loss in World War One, Napoleon tried to do so at the Battle of Waterloo and China is trying to do so today. However, Russia is not anywhere near where it needs to be if it ever wants to reclaim its former glory. There are significant advancements that need to be made institutionally, economically and militarily before Russia can once again be a serious contender in the global balance of power. Until such a day as these reforms take place, Russia cannot properly be considered a potential superpower today.
Chapter IX  
The Republic of India

Section I: Introduction

India is a new and rising member of the great power club. As the world’s most populous democratic nation with one of the biggest populations, it is understandable how it attained membership to the prestigious BRIC club. The country rests in a strategic part of the world, bridging the Arab world with East Asia. It lies on the southern part of the Asian continent, giving it unique access to the Indian Ocean. On top of all of that, India has been rising economically for years. Historically a poor nation best known for being one of the most prestigious colonies of the British Empire, India has begun to come into its own as a member of the global community. Its GDP has been growing at an impressive rate, with some predicting that it may one day be among the largest economies on the planet. There is no doubt that modern-day India has grown beyond what anybody could have predicted even a few decades ago, so question then becomes what potential India brings to the future balance of power in the international system.

Section II: Hypothesis Testing

Domestic Stability

The Republic of India is not a secure state. Since the split with Pakistan upon gaining independence from Great Britain, the two nations have been locked in a bitter struggle over influence in the region. The side effects of this struggle are horrific terrorist attacks that lay bare the vulnerability of the Indian state and population. The most recent attacks were the 2008 Mumbai attacks, where Islamist terrorists stormed various positions in the city of Mumbai and killed several Indian and international citizens (Sengupta 2008). The Indians and Pakistani are also in a feud over who holds the region of Kashmir, a conflict which has resulted in more than
one military engagement between the two states. Kashmir is currently the most militarized border dispute on earth, and could lead to open warfare at any moment (CIA 2013).

India’s northern border is also very vulnerable. Relations between India and China have been heated for the past half century, even resulting in a border war in 1962 (George 2012). While the two countries have not fought in an open engagement since the new millennium, tensions are still a big cause for concern with the Indians. China regularly infringes on its sovereign territory with military incursions that often go unpunished (Katoch 2013). The Indian government must be alarmed by the fact that another great power regularly crosses its borders without warrant or consequence.

It is clear that India needs a lot of improvement in regards to their domestic stability. Terrorist attacks, hot border disputes, and military incursions indicate that the Indian state is not as secure as it would like. For these reason, India scores a three for the domestic stability test for my hypothesis. It is hard to make the case that a country that is regularly invaded by its neighbor is secure in its sovereignty and security. India needs to make big steps in securing its borders from foreign encroachment and protect its people from domestic terror.

Democracy

Constitutionally, India describes itself as a federal republic. This is an accurate description of the Indian governmental system, which has been a democracy since it achieved independence from Great Britain (Thomas White International). Freedom house lists the country as a free state, further supporting this observation (Freedom House 2013a). If there is anywhere India needs to improve in regards to its democratic values, it is in the realm of press freedoms. While Freedom House lists the country as a free state, the press in India is only listed as partly
free (Freedom House 2013b). Constitutionally, the press has certain freedoms that are legally
 guaranteed, but these rights are not regularly upheld by the Indian government (Freedom House
 2013b). An example of this is the 1923 State Secrets act, which allows both state and national
 authorities to censor the press when it is convenient to them (Freedom House 2013b). Despite
 this however, India still possesses the freest press industry in all of South Asia (Freedom House
 2013b). Based on these observations, India receives a democracy score of four. As time goes on,
 it will be up to India to determine exactly how dedicated it is to its own ideals of democracy and
 freedom.

*Capitalism*

India is currently stuck somewhere between a socialist and capitalist economic system.
Constitutionally, it is a self-declared Socialist nation (Britannica). This means that there are
extensive government controls and interventions into the domestic economy, which are not in
line with capitalism. However, the Indians have since the early 1990s started attempts to develop
an open-market economy (CIA 2013). To kick off this reform, they have introduced a series of
industrial deregulations and reduced trade controls (CIA 2013). Additionally, the Indians have
been privatizing many of their state-owned enterprises (SOE) (CIA 2013). These are significant
first steps to reduce Indian socialism and shift their economy toward something more similar to
the West.

The biggest obstacle to free-market capitalism in India is its ancient caste system. Under
this system, people were assigned their roles in life based on whatever social class they were
born into. For example, a man born into the poor class would remain poor his entire life, and
would be restricted from taking on certain jobs. Obviously, a system like this is a major obstacle
to the freedom of mobility that fuels a capitalist economy. The Indian government understands this, which is why they have been trying to move away from the caste system (Sankaran 2013). However, until India is able to completely do away with its castes as well as its socialist infrastructure, it will continue to be a mixed economy. Therefore, the capitalism test for my hypothesis results in a score of three.

