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Chinese People and the Others:
Notes on Contemporary Chinese Nationalism and the May Fourth Movement

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Abstract

The May Fourth Movement (1917-1921) has always been an important part of the official historical narrative of the Chinese Communist Party. Today, the Movement is often celebrated as being closely connected with the emergence of modern Chinese patriotism and nationalism in contemporary China. In the 21st century, Chinese nationalism has voiced more assertive overtones with a tendency to glorify Chinese imperial history. What is more, contemporary Chinese nationalism often adopts a negative attitude towards foreign ideas and thought trends. This article discusses the differences between contemporary Chinese nationalism and the May Fourth Movement nationalism by examining the argumentation structures wherein the concept of nationalism was used during the May Fourth period. The article shows that the concept was, in fact, given primarily a negative meaning in the May Fourth context. The article shows that, in May Fourth journals, nationalism was associated with imperialism, capitalism, and Darwinism, which were presented as destructive ideas that were responsible for the First World War. Unlike the radical Chinese nationalists of the 21st century, May Fourth authors supported a cosmopolitan spirit and international cooperation. The desire to strengthen and develop China involved dreams of creating an international operational environment based on equality and cooperation, instead of aggressive power politics.

Keywords: Chinese nationalism, May Fourth Movement, Chinese Communist Party

Introduction

Chinese nationalism is currently one of the most popular research topics among scholars studying Chinese politics and Chinese political thought in the 20th and 21st centuries. Many scholars have noted that nationalism has been on the rise in China since the 1990s, and previous studies have shown that, with the fading appeal of international socialism since the early 1990s, nationalism has become a central element in the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (Carlson, 2009: 20-35, Lam, 1999: 52-5, 161-4, 265-77). As a result of official patriotic education campaigns, patriotism is nowadays closely associated with loyalty to the CCP itself in contemporary China (Link, 2015: 26).

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This article presents a historical perspective to debates on the rise of contemporary Chinese nationalism by examining the usages of the concept of nationalism during a period that was significant in the development of modern Chinese political vocabulary. The article critically examines the contemporary portrayals of the May Fourth Movement[1] as a nationalist and patriotic movement[2] by looking at the usages of the concept of nationalism in the Movement's most well-known journals[3], especially in the *New Youth*[4] journal, 1919-1921.

The purpose of the article is not to claim that there were no elements of nationalism and patriotism involved in the Movement. However, the article shows that, after the First World War, the concept of nationalism was usually given negative meanings as it was associated with imperialism and other ways of thought that had led to the war. These May Fourth authors did not only want to strengthen China – they were envisioning a new period in international relations that was not to be based on power and aggressive foreign politics, but on equality and cooperation. Negative meanings to nationalism were attached both before and after the class struggle paradigm was introduced and espoused in the Movement's journals in 1920. The May Fourth Movement can be seen as a patriotic movement in a sense that the May Fourth authors wanted to develop and strengthen China so that China would become a nation that could defend herself against foreign aggressors. In her well-known study on the Movement, Vera Schwarcz

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[1] According to Chow Tse-tsung's (1967 [1960]: 1) definition, the May Fourth Movement refers to a period from 1917 to 1921 (in 1921 the CCP was established). However, in this article, I will focus on the period after the First World War (the armistice was signed in November 1918): 1919-1921. The May Fourth Movement and the New Culture Movement have been studied extensively from the 1930s onwards. The scope of the current article is related to 21st century debates on Chinese nationalism, and is thus limited. For a more comprehensive discussion of the May Fourth and New Culture Movements, as well as their political relevance in 20th century China, see for example Chow (1967 [1960]), Schwarcz (1986), or Mitter (2004).

[2] When I use the term patriotism instead of nationalism, I am referring to more general level concept, where the idea of 'dedication to one's native country' is the core element. In common usage, of course, these two concepts are often intertwined and the terms nationalism and patriotism are used interchangeably. In the May Fourth context, both "narrow nationalism" and "narrow patriotism" were opposed.

[3] In this article, the focus is on the most well-known May Fourth journals. *New Youth*, *New Tide*, *Young China*, and *Citizen* discussed in this article were monthly publications, whereas *Weekly Critic* was a weekly publication. For the purposes of the current article, I have studied articles in these journals that discussed issues such as the development of Chinese society and international relations. Articles dealing with issues such as literature, poetry, and language reform were not included in the research data. My conclusions and reading of the intellectual trends of the time are based on my previous research on the May Fourth Movement (Haapanen, 2013). Due to limitations regarding the length of the article, the number of May Fourth example articles directly discussed here is limited. One should also keep in mind that the Movement was not unified, and it might well be possible that one could end up with different conclusions by studying less well-known journals of the movement.

[4] *New Youth* (*Xin Qingnian*) was the most well-known reform-minded journal of the period. The journal was established in Shanghai in 1915 by Chen Duxiu. In its early days, the journal was directed against Yuan Shikai's (1859-1916) attempts to reinstate monarchy in China and to establish Confucianism as a state religion. The establishment of *New Youth* is sometimes seen as a starting point for the wider, anti-traditional New Culture Movement. The journal was closed down in 1926.