Natural Resources

As a massive country located on an already massive continent, India is rich in natural resources. The country currently produces at least 87 different minerals (Madhavan 2013). It possesses the fourth largest coal reserves in the world, which serves as a valuable export for the Indian economy (CIA 2013). In addition to that, the landscape is very rich in iron (Britannica). India is not rich in any of the more traditional natural resources that spring to mind, such as oil and natural gas. It is the 21st highest producer of crude oil and the 23rd highest producer of natural gas (CIA 2013). This may not end up being such a bad thing, especially if Brazil succeeds in setting up ethanol as a global replacement for oil. However, India’s minerals are a valuable resource that can be a boon for its economy. The abundance of minerals in India has also helped it achieve a score of four for my natural resources hypothesis.

Advanced Economy

There is a lot of progress that needs to be made before India is able to develop a modern information-age economy. While it is a global hub for high-tech manufacturing, it is not a leader in high-tech development (Press trust of India 2013). There are not many new technologies coming out of the Indian economy, and it does not even rank in the top ten list of patent registering countries on Earth (Maps of World). Instead of having a fully modern work force,
more than half of all employment in India is in the manufacturing sector (CIA 2013). Additionally, more than two-thirds of India output is in the services sector (CIA 2013). The development of a high-technology sector would require dramatic shifts in India’s workforce.

The first and perhaps most important step to economic modernization would be significant improvement in India’s higher education. There is not a single university in all of India that is known for producing competitive workers. To drill this point home, India has no universities that rank even in the top 200 list of the world’s colleges. The highest ranked college in India is the Institute of Technology in Delhi, at 222 (Top Universities 2013). Until India is able to train workers who can bring a new wave of innovation to the country, it will never be able to construct an advanced economy. Until this takes place, India’s advanced economy score will be a two.

Military Spending

India has spent a significant amount of money on its military budget. In the year 2012 the Indian government spent about 46.1 billion American dollars on the military (SIPRI 2013). This level of spending put it in the eighth top spot for global military spending (SIPRI 2013). This is significant because it means that India’s army is receiving more funds for modernization and development than all but seven of the world’s great powers. In regards to its military spending relative to its GDP, the numbers shift a little. Despite India being the eighth biggest military spender, it accounts for only 1.8 percent of its GDP (CIA 2013). This percentage means that India is the 77th biggest military spender in the world in regards to GDP terms (CIA 2013). The significance of this data is that India clearly has more resources that it could shift to military spending in the event of an emergency.
While these numbers are impressive, they still fall short of the requirement for potential superpower status. As was mentioned in the previous Brazil and Russia chapters, being a superpower means being one of the top two nations in the international system in every dimension of national power. India is only the eighth biggest military spender, and that puts it several spots below the bar that is required to score high on this hypothesis test. If it were to divert more of its economic output towards the military, it would be relatively easy for India to cross into a passing grade. However, for the time being this is not the case. Therefore, India’s military spending score is a one.

Military Technology

While India is certainly spending a great deal more on its military relative to other great powers, this has not as of yet translated into modernity in its arsenal. Much of its current military technology finds its roots in the Soviet Union, putting the Indian army out of date in terms of advancement (George 2012). This is a disturbing fact for India’s generals, especially since it faces threats from a nuclear-armed Pakistan to the West and a rising China to the north. In response to this, India has launched a massive modernization program intended to make its military globally competitive in the modern age (George 2012). The majority of this program has been aimed at acquiring advanced technologies from modern powers.

The Indian Navy has made very significant acquisitions through this modernization program. It has been adding several new frigates to its fleets, and recently took delivery of a nuclear-powered submarine from Russia (George 2012). This makes India just one of six countries to possess one of these advanced submarine platforms. It does not take much imagination to discover what India intends to use this new technology for. India is a nuclear
power, possessing up to 100 nuclear warheads today (Collina 2013). In January 2013 it conducted a nuclear missile test from a submarine, and is still in the process of developing that capability (Medcalf 2013). If successful, it would be a powerful new deterrent against any nation that violated India’s sovereignty, such as China or Pakistan. It is a well-established fact that India’s growing rivalry with China is one of the primary motivators for its modernization program (Urquhart 2013).

Another major addition to the Indian navy has been the aircraft carrier. India just purchased a new one, bringing its aircraft carrier fleet to a grand total of three (Urquhart 2013). None of these carriers were produced in India, being manufactured in Great Britain and Russia (Urquhart 2013). However, India is in the process of constructing a domestically-made aircraft carrier that it hopes to deploy by 2018 (Urquhart 2013). Building a deployable fleet of aircraft carriers will give the Indians blue-water capabilities that are enjoyed by very few nations in the world. Possession of such a force would greatly expand India’s ability to project power on a global scale, a prerequisite for any state which hopes to be considered a potential superpower today.

It is undeniable that India has made significant advances in terms of military technology. Its program to modernize its armed forces accounted for 9 percent of all weapon imports in the year 2010 (George 2012). However, it is not near the level that it has to be. The Indians are not modernizing fast enough relative to the other great powers, especially China (George 2012). Additionally, simply possessing the technology is not enough, one must also be able to use it effectively as both a deterrent and in combat. India has yet to prove that it fully understands how to effectively use the technology it has already acquired, and as a result scores a two for this test.
Population

India is not called the world’s largest democracy for no reason. With a population of 1.2 billion people, it possesses the second largest population of any country in the world (CIA 2013). Additionally, with a 1.28 percent population growth rate and a median age of 26.7 years, India has a young population that is continuing to grow (CIA 2013). Based on these numbers, there is no doubt that India scores well for my population hypothesis. Having such a large population in addition to a positive growth rate means that India will be relatively stable in terms of its domestic growth. As a result, the population test for India ends with a score of four.