(1986: 36) writes that the spirit of "saving the nation" brought the May Fourth intellectuals together, although they possessed different ideas on how to develop China and what kind of ideologies Chinese intellectuals should follow.[5]

The May Fourth Movement today is seen by many as a historical symbol of modern Chinese nationalism and patriotic spirit. For example, in April 2005, when large-scale anti-Japanese demonstrations took place in China, the May Fourth anniversary became a turning point for the Chinese leaders who had originally allowed the demonstrators to openly voice their concerns. These demonstrations were related to the dispute about Japanese school textbooks used to teach history and about a proposal to give Japan a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Japanese businesses in several cities in China were vandalized during the protests. When the government learned that the protestors were going to arrange even wider mass demonstrations on the anniversary of the May Fourth demonstrations of 1919, the nation went on full alert and officials closed Tiananmen Square to the public (Hughes, 2006: 151; Zhao, 2013: 540-2).

According to Christopher Hughes (2006: 2-4), nationalism is a "fuzzy concept" that is essentially contested and its meaning changes as it is used for different purposes over time. Following this starting point, this article does not aim to define Chinese nationalism; rather, the aim is to show that the meaning of political concepts varies according to the needs of the authors who are creating arguments for specific debates. The context within which these May Fourth authors operated had its own peculiarities: the First World War had just ended, the October Revolution in Russia had taken place in 1917, China was divided by independent warlords, and there was no Chinese Communist Party (the article focuses on a period before the party was established in July 1921) nor a People's Republic of China (PRC) (established in 1949 after the Chinese Civil War). The challenges and 'perennial questions', as they were interpreted then, were related to the development of the Chinese nation, and the Chinese people were different from the ones that Chinese authors writing about China's future development and international status are dealing with today. Because of these differences, many concepts, including nationalism, were loaded with meanings that might not seem obvious today.

According to a pioneering study on the development of Chinese political concepts by Jin

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[5] The nationalist character of the movement has been underlined, for instance, by Lin Gang (1989), who claims that the fundamental driving force behind the intellectual movement was, in any case, the spirit of nationalism.

Guantao and Liu Qingfeng (2009), the majority of modern political concepts were introduced in China in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Usually, these concepts went through three stages: *first*, after the mid-19th century, Chinese authors used terms borrowed from Chinese classics to express new concepts adopted from Western sources; *second*, between 1895-1915, Chinese authors used new terms borrowed from Japanese translations of Western texts; and *third*, after 1915 and especially after 1919, certain Chinese versions of originally-Western concepts such as democracy, nationalism, socialism, or liberalism, began to become entrenched. Based on their findings, Jin and Liu (2009: 7-9) conclude that conceptual developments during the period 1915-1925 should be given special attention.

The approach used in this article is based on J.G.A. Pocock's writings on political languages. According to Pocock (1971), when studying history of political thought, the first problem is to identify the language and vocabulary with and within which the author operated. Using political languages means acting, speaking, and thinking in certain ways that are politically biased. Political languages possess their own terminologies, styles, and conventions (Pocock 2009: 69-79). For Pocock, scholars studying the history of political thought should become familiar with political languages and the paradigms which operate within them. The purpose of the chosen approach in the article is to get a better understanding of the dynamics of changing viewpoints related to the intellectual interactions of a period when a great variety of new foreign ideas and ideologies were debated in China. In the following, I will first discuss the origins of the concept of nationalism in China before moving on to an analysis of the usage of the concept of nationalism within the language of mutual aid (esp. 1919-1920) and the language of class struggle (esp. after 1920), which was prevalent during this period.

The Concept of Nationalism in China and the May Fourth Movement

The origins of the Chinese concept of nationalism can be traced back to the first decade of the 20th century. The emergence of the concept was closely related to the question of China's national sovereignty during a time when most of the reform-minded Chinese authors felt that the future survival of China was under constant threat. The emergence of the concept of nationalism was connected to a wider cosmological turn away from a Sinocentric "all under heaven" (天下 *tianxia*) cosmology, to a world (世界 *shijie*) of competing nation states (国家 *guojia*). This paradigmatic change was connected to the increasing presence of foreign powers in East Asia, and to the fact that the Qing dynasty was unable to isolate China from foreign

influences or properly defend its borders. Defeats in the Opium Wars (1839-1842 and 1856-1860) were followed by a defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). The latter was a turning point for many Chinese intellectuals who became convinced that the old Sinocentric worldview had become obsolete and, if China was to be rescued, it was necessary to create and develop a modern Chinese nation state with a strong national spirit. These military defeats and the unequal treaties that China was forced to sign with foreign powers are still seen by many in China as a central part of the "century of humiliation" that usually refers to a period of foreign imperialism and internal fragmentation in China from 1839 (when the First Opium War started) to 1949 (when the PRC was established).

According to Jin and Liu (2009: 243), the concept of nationalism first appeared in a Chinese text in 1901. Authors such as Liang Qichao, Yan Fu, Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan), and others became interested in Western nationalism. Besides concrete military defeats and military threats, discussions on the survival of China were closely connected to the social Darwinist scenarios of the so-called struggle for survival. Social Darwinist ideas and slogans were introduced in China in the 1890s. Yan Fu translated Thomas Henry Huxley's work *Evolution and Ethics* (1893) into Chinese in 1898. James Reeve Pusey (1983) has written that, among reform-minded scholars, evolutionary theory gained huge popularity and soon everyone was writing about the reform of Chinese society using a Darwinist perspective. The Qing dynasty that was despised by many reform-minded scholars and intellectuals eventually collapsed in the revolution of 1911, but the following Republic of China was weak and the central leadership in Beijing could control only a limited area within the Republic's territory. Independent warlords controlled provincial areas in China with the help of their private armies and private sources of income. In the First World War, the Beiyang government (1912-1928) in China supported the Allied side by sending so-called working battalions to Europe. After the war, in the Paris Peace Conference, the areas in China that were previously controlled by Germany were not given back to China. Instead, they were transferred to Japan. Naturally, many people in China were unhappy about the decision, and large-scale demonstrations took place on May 4th in 1919. In the end, China never signed the peace treaty. In a narrow sense, the May Fourth Movement refers to these demonstrations ("the May Fourth Incident"). In a wider sense, this name refers to a loose reform movement by Chinese students and academics. The Movement was neither uniform nor well-organized. There was no established leadership or commonly-shared agenda. These authors wanted to re-evaluate tradition and strengthen China's development by promoting new learning. According to Chow (1967 [1960]: 215), the

spirit of unity beyond these goals was only superficial.

Already in the late 1920s, and especially in decades which followed, various Chinese authors tried to connect the May Fourth Movement to their own political agendas and to historical narratives that served their own political goals. Many authors have wanted to strengthen the image of this Movement as a nationalist movement. In 1986, Vera Schwarcz (1986: 287) wrote that the "nationalist assault on the legacy of May Fourth has been going on for a number of decades already." According to Schwarcz (1986: 245), the significance assigned to the Movement by political leaders often runs counter to the experience of the May Fourth participants themselves.

According to Chen Zhongping (2011), many of the provincial warlords in China during the Movement tried to benefit from it, although the power of warlords was one of the issues that was constantly opposed in May Fourth journals. In the 1920s, Sun Yat-sen portrayed the Movement as a part of the Guomindang-led revolutionary project. For Guomindang, it was a nationalist movement that was betrayed by the Marxists. The official CCP historiography, on the other hand, connects the Movement to the CCP's own historical narrative and, in this context, the Movement is portrayed as a prelude to the CCP. In this narrative, the May Fourth Movement period was the last period in the struggle against feudalism and the CCP itself was the leader of the struggle (Chow, 1967 [1960]: 347, Gu, 1992: 36-7, 76-7, Mitter, 2004: 103-4, Schwarcz, 1986: 236-7, 245-6).

Originally, the May Fourth demonstrations in 1919 were connected to the experience of injustice in the Paris Peace Conference, and certainly the demonstrations were connected to the bilateral relations between China and Japan – as Japan was seen as an imperialist and militarist power which was constantly threatening China. Thus, it is not difficult to understand the logic behind the idea of connecting the events of 1919 to anti-Japanese demonstrations in the 21st century. However, seeing the May Fourth Movement as a purely nationalist and patriotic movement can easily be misleading, as the journals of the Movement uphold a strong cosmopolitan spirit.[6] The May Fourth Movement was not a movement that would have glorified the value of Chinese culture or the prowess of the Han Chinese people, as is often the case with

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[6] For the May Fourth cosmopolitan spirit, see also Ip (2005: 27-32). Although in the May Fourth context, the cosmopolitan spirit was closely connected to the criticism of nationalism, concepts of nationalism and cosmopolitanism are not necessarily out of tune with one another. See, for example, Brett and Moran (2011) and Calhoun (2008). What is more, Acharya and Buzan (2010) note that it has not been unusual in Asia that nationalist movements have themselves criticized nationalism as the basis for organizing international relations.

21st century Chinese nationalism. Previous studies on 21st century Chinese nationalism have shown that there are three commonly used elements in nationalist historical argumentation: *first*, it is typical for Chinese nationalists to admire the past greatness of Chinese empires and to underline the exceptionality of China's history and culture; *second*, it is typical for Chinese nationalists to stress the damage inflicted upon China during the so-called century of humiliation which started with the Opium Wars and ended with the establishment of the PRC in 1949; and *third*, the role of the CCP is depicted as being that of the hero who saved China from the hands of foreign imperialists and was able to strengthen and develop China (Carlson, 2009: 22).

It is not difficult to find ways to connect the May Fourth Movement and the second and the third of these historical elements in contemporary Chinese nationalist argumentation. The May Fourth Movement was a movement that opposed imperialism, and thus the Movement is related to the century of national humiliation. It certainly can be seen as an intellectual movement that was trying to find ways to end this humiliation. Naturally, there is a clear connection between the Movement and the Chinese Communist Party, as many of the central figures of this Movement such as Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao were later important members of the CCP in its early years. A connection between the first key element depicted above with the Movement is, however, not easy to create, as the Movement was extremely critical of Chinese traditional culture, and for May Fourth authors the history of Chinese empires was not a symbol of past glory but a symbol of stagnation and decay. Instead of looking for inspiration for China's future development by glorifying the history of Chinese emperors and dynasties, these intellectuals wanted to reject traditional Chinese culture and education, and to reform China by following modern political ideas from abroad. They believed that the only way to save China was to follow the prevailing international thought trends.