Local Rivals

India is not in the best place for a country that may pursue superpower status. It is surrounded by nuclear-armed states that all have a history of antagonism with the Indians. Even though it is not a great power in the international system, Pakistan is still a huge cause for concern. With up to 110 nuclear weapons at its disposal, as well as a strong terrorist presence, Pakistan is a big roadblock that India will need to cross if it hopes to expand its influence to the West (Collina 2013). There is also China to the north, which India already fought one border war with (George 2012). Considered the most likely state to challenge the United States’ hegemonic position in the world, China would be a tough obstacle for India if it wants to project power into East Asia. A potential superpower needs to be able to project power beyond its home region, and India doesn’t even have a hegemonic presence there. As a result, India fails the local rivals test with a score of one.
New Ideology

No new international ideology has come from India since its independence from Great Britain. In terms of the current international system, the biggest change that India has proposed is a permanent UNSC seat for itself (Pennington 2013). While this would be a significant advancement in terms of Indian power in international relations, it does not represent a drastic shift in the current global order. India is seeking more power within the rules that have already been established by the great powers that came before it. For as long as India continues to operate within the structures established and maintained by the United States and its allies, India will never be an international leader on par with Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Understandably, India scores a one for the new ideology hypothesis test.

Section III: Results and Conclusions

Results

Table 25: Results of Hypothesis Testing on India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Test Result</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>Domestic Stability</td>
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<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>Capitalist Economy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
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<td>Advanced Economy</td>
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<td>Military Spending</td>
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<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 9</td>
<td>Local Rivals</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 10</td>
<td>New Ideology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score: 25
Conclusions

India has received a total score of 25 for my tests, below the bar for a potential superpower. Despite the fact that India suffers from instability at home, it is a vibrant democracy with strong constitutionally guaranteed freedoms. However, it needs to take further steps to liberalize its economy if it is ever going to have a free-market capitalist system that both maximizes its potential at home and makes it competitive abroad. Additionally, the Indian government needs to promote a better education system in its country if it ever wants to develop a high-technology sector that will produce the latest innovations.

Militarily, India has been making a number of significant advances. Their new modernization program has led to the acquisition of several prestigious platforms that, if mastered, will make India’s armed forces among the most advanced in the world. However, there is a big difference between having a weapon and knowing how to use it. Until India can train
itself to use and deploy its newest weapons, it will not be able to use them effectively to project power regionally, much less globally. Only time will tell whether or not it is truly ready to join the club of advanced militaries.

It is easy to see why someone would put consider India a rising global power and potential superpower. It is a massive country with an already large and growing population, it is a nuclear power, it has a growing economy and is located in a very strategic location in the world. However, there are still too many obstacles that need to be overcome before India can even come close to rivaling the United States. Among these problems are local rivalries and an out of date military. However, there is no law that says India cannot overcome these trials. If they can find a way to pacify Pakistan, block China from the region and master the weapons they have spent years procuring, then the possibilities are endless for the Indian people.
Chapter X  
The People’s Republic of China

Section I: Introduction

Out of all four of the BRIC countries, China is widely viewed as the one most likely to challenge the United States much in the same way that the Soviet Union did during the Cold War. China has the largest population in the world, is a nuclear power, has a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and has a rapidly growing economy. There are many who predict that if China’s economy continues to grow at its present rate, it will surpass the United States as the world’s largest economy within a generation. China is the largest communist country to survive the end of the Cold War, with an authoritarian political party that maintains a tight grip on power and is quick to crush any dissent. Additionally, the Chinese economy did not suffer from the Great Recession nearly as much as the West did, and has resulted in many praising their market-based socialism approach to economics as the future of the global economy. However, we have heard all of this before. When Japan was undergoing a similar rise in the late 20th century, many predicted that it would be the next challenger for international supremacy. When that failed to materialize, analysts instead turned to the European Union. Now that Europe is undergoing a sovereign debt crisis, all eyes have turned to China. Simply put, nobody has ever been able to predict which country is most likely to make a bid for superpowerdom based solely on good economic conditions at a single point in time. There is too much unpredictability that can take an economically thriving nation and plateau its international prestige, similar to what happened to Japan during the Lost Decade. Therefore, it is important not to make predictions on where China may be twenty or thirty years from now based on current economic trends. If we want to find out whether or not the People’s Republic of China has a
serious chance to become an international superpower, the best way to do so it to test it against my hypotheses.