Kropotkin, Mutual Aid, Nationalism After the End of WWI, 1919-1920

After the end of First World War, especially during the year 1919, Russian author Pjotr Kropotkin appeared as one of the leading international authorities in the May Fourth journals. Kropotkin's conceptions on evolution were first introduced to the Chinese readership during the first decade of the 20th century (Bailey, 1990: 229). Hence, Kropotkin's work was already familiar to those who would form the core writers of the May Fourth journals.

Articles published in May Fourth journals after the war heavily criticized imperialism and

militarism. Social Darwinism was seen as a harmful intellectual construct that had created a favorable atmosphere for imperialist and militarist ideas to appear. Besides Kropotkin, Woodrow Wilson's ideas related to self-determination and peaceful international relations presented in his 'Fourteen Points' speech were applauded by many Chinese intellectuals (see Ma, 2017). In this context, aggressive or "narrow" nationalism was seen as a way of thought that was outmoded and harmful for the peaceful development of international relations.

Kropotkin's work *Mutual Aid* (1902) challenged social Darwinist versions of evolution and directly criticized Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (1893). Instead of mutual struggle, Kropotkin (1915 [1902]) underlined the importance of mutual aid in evolution. According to Kropotkin, mutual aid and cooperation were much more relevant for the survival of species than the ability to fight against others. Struggle was to be understood mainly as a collective struggle against circumstances, not as a struggle between individuals.

In the post-war China, Kropotkin was applauded as one the authors whose writings represented "a new era" and a "new tide of thought." In this context, it was Kropotkin – and not Darwin – who could best explain 'the true nature of evolution'. In November 1918, Cai Yuanpei, one of the leading intellectual figures at Beijing University wrote that the Allied side won the World War because they followed Kropotkin's ideas:

> At the end, it was the Allied Nations who got the victory. The Allied side followed Kropotkin's principle of mutual aid. The principle of mutual aid is a general rule in evolutionary theory (Cai, 1918)

According to Cai (1918), Germany had followed the ideas of Nietzsche and the idea of the survival of the fittest and that had led to their defeat.[7]

For Cai, as for many others, the war had proved that Kropotkinian mutual aid was the key in evolution. Cai's article was a typical one, and many similar articles where the power of mutual aid and Kropotkinian thought were underlined appeared in May Fourth journals in 1918-1919. It was not only *New Youth*; similar articles appeared in other journals such as *Young China*[8], which was the journal of the Young China Association – originally established in June

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[7] Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940) served as Chancellor of Beijing University and was the first President of the Academia Sinica. See Boorman and Howard (1967: Vol. 3, 295-299).
[8] The journal *Shaonian Zhongguo* was not only a Beijing University journal, as the Young China Association had branches in Nanjing, Chengdu, and Paris. The society remained active until 1925. For more about the Association, see Chow (1960/1967: 80).

1918 by students who had returned to China from Japan. In the first issue of *Young China*, which appeared in July 1919, Wei Shizhen wrote that, before the war, the Darwinist struggle for survival was prevalent, but after the war everyone had started to study Kropotkin's ideas on evolution. Wei argues (1919), that the key to understanding evolution correctly is found in Kropotkin's idea of cooperation. In the same journal, one of the student leaders of the Young China Association, Yun Daiying (1920a)[9], wrote that supporters of narrow nationalism (狭隘 的国家主义 *xia'ai de guojia zhuyi*) had used science for their own purposes and this had led to poisonous effects in the development of societies. In another article, Yun (1920b) stressed that, although it is necessary to resist the "capitalist oppression" of China, nationalism (国家主义 *guojia zhuyi*) was not the solution because it led to grievances and conflicts between nations. Instead of nationalism, it was equality and humanity that was to be supported. According to Yun, the current unstoppable trend of democracy was against the old ways of though.

In another well-known May Fourth journal, *Weekly Critic*[10], Gao Yihan[11] wrote that Kropotkin's espousal of mutual aid was not based on the optimist beliefs of human compassion, but was based on observations in natural sciences. Gao argued that, although Darwin himself did understand the relevance of cooperation, competition and mutual struggle were emphasized in his later writings. These elements were overemphasized, particularly in the discussions that followed. According to Gao (1919), mutual aid was a leading trend in nature and human societies were following this trend. Patriotism (爱国主义 *aiguo zhuyi*) was in contrast with this trend, yet could not change this basic state of affairs.

Following the style of argumentation, in *New Tide*[12] Li Dazhao[13] (1919) wrote that the old nationalistic ethics (国家主义的道德 *guojia zhuyi de daode*) could not survive any more in the contemporary world because they were based on outmoded thinking. New ethics were

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[9] Yun Daiying (1895-1931) was active in the CCP in its early years. See Boorman and Howard (1967: vol. 4, 92-5).

[10] *Weekly Critic* (*Meizhou Pinglun*), established in 1918, was a journal that was associated with *New Youth*, but it adopted a more direct style of criticism towards existing power elites in China. The journal was suppressed in 1919.

[11] Gao Yihan (1885-1968) was Professor of Political Science at Beijing University. For more about Gao, see Lin, D. (2005: 169-170).

[12] New Tide (Xin Chao) was a journal of the New Tide student society. It was active from 1919 to 1922.

[13] Li Dazhao (1888-1927) was Chief Librarian at Beijing University until September 1920 when he became Professor of History, Economics and Political Science. According to Meisner (1973 [1968]: 190), the "internationalist phase" in Li's writings was strong between 1919 and 1921. Chen Duxiu, on the other hand, was already critical of patriotism in 1915, and called it "blind loyalty to the state" (Schwarcz 1986: 38).

not based on spirituality, religion, classical thought, class divisions, private ownership, or occupations. Instead, new ethics were based on mutual aid, harmony, humanity, practicality, and constructiveness.

Within the 'language of mutual aid' in this context, we can recognize some recurring arguments related to the international operational environment within which China was to be developed: 1) mutual aid is more essential an element in evolution than mutual struggle; 2) people should follow the prevailing trends of the spirit of mutual aid and democracy and abandon the spirit of mutual conflict militarism and imperialism; 3) people should oppose structures that protect the privileges of the few; and 4) people should strive for equality, both domestically and internationally.

This type of argumentation was used also on the pages of the *Citizen*[14], a journal that is often seen as a more nationalistic May Fourth journal compared to the likes of *New Youth*, *New Tide*, and *Weekly Critic*. In November 1919, Yang Yiceng expressed his views on building a better society. Although Yang did not refer to Kropotkin, he used similar argumentation. Yang (1919) explains that the current society was an unequal society without humanity and justice. Warlords were oppressing the people and capitalists were oppressing the workingmen. According to Yang, nationalism (国家主义 *guojia zhuyi*) was harmful because it created international conflicts. Yang argued that people should strive to improve the lives of all the people in the world, and they should not focus only on the limited interests of existing societies based on religion or ethnicity. According to Yang, there was a need for "true democracy" that followed the spirit of liberty, fraternity, and equality.

The mutual aid framework was not only used to interpret the result and meaning of the First World War; the revolutions in Russia and in Germany were treated similarly. In February, Huang Lingshuang (1919), writing for *New Youth*, explained that the prevailing international thought trends were in manifested by Kropotkin's theory of mutual aid, whereas the revolutions in Russia and in Germany were practical manifestations of the trend. This is to say, neither the October Revolution (1918) in Russia nor the November Revolution in Germany (1918-1919) were immediately interpreted through using the language of Revolutionary Marxism. This type

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[14] *Citizen* (*Guomin*) was a student journal at Beijing University. It was funded by a student society named the Citizen Society. The Society was established by students who had returned from Japan to China, and originally the main theme of their activities was to oppose Japanese imperialism. The journal was active from 1919 to 1921. Many of the students participated in both the New Tide Society and the Citizen Society.

of argumentation entered these journals and the May Fourth Movement only later.

When we look at the concept of nationalism in this context, it seems that nationalism is opposed by these authors when elements of imperialism, militarism, and social Darwinism are included. On the other hand, it seems clear that these authors were willing to support all attempts to develop China, to strengthen China, and to create a positive and active spirit that would help China to defend her national sovereignty. In this sense, it might be somewhat less problematic to associate the concept of patriotism with the Movement than the concept of nationalism, especially if the latter is attached to elements typically associated with Chinese nationalism, such as ethnic-cultural unity or the shared national heritage of the Han Chinese.

The period of optimism, where the arrival of this new positive period in international relations was discussed, took place between the armistice in November 1918 and the conclusion of the Paris Peace Conference in May 1919. The Peace Conference, as it has been mentioned above, was a great disappointment for the Chinese people and for the reform-minded authors writing about the future development of China. The tone of the articles did not, however, change immediately after the conference. The more radical and revolutionary style of argumentation properly entered these journals in 1920.

Class Struggle and Nationalism in late 1920

From the autumn of 1920, the language and style of writing in the May Fourth journals started to change significantly. Instead of a spirit of mutual aid and democracy, many authors started to use a class struggle framework when discussing the future development of China. World trends, as they were interpreted, were – from then on – usually depicted as trends moving towards revolution. Besides class struggle, the necessity for revolution and proletarian dictatorship was repeatedly underlined and were claimed to be necessary elements of China's future development. Many of the central concepts such as democracy and freedom were given new meanings: democracy and freedom in "capitalist societies" were explained as "unreal." Real freedom, real democracy, and equality could be reached only through class struggle. Obviously, this development of political rhetoric in these journals was connected to the fact that many of the central authors writing for these journals started to see Soviet Russia as a model for China's development.

Within the framework of international class struggle, May Fourth authors started to associate the Chinese people with the international proletarian class that was trying to survive

in a battle against international capitalism and imperialism. In this setting, these authors did not call for Chinese nationalism, because nationalism was seen as an element belonging to capitalist countries looking for opportunities to oppress less-developed countries in order to gain material benefits. Within this political language, it was not China or the Chinese people as a whole whose position the authors wanted to improve. The main player was, instead, the Chinese workers – together with workers all over the world.