Section II: Hypothesis Testing

Domestic Stability

One of the side effects of an authoritarian state is a strong hold over domestic security. China has demonstrated this by boosting their local security spending last year. In 2013 the Chinese government allocated more of their budget to domestic security than national defense (MacLeod 2013). As a result, the state has a firm grip of control on the home front. There are no interstate and intrastate wars involving China that have the potential to destabilize the state and weaken local infrastructure. The most pressing security concerns in China today are not war, but human trafficking and a growing heroin trade (CIA 2013). There is a lot of potential for this to change, however. For example, there is always the possibility of a quick and damaging conflict with Taiwan, or growing unrest in Tibet. However, for the time being nothing is materializing that puts China at risk of failing this hypothesis test. As a result, China gets a perfect score of five for my domestic stability test.

Democracy

China is a communist country (CIA 2013). It is the largest communist state to survive the fall of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has a firm hold on every rein of power within its country, and does not tolerate any form of organized opposition (Freedom House 2013a). There are only about eight smaller political parties in China, but all of them are controlled by the CCP (CIA 2013). The Politburo Standing Committee, whose members are all chosen by the CCP, sets all government and party policy with virtually no
oversight or limitations (Freedom House 2013a). Based on these facts, it should come as no surprise that Freedom House officially classifies China as a not free society (Freedom House 2013a). The CCP maintains an authoritarian hold over every organ of the government that it has no intention of loosening its grip on.

With China being a one party state, there is no doubt that it scores low on the democracy test for my hypothesis. The entire country is ruled by a political party that holds all of the top government posts and consists of only about six percent of China’s population (Freedom House 2013a). While there are elections held at the local level, mostly in the rural villages, every candidate is vetted and approved by the local CCP committee (Freedom House 2013a). It is hard to imagine if, how and when democracy will ever take root in the Chinese system. However, until it does, it will always have to deal with the disadvantages of an authoritarian government that led to democracy being a prerequisite for potential superpowerdom. For example, in 2010 alone about 140,000 CCP members were sanctioned for corruption (Fenby 2012, 326). Until the CCP instills more freedoms for its people and transparency in its government, it will never score higher than a one for the democracy test.

*Capitalism*

China is a communist state, and as such maintains strict centralized control over its economy. It is a fact that the state does not maintain the same level of control that it used to. Since the 1970s China began to move to a more market-based economy (CIA 2013). It kicked off this new initiative by loosening restrictions on foreign investment and the de-collectivization of agriculture (CIA 2013). Today, China has a stock market, massive international corporations,
and a growing middle class (CIA 2013). There is no doubt that the economy of China is not fully communist in nature, despite the country’s official form of government.

However, the Chinese government still maintains a level of control over the economy unprecedented in a true capitalist society. Any industry that the CCP declares vital to China’s economic future has been nationalized by the government (CIA 2013). Additionally, any major foreign company that branches into China is assigned its own cell of CCP party officials, who have the power to veto any major decision made by the firm (Fenby 2012, 286). This unique brand of economics has allowed China to build a market-based economy that is still tight under the thumb of the central government. This system has been categorized as state-led, authoritarian capitalism (Coase 2013). The Chinese may have introduced some core capitalistic concepts into their economy, but it is still nothing close to a truly capitalist system.

Being a capitalist economy is about more than just privatization and investment. It is a statement on the relationship between the country’s economy and its government. The Chinese Communist Party and its organs in the central government have liberalized the Chinese economy more than it was under Mao, but have continued to maintain their authoritarian power over every major financial institution and business in the nation. Until China releases its major corporations and financial instructions from the control of its government and gives more freedom to foreign companies that seek to do business there, then the authoritarian-led economy title is going to stick. This results in a score of three for my hypothesis as it relates to China.

*Natural Resources*

China is a very large country, one of the largest in the world (CIA 2013). As such, it is not surprising that it has access to a wealth of natural resources. Some of its more abundant
minerals include coal and iron ore (CIA 2013). Additionally, China is a leading producer in some of the more popular and internationally recognized resources. It is currently the fourth largest producer of crude oil and the eighth largest producer of natural gas (CIA 2013). Based on these figures, it makes sense that China would pass the test for my natural resources hypothesis. However, these numbers do not tell the whole story.

While China has access to an abundance of natural resources, it is not enough to maintain either its economy or population. Having the largest population in the world has been both a blessing and a curse for the Chinese economy (CIA 2013). China’s rapid growth has exceeded its resources, and even though it is a top producer in many critical venues, it is not enough to meet the demands of domestic consumption (Butts 2009). The Chinese have responded to this by looking outward, mostly towards Africa. Chinese firms and state-owned enterprises are investing heavily in the resources of various African countries in order to meet domestic demand (Butts 2009). These investments have taken many forms, including the construction of oil refineries (French 2007). While China may find everything it needs from foreign investment and development, it puts itself in an awkward position related to my hypothesis test. The entire point of my natural resources hypothesis was to demonstrate that a country rich in natural resources would not have to subject itself to foreign investment in order to meet its domestic needs. As a result, fluctuating markets and changes in international relationships would not be increasingly harmful to a state’s economic interests. This would protect a potential superpower power removing one avenue through which other states could buffer its economic rise. China is unique in that while its resources are aplenty, its domestic demand is even more so. Therefore, China only scores a four for my natural resources test.
Advanced Economy

The Chinese economy is impressive more in terms of its size than its composition. Ten percent of its economic output is in agriculture, 45 percent in the manufacturing industry and 45 percent in services (CIA 2013). In other words, China is the global center for production, making it the leader in gross value of economic output (CIA 2013). What it makes up for in industrial production, it lacks in advancement. China has yet to develop a high-technology sector that is capable of producing the latest in modern technologies.

There are many explanations for why China has not been able to build an advanced economy as of yet. One explanation is that most of the workers who are feeding into its domestic production are rural migrants who do the most menial of tasks. However, a better explanation is China’s inability to produce and maintain globally competitive employees. Just like with the other BRIC countries, China needs to do more to develop its higher education sector so that its students can develop the latest technologies and export them into the global economy. Today, China’s top college is Peking University, which only ranks 46th out of all of the colleges in the world in terms of the quality of its education (Top Universities). Cheating and dishonesty are also serious problems in Chinese education, and many of China’s top government officials have been caught sporting college diplomas that they never earned (Fenby 2012, 303). This is a serious problem that will reflect on China’s educational system both domestically and internationally.

China is the manufacturing center for the world, and that is what has fueled their impressive economic growth over the past few decades. However, this position is very vulnerable. Countries like India which also have large populations and focus on the industries of
services and manufacturing will always put China’s position in the global economy at risk. To secure its economic rise, as well as ensure its continued global competitiveness, China needs to shift from an industrial economy to a technology economy. A good first step in this direction would be the serious development of its universities so that China’s younger labor force can compete with the best minds in the West. Until the Chinese are able to make this shift, it will never match the United States economy in terms of strength, regardless of its size. China therefore scores a three for my advanced economy test.

Military Spending

China is one of the top military spenders in the world. In 2013 it spend 166 billion American dollars on its national defense budget (SIPRI 2013). This makes China the second highest military spender on national defense in the world, second only to the military spending of the United States (SIPRI 2013). In regards to GDP, China’s military spending represents about two percent of all economic output in China’s economy (CIA 2013). As a result, China is the 128th biggest spender on the military in GDP terms. These numbers are important because of my hypothesis that any international superpower in today’s global system must also be one of the top two military spenders. Since China’s military spending comes in second place globally, it passes my military spending hypothesis test with a score of five. However, it should be noted that Chinese military spending is not very transparent (Cordesman 2013, 94). The Chinese government is very secretive, especially in regards to its military. As such, we may not know what China’s true military budget is. The data cited in this section is based on both Chinese disclosures and U.S. government research, and for the sake of this project will be considered reliable for the purposes of this hypothesis test.
In order to understand China’s current military modernization program, one must first understand China’s strategic interests. Despite the public perception that China is out to replace the United States as the preeminent global military power, its current strategic objectives do not reflect such a desire. China’s preeminent strategic interest today is not to be a global power, but a regional one. The Chinese want to be the preeminent power in East Asia, and the development of their military is reflective of this (Beauchamp 2014).

The People’s Liberation Army, China’s domestic ground force, has been focusing its development on the ability to win local and regional wars (Cordesman 2013, 144). As a result, the army itself has not been focusing on the sorts of technologies that would give it global military capabilities. However, the navy is another story altogether. China’s navy, like the army, is focusing right now on the ability to engage in high-intensity regional conflicts (Cordesman 2013, 148). A possible example would be a hot war over the South China Sea dispute, or an engagement with the United States over Taiwan. Therefore, the navy’s advancements in recent years have been undertaken with the purpose of deterring US naval supremacy in the Pacific (Cordesman 2013, 146). To carry this out, China has been actively trying to develop advanced naval platforms.

China wants to develop a blue water navy; a navy that can deploy anywhere in the world (Cordesman 2013, 146). The biggest step towards carrying this out would be the production and deployment of aircraft carriers, widely recognized as vital to the navy of any international superpower or great power. China started down this path by commissioning its first aircraft carrier in 2012 (Cordesman 2013, 146). This aircraft carrier is old, Russian-built and was bought
from Ukraine (Perlez 2012). It is obvious that this carrier is meant more as symbolism than deterrence, since it is recognized that it would never survive in a direct confrontation with the United States. Regardless, it still represents a serious advancement in China’s military capabilities. China is also working to build its own domestic aircraft carriers, and hopes to deploy its first by the end of the decade (Cordesman 2013, 146). Additionally, China is continuing the development of its ballistic-missile submarines, which would be a significant deterrent against any hostile action against the Chinese state (Cordesman 2013, 146). It is clear that China is on the right path towards developing a military worthy of a potential superpower.