The events in the Paris Peace Conference after the war were used as a prime example of the moral corruption of capitalist countries. On the other hand, there were events that made it easier to portray Soviet Russia as a friendly companion in international relations. Maybe the most important event in this sense was the so-called Karakhan Declaration. The declaration listed different treaties signed between the Russian Empire and China that the current Soviet Russian Government wanted to cancel. This declaration was originally announced already in July 1919, but news of the declaration did not reach Beijing until March 1920. The declaration was significant because it promised to concede all Russian special privileges in China. Naturally, when the news arrived in Beijing, the Chinese reaction was extremely positive. In May 1920, *New Youth* published a translation of the declaration with a collection of responses from Chinese student unions, labor unions, and trade unions, and commentaries from other Chinese journals. According to this collection, many in China saw this declaration as a sign of the beginning of a "new age in history." Many hoped that China and Soviet Russia could work together against international suppression and inequality between nations and classes. In September 1920, *New Youth* started a new "Russian Studies" section that dealt with issues such as the Soviet government, economy, labor unions, education, science, and other themes related to the development of Soviet society after the October Revolution in 1917.

The summer of 1920 was a turning point for the *New Youth* journal and for the May Fourth Movement. During this summer, the journal moved from Beijing back to Shanghai, where Chen Duxiu had originally established the journal in 1915. At this point, Chen, Li Dazhao, and others who had become interested in Marxism wanted to start publishing articles about revolutionary ideas and class struggle on the pages of *New Youth*. Authors, such as Hu Shi, who did not agree with this change of policy decided to leave the journal. When *New Youth* restarted its operations in Shanghai in September, the "Russian Studies" section was not the only new element in the journal. In the September issue, Chen (1920a) started to write about class struggle in his article titled "On Politics." According to this article, the main problem in all modern societies was that the capitalist uses state institutions to oppress the workingman,

and only class struggle could change this state of affairs:

> If one does not support the use of force, does not support class struggle ... then the capitalist class will control the state and will take advantage of politics and law. ... If in Russia they would have relied on Kropotkin's free unions instead of Lenin's proletarian dictatorship, not only the capitalist class would have immediately been able to restore its power, but also the imperial system would have inevitably been reinstated. ... if we do not go through a class struggle, if we do not go through a period where the working class holds the power, democracy will inevitably and forever be exclusively a thing of the capitalist class

In another article later during the same autumn, Chen (1920b) wrote that capitalist societies produce the harmful products nationalism (国家主义 *guojia zhuyi*) and imperialism (帝国主义 *diguo zhuyi*). State power, law, and politics should be used to protect the status and living conditions of the working class instead.

As in the case of the language of mutual aid and democracy, we can identify the main assertions of the language of class struggle in this specific context: 1) world trends are moving towards revolution; 2) class struggle, social revolution, and proletarian dictatorship are necessary elements of economic development; 3) China should take Soviet Russia as its model; 4) Marxism is the only scientific version of socialism; and 5) real freedom and real democracy cannot be realized without class struggle.

However, the rejection of the idealistic mutual aid spirit did not mean the rejection of cosmopolitanism and internationalism. As was the case with the language of mutual aid, nationalism – especially "narrow nationalism" – was still a concept within the language of class struggle that was given negative meanings. In his article on German socialism, published in *New Youth* in January 1921, Li Da[15] criticized the German socialist movement because, according to Li, the Movement had abandoned ideas of international class struggle and proletarian dictatorship, and turned instead to nationalism (国家主义 *guojia zhuyi*) and parliamentary democracy. Li (1921) wrote that it was nationalism that led Germans to the war. Although it seems that the negative attitude towards nationalism remained, it seems clear that the spirit of internationalism was changed; these authors started to lean towards more revolutionary versions of socialist internationalism. In other words, the type of international

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[15] Li Da (1890-1966) was one of the founding members of the CCP in July 1921. He later became President of Wuhan University. For a more detailed biography, see Boorman and Howard (1967: vol. 2, 328-9).

cooperation that was supported within the language of class struggle was a more limited, one compared to the language of mutual aid.

The concept of nationalism was also discussed by Bertrand Russell, who lectured in China during the May Fourth period, and many of his articles and summaries of his lectures were published in May Fourth journals. Russell was admired by many Chinese authors, and he appeared in many articles after the First World War as an authority who supported the validity of Kropotkin's writings on mutual aid (see for example Russell, 1920; Zhou, 1920). Initially, Russell had been optimistic about the prospects of the October Revolution but, after visiting Soviet Russia in August 1920, he became more skeptical and critical about the future direction of the Bolshevik government. May Fourth authors who had adopted Soviet Russia as a future model for China did not accept Russell's views (see for example, Yuan, 1920). On nationalism however, there seemed to be a common understanding, as Russell (1920b) held that nationalism meant looking after one's country's benefits at the expense of those of other nation states, and was thus one of the main enemies of socialism. Socialism, on the other hand, should maintain its international character.

Within the May Fourth context, various versions of anarchism and socialism were discussed, and there were many authors who were interested in international authors' writings about these ideologies. Typically, the frameworks and argumentation structures that were adopted from these sources depicted nationalism as a negative concept. Outside these journals there were, however, authors such as Sun Yat-sen who strongly supported nationalism[16]. In fact, May Fourth authors were also criticized by their contemporaries for being unpatriotic and for betraying national culture (Schwarcz, 1986: 121, 169-170)[17].