There is something important that should be noted. Developing an advanced military is not the same as having one. In addition, having an advanced military does not mean that a country knows how to effectively use it. China has made it a strategic goal to modernize its armed forces, develop aircraft carriers, and build the weapons platforms that would allow it to project power on a regional scale. Another major platform the Chinese have been developing is stealth technology, which would be a significant step if they are able to master it (Yu 2014). However, it will still be some time before China is able to prove that it both has these weapons and can use them effectively in combat. Goals are important, but until they translate into tangible results, they will not make serious waves in regards to international power. Therefore, China scores a four for the military technology test for my hypothesis. This may change in the future if China is able to accomplish everything that it has put its mind to, but there is not enough evidence that it has these capabilities today.
Population

China is both the world’s fourth largest country and its single largest population (CIA 2013). The population of China currently rests at 1.3 billion people, since I hypothesized that a new superpower today would need one of the top two largest populations in the world in order to challenge the United States both politically and economically, China has passed this hypothesis test with a score of four. It fell short of a perfect score due to troubling predictions on its demographic trends. China’s own demographic policies have put it at risk of failing this test in the coming years, which is right when it is predicted to begin seriously challenging the United States’ supremacy in the world.

As a result of China’s One Child Policy, there is a demographic crisis that may put China’s entire rise in jeopardy. It is true that China’s population is the largest in the world, leading it to pass my hypothesis test, but it is also the world’s fastest aging country (CIA 2013). It is predicted that the population of China will peak by 2020 (Einhorn 2013). Additionally, by the year 2050, about 35 percent of China’s population will be over the age of 60 (Ford 2013). This would be a serious crisis for the Chinese state. The backbone of China’s economy is its massive manufacturing sector, which in the coming years will see fewer workers having to work to support a growing population of senior citizens. This could put China’s institutions in financial chaos and result in increasing strain on all government services.

If that were not bad enough, the One Child Policy has also resulted in a large gender gap between the two sexes. It is already widely known that the policy has fed a rise in gender-selective abortions, since families that can have only have one child would prefer a male who could support them financially. However, this has resulted in an abundance of men and shortage
of women. In 2009 alone, there were 32 million more men under the age of 20 than women (Branigan 2009). This, when coupled with China’s aging population, could lead to a long term demographic crisis that could go on for generations. If this happens, China’s population will shrink, its services will be stretched to the limit, and its economy will be put through enormous strain. There is also the potential for unrest, as a shrinking workforce is forced to support a growing population of retirees. So while China may have a high score today today, its future prospects look very grim.

Local Rivals

China’s increased aggression in East Asia has made clear the growing discontent with China’s regional rise. The Chinese government has pursued several policies lately that have resulted in a serious pushback both by the many local great powers and the world’s only current superpower. For example, China recently claimed full ownership and sovereignty over the entirety of the South China Sea, which would give it access to a wealth of oil reserves that are predicted to be located there (Spegele 2014). The problem is that this claim has no basis in international law, and has put China at odds with Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan and Indonesia. A dispute with Japan over the Senkaku Islands has raised tensions between the two countries, and may once again put the Chinese at odds with a state that was once also considered a rising superpower (Tisdall 2013). In November 2013, the Chinese declared a massive air defense zone beyond its traditional air space in the Pacific, demanding that all non-commercial flights report themselves to the Chinese government upon entry (Harlan 2013). These moves may have been intended to promote a growing Chinese influence in the region, but it has had the opposite effect.
The claim over the entirety of the South China Sea has resulted in a push back by every state that it conflicts with, none of which are established great powers in the international system. Its attempted expansion through its air defense zone and the Senkaku Islands have put it at odds with two pro-Western great powers, Japan and South Korea. It is clear that any attempt by China to expand its influence within its own region will only result in pushback by more than one great power. Additionally, the Chinese still have the United States to contend with. In response to China’s expansionist policies, the United States has begun a global shift of its military might from Europe to the Pacific, and by 2020 about 60 percent of the U.S. Navy will be deployed in the region (Barnes). This is a disastrous development for Chinese influence, since the opening salvo of its regional expansion has not only failed to overcome its neighbors, but resulted in the growing involvement of the international hegemon.

After Europe, East Asia has the highest concentration of great powers in the world. With Russia to the north, India to the south, Japan and South Korea to the east, and a growing American military presence, China is surrounded at all sides. The only thing that unites all of these countries is their opposition to growing Chinese dominance in the Pacific. For this reason, any attempt by China to project its power internationally will result in a dramatic push back by its rivals. Unless China finds a way to overcome these barriers, they will score a one for the hypothesis test on local rivals. It is hard to see how the Chinese can score higher while the hegemon is reacting to its every move.

New Ideology

The Chinese have made it very clear that they are not content with the current international system. This does not come as a surprise, since the Western-dominated global order
is what led the charge in its ‘century of humiliation’, where it was split apart by the different European colonial powers. Right now their opposition is specifically to the unipolar global system, and has resulted in calls for a new multipolar system that would not be led by a single superpower (Ng 2013). This view is not unique to the Chinese, however. Most of the BRIC countries and many other current great powers have called for a multipolar world. Therefore, it would be hard for the Chinese to take any form of leadership role in the global order, since the new order that they are calling for is leaderless in nature. As a result, China scores a two on my new ideology hypothesis test, since its proposed changes are more symbolic than functional, and would not give the Chinese an opportunity for global leadership.