Conclusions

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[16] For Sun, nationalism was not a negative concept that was merely associated with imperialist and capitalist nations, unlike for the May Fourth authors discussed in this article. Sun's famous lecture series *Three Principles of the People* (*San Min Zhuyi*) on nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihoods were held in 1924. For Sun's lectures on nationalism, see Sun 2003 [1924]: 1-59.

[17] It is well known that, during the May Fourth Movement period, there were intellectual circles in China who were much less interested in authors such as Kropotkin or Marx, and offered different perspectives and solutions to China's challenges. For example the *National Herigate* (*Guogu*) journal in Beijing and *Critical Review* (*Xueheng*) in Nanjing offered completely different versions of China's challenges, and they were highly critical of the New Culture Movement. For more, see Dolezelova-Velingerova, 2008; Wang, 1978.

In this article, I have tried to explore and explain the usages of the concept of nationalism within a context where the class struggle paradigm was introduced before the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party in July 1921. In order to understand meanings given to concepts in specific debates, I believe that it is necessary to try to understand the political languages within which the concepts are used. Although I do believe that the languages of mutual aid and class struggle (after 1920) were the most common "political languages" in this context, this certainly does not mean that it would be impossible to find other contrasting languages (with recurring argumentation structures and usage of concepts) that were used by various authors.

May Fourth Movement authors wanted to make a distinction between acceptable and harmful types of nationalisms. In this context, positive nationalism meant the support of an intellectual atmosphere where China could develop and become stronger, so that it could defend itself against foreign imperialist invasions. The negative concept of nationalism that these authors opposed meant aggressive nationalism that involved beliefs of cultural or racial superiority, and was used to justify aggressive foreign policies and the juxtaposition between nation states. The negative concept of nationalism in this specific context was associated with Darwinism, imperialism, militarism, military invasions, and capitalism.

The May Fourth authors certainly wanted to strengthen and rescue China, but this did not mean loyalty towards the contemporary government. The Beiyang government was a warlord government, and the fact that China was governed by various warlords was an issue that was seen as an obstacle for future development. Militarism and the power of warlords were elements in the contemporary Chinese society that these authors opposed. As it has been noted, anti-imperialism was a central element in Chinese nationalism in the early 20th century[18]. Anti-imperialism did not, however, mean antiforeignism. Antiforeignism was the very opposite of what the Movement stood for, as Chow (1967 [1960]: 199) has noted. The May Fourth Movement authors held a strong cosmopolitan spirit, where the need for international cooperation and equality in the international operational environment were constantly stressed.

The year 2019 marks the Centenary of the May Fourth demonstrations, and the Movement again receives great attention in China. Recently, some Chinese scholars have connected the Movement to Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream (Li, B., 2014, Li, Y., 2016). Furthermore, the year

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[18] Ip, Hon, and Lee (2003) call May Fourth nationalism "anti-imperialist nationalism." For more about Chinese "anti-imperialist nationalism", see Duara (2003: 10-20).

2021 will be the Centenary of the establishment of the CCP, and undoubtedly China will highlight its early 20th century political history and history of political thought. Thus, we have reasons to believe that the Movement will be celebrated in a manner that aims to portray it as an inevitable part of the CCP's own history in a way that will probably involve strong nationalist overtones.

According to Carlson (2009: 22-3), "a pervasive collective memory of past national experiences plays a central role in framing the content of modern Chinese national sentiment", and that the predominant interpretation of Chinese history where the CCP appears as the savior of China is not a natural product of the past, but a carefully crafted one. Mitter (2003: 103-4) states that the official CCP version of Chinese history has tried to downplay the relevance of the possibilities of alternative paths of the May Fourth history. According to Mitter, there was nothing inevitable in the rise of the CCP.

When studying Chinese nationalism, scholars should not only focus on contemporary events and discussions on nationalism but should critically analyze these crafted images of the past events and movements that are used to support nationalism in the 21st century. For the May Fourth authors, nationalism was something that belonged to outmoded trends of thought, and their patriotism was certainly not based on glorified images of Chinese history or dreams of more assertive and aggressive foreign politics. Neither was the Movement an anti-foreign movement. The aim of this current article has not been to somehow politicize or mystify the May Fourth period, but to make more explicit the relevance of the interpretations of the period and their usage for political purposes today. One fundamental difference between 21st century Chinese nationalism and the May Fourth Movement lies in their attitude towards foreign thought trends. Unlike the CCP today that tends to denounce foreign ideas such as the freedom of the press as harmful and dangerous[19], the May Fourth Movement authors were not afraid of foreign thought trends and foreign influences. Conversely, these authors were afraid that, if China did not adapt herself to prevailing international developments, China would remain backward, unbalanced, and weak.

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[19] For example the "Document 9" that depicts many foreign ideas as attempts to undermine the current leadership (China File 2013).

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Pension reform in China:
What can China Learn from the Danish Approach to Demographic Change?