Section III: Results and Conclusions

Results

Table 26: Results of Hypothesis Testing on China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Test Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>Domestic Stability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>Capitalist Economy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>Advanced Economy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>Military Spending</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>Military Technology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 9</td>
<td>Local Rivals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 10</td>
<td>New Ideology</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score: 32
Table 4: Score Breakdown of China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Category</th>
<th>Score Breakdown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Stability</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalism</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Economy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Spending</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Technology</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Rivals</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ideology</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

The total score for the People’s Republic of China is 32. This is the highest score of the BRIC countries, but is still not high enough to be classified as a potential superpower. While the authoritarian one-party system has allowed the government to maintain strict domestic order, it has prevented any pure form of democracy or capitalism from taking hold in the country. This prevents it from building a modern economy, keeping its industries working in the services and manufacturing sectors. While the country is very impressive both in terms of military spending and military technology, it has not as of yet developed the technologies and capabilities it would need to challenge the United States globally or even regionally.

The biggest obstacle to China’s rise in the international system is itself. While China may have had a peaceful rise starting out, today its international relations are focused on outward expansion and antagonism against its neighbors. This has resulted in significant international
disputes with Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam and the Philippines. It also resulted in the United States diverting more of its military might to the region, a significant backfire against Chinese interests. A potential superpower’s rise should result in an enhanced sphere of influence within its region, but every attempt by China to establish one has only brought in more rivalries with the global hegemon.

China’s One Child Policy, while loosened recently, has had side effects on the Chinese population that could bring a demographic disaster. By the time China is predicted to be the world’s biggest economy, over a third of its population will be over the age of 60, and the remaining youth will be disproportionately male. This will cause China’s work force to shrink at the same time that government services are being most utilized. It is too soon to tell how this may affect the overall Chinese economy, but it puts long-term projection for Chinese growth in serious jeopardy.

It is easy to see why China is widely predicted to surpass the United States in global dominance. However, those that do so do not have a full and accurate understanding about what international power is. In absolute terms, China is much better off than it has ever been, and is an undeniable great power both locally and internationally. However, being a superpower is about power relative to the rest of the world, not to yourself. China still has many obstacles to overcome both at present and long term if it is ever going to be considered a serious challenger to America’s international supremacy. How China reacts to growing regional opposition and demographic constraints will determine its fate as a rising power for years to come.
Chapter XI
Conclusions

Summary and Results

My case studies of the BRIC countries have concluded that none of the four nations currently score high enough to be considered a potential superpower in the international system. While these countries have undergone extraordinary development in the past half century, this does not translate into a change in the global balance of power. The United States is still the global hegemon in international relations, and the BRIC countries need to make significant political, economic and military advances before they are able to challenge America for its role.

Table 27: Results of Hypothesis Testing on BRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis I</td>
<td>Domestic Stability</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis II</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis III</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hypothesis IV</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hypothesis V</td>
<td>Advanced Economy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis VI</td>
<td>Military Spending</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis VII</td>
<td>Military Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis VIII</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis IX</td>
<td>Local Rivals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis X</td>
<td>New Ideology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Scores</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brazil is the only great power on the South American continent. It is a capitalist-democracy with several reliable industries that it can rely on even during a global economic crisis. It rests in a relatively peaceful location when compared to the rest of the world and is unlikely to be drawn into any interstate conflicts in the near future. It is certainly a rising economic power, but it still lacks in the military realm. A non-nuclear power without a fully modern military will not be making any serious waves in international relations, and will find
itself more at the mercy of other states in regards to its global interests. The Brazilians also need to improve their education system so that its workers can compete globally and turn Brazil into a leading innovator.

Russia has been pursuing its old seat on the top of the global order ever since Putin came into power. However, the Russian state has too many fault lines that put its global aspirations at risk. Authoritarianism, corruption, international rivalries and an out-of-date military all prevent it from reclaiming the glory days of the Soviet Union. If Russia seriously wants to change this, it needs to recognize that authoritarianism has not served the country well either economically, militarily or politically. A democratic Russia will have the domestic stability to adapt to new challenges, the ability to realize its full economic potential through capitalism, and will find it easier to make friends with Europe and the United States.

India is an impressive display of democracy in a region of the world that has traditionally been chaotic, violent and autocratic. The fact that it is able to maintain itself and its regional influence while surrounded on all sides by terrorism, regional enemies and rising powers is a huge boost to the prestige of the Indian people. However, there are still too many reforms that need to be made before India is able to be a true global power. It is never going to finish the transition from socialism to free-market capitalism until it fully revokes the caste system and finds a way to integrate its massive population into its growing economy. Once it accomplishes that, it can focus its output on modernizing its military into a force that can both protect itself from Pakistan and deter Chinese influence.

It does not take a strong imagination to imagine China as the next superpower. It is a massive nuclear power with an equally massive economy. Its military modernization is seeking to produce top-of-the-line weapons platforms that could produce a serious deterrent to the
American naval presence. However, the China case study has revealed that China has serious long-term problems that all prevent it from being a true regional power, much less an international superpower. The after-effects of the One Child Policy may have serious repercussions on Chinese domestic stability and economic growth. In addition, China’s recent expansionism in East Asia has backfired on itself, bringing the ire of every regional power and a growing military presence by the United States. China needs to find a solution to its demographic problem that will protect its economic stability, as well as build long-term partnerships with its neighbors so that they don’t need to run to the United States for protection. If China is able to do this, it will set itself up as the dominant power in Asia, and from there will be able to project its will and influence on a global scale.

Lessons Learned

I was surprised to discover at the start of this project that there was not much research on the subject I was pursuing. Many scholars and analysts have examined what a superpower looks like, and have used those guidelines to examine the rising powers in international relations. However, there was little to no research done on what conditions lead to those countries becoming potential superpowers in the first place. Upon learning this, I found a way to make a significant contribution to my field while answering an important international affairs question at the same time.

The first step of this research project was to do what a literature review traditionally does, identify independent variables for my research question and develop a set of hypotheses. After examining both the two historical superpowers and failed superpowers, I was able to identify ten independent variables that set the winners apart from the losers. Using these ten variables, I developed ten hypotheses that I used to examine the case of every BRIC country in order to
make a determination on their potential as rising powers. What I learned surprised me. I assumed going into this project that military conditions and capabilities formed the backbone for any potential superpower in international relations. This is a central belief of realism, which claims that military power is preeminent in international relations. After examining the historical superpower case studies, I learned that certain economic conditions were essential to developing these military capabilities in the first place, and it was the absence of these economic variables in the Soviet Union that led to its demise. These results poke a few holes in realism’s claims concerning international power.

The biggest lesson for me in conducting this research was that in international relations, every aspect of national power is extremely important both domestically and internationally. There are some countries that only focus on one or the other, such as how North Korea focuses solely on its military development to protect itself from foreign influence. However, without a competitive combination of both economic and military development, a country will not be able to rise and maintain its position as a global competitor. In a world where globalization is changing both international culture and economics, these factors are only going to become more vital as developing nations continue to rise and compete for resources and influence.

There is no doubt that none of the BRIC countries can be considered a potential superpower in the world today. However, it is interesting to see how the score breakdown refutes preexisting notions about the rise of China. While China did score the highest, Brazil was a very close second. It is a large democracy with a stable economy, no major international conflicts, and no major obstacles to its influence in South America. As a democracy, Brazil is best suited to deal with any major problems that come its way, while at the same time maintaining stability locally with regular peaceful transfers of power. This is important because the case studies
showed that the democratic countries were the ones that became international superpowers. The Brazilian economic model is also very reliable, with a massive energy and agricultural industry that will protect it from fluctuating global markets while meeting its domestic demand. The Amazon rainforest may also be a source of international influence for Brazil. With climate change growing as an international concern, Brazil’s unique position as the sole owner of the Amazon may be a valuable bargaining chip in the world’s balance of power. The Amazon is a unique global resource that the world simply cannot afford to lose, and the Brazilians can use this resource to great effect.

While Brazil may not have an advanced military with which to project power, this is more as a matter of necessity than a display of incompetence. Without major local rivals, and with the ability to be self-sufficient in energy, Brazil simply does not need a massive military to protect its interests at home and abroad. If the time ever came when Brazil needed to develop such capabilities, it has a strong and stable economy to lean on that it could use to produce a powerful regional force. Additionally, with no major local rivals to contend with, there would not be much stopping Brazil from projecting said military power abroad if need be. The only thing that could change that is a larger American presence in the region. However, things do not look to be currently moving in that direction. This is all pure speculation however, as Brazil may find itself perfectly content with its position as the peaceful regional power and not seek to make big waves in the international community. Either way, it is clear that China is not the only true contender for superpower status.

**Potential for Future Research**

Now that I have developed a set of hypotheses to test potential-superpowerdom, I can potentially test any great power or rising power to see if it makes to cut. The most attractive
candidate is the European Union, which has the largest economy in the world when counting all of its member states (CIA 2013). South Africa is also an attractive candidate, and has already been declared the newest member of the BRIC club, now dubbed BRICS. Analyzing either one would be another good step towards predicting the potential future for the international system.

Additionally, some scholars have suggested that geography also plays a major role in which countries will ascend in the international system and which ones will not. Robert Kaplan states that you can tell what a government’s aims will be simply by looking at a map (Kaplan 2012). He lists ethnic division, natural resources, local rivals and natural barriers as some of the primary motivators for state actions and development. Most of these concepts have been covered in my thesis, but I did not closely examine how natural barriers can influence the rise of a superpower. Kaplan suggested that a big factor in the rise of the United States was the fact that it was surrounded on both sides by oceans, the Canadian Arctic to the north, and a river border to the south, thus granting it many natural protections from potential threats. A close examination of the natural barriers, or lack thereof, in the BRICs could assist in making a prediction on their futures in the world order.

**Implications and Concluding Thoughts**

Any scholar or analyst in international affairs would be interested in the results of this project’s tests on any number of rising powers. Whenever an established great power or developing state is identified as a potential superpower, it should be tested against this project’s hypotheses to determine exactly how true this is. In doing so, we can protect ourselves from making the same analytical mistakes that we made with Japan, Germany and the Soviet Union. It is obvious that whatever criteria the world has been using to identify potential and make predictions has been wrong up until this point, and a change needs to be made in how we think
about international power and hegemony. It is my hope that this project will be the first step in a long road to understanding the international system more effectively.
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