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Abstract

This study addresses two questions: first regarding China's ability to respond to its rapidly ageing population, and second what China can learn from Denmark in their approach to this challenge. Denmark, along with the other Scandinavian countries, is generally considered well adapted to demographic change. This paper aims to examine if the experiences of Denmark can add insights that are useful for the development of a sustainable and financially responsible approach to population ageing in China. Reviewing the respective demographic challenges of both China and Denmark, together with the provisions of old-age security and care, this paper presents an examination of their adaptability to demographic change. Finally, the paper outlines three factors from which China arguably could learn from the Danish approach to demographic change. It is evident from studying the Danish approach to demographic changes that pensions are not the sole focus; stimulating labour force participation, creating initiatives to postpone retirement and work longer and enforcing pro-natal polices are all part of the solution. Due to this, this paper argues that the main lesson to be learned from Denmark is that there is a need for a holistic approach to demographic change; reforming the pension system is only one part.

Keywords: China, Denmark, universalism, demographic change, pensions, old-age dependency

Introduction

Since the mid-2000s, a substantial body of literature has emerged on the subject of China's ageing population, most of which measures and proposes solutions to China's demographic challenge. There is increasing concern that the burden of ageing will prove an overwhelming impediment to continued economic growth and challenge the fiscal conditions of the fragile public pension system (Cai, 2016; Dong & Wang, 2016; Frazier & Li, 2017; Peng, 2013; van Dullemen & Bruijn, 2017).

This paper presents an examination of China's response to the demographic challenge. With a focus on demographic indicators and old-age pensions, attempts to accommodate demographic changes (given rapid modernisation) are investigated. The comparative focus will be on Denmark. Denmark has addressed demographic challenges and changes effectively

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whilst having maintained a nearly universal public pension system. Denmark and the Scandinavian welfare states in general, are recognised as being "well adapted to demographic change" (Andersen & Hatland, 2014: 258) and have been proactive in addressing their respective demographic situations by reforming their pension and retirement systems (Kangas et al., 2010; Mercer, 2018). According to the Danish Economic Council, the Danish pension system and the welfare state in general is sustainable throughout the Century, *vis-á-vis* the ageing of the population (Danish Ministry of Finance, 2018).

The study seeks to address the question of how China can respond to its increasingly ageing population. The main focus will be on investigating barriers and solutions, based on experiences gained from the Danish approach to demographic change, in creating a sustainable old-age pension system given the current demographic transition.

An important question in political science is; how can experiences from social security reforms be transferred from one country to another? The Danish welfare system, part of the Scandinavian welfare model, is well known in China, and research on Scandinavian social welfare has increased as "Chinese researchers and policy-makers want to learn from the successful experiences [of the Swedish social welfare model]" (Johansson & Cheng, 2016: 922). Furthermore, the term 'appropriate universalism', which has become key in recent social policy reforms in China (Kongshøj, 2015), signifies some reliance on Sino-Nordic policy learning. As a case in point, there are several references to various policies in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway in the report *Constructing a Social Welfare System for All in China* from the Development Research Centre of the Chinese State Council (CDRF, 2012), which is an official think-tank reporting directly to the Chinese prime minister. Furthermore, the CDRF took part in a study tour to Copenhagen in 2008, with the intent of studying socialised old-age security in Denmark.

This article goes beyond policy learning and diffusion. One critical question to ask is; whether China could and should learn from a country such as Denmark? First, it can be argued that a wide range of conventional measures and existing scientific instruments are contextually dependent and there should be no doubt that the Danish context differs from the Chinese by magnitudes. Secondly, when the demographic transition commenced in Denmark, the conditions for welfare state development were different compared with what they would be if this process had started today. Third, increased longevity due to improvements in wealth, lifestyles, education, healthcare, etc., has changed dependence patterns, and made the issue of old-age security and care increasingly urgent. Last, individual needs for old-age security and

care interact with the specific context in an ageing society, i.e. demographic behaviour is shaped by the context.

Due to these considerations, this paper does not suggest that Danish policies/schemes could be emulated in China, but rather examines whether the experiences of Denmark can add insights to the development of a sustainable and financially responsible approach to demographic change in China, even given the huge contextual difference.

This paper is structured as follows: first, the demographic challenge and support burden facing China is assessed, with a focus on the present until 2050; second, a comparison of the Chinese and Danish pension systems is provided. More importantly, their respective adaptability to demographic change are evaluated. Last, three recommendations are provided, from which it is argued that China could gain insights from Denmark in their attempt to address the demographic challenge.

Assessing the demographic challenge in China

In response to rapid population growth, the Chinese government introduced the voluntary 'later-longer-fewer' policy at the beginning of the 1970s. The policy was designed to encourage later childbearing, longer spacing between childbirths, and fewer children. This policy contributed to a dramatic reduction in the total fertility rate (TFR) - the total number of children born per woman of child-bearing age - from an estimated 5.9 in 1970 to 2.9 in 1979. Despite this reduction, fears of overpopulation continued, and the one-child policy was enacted in 1979. Following the introduction of the one-child policy, the TFR continued to fall, but at a steadier pace (Hesketh et al., 2005; Zeng & Hesketh, 2017).

The Chinese government introduced the one-child policy as a means of lifting China out of extreme poverty, through population containment (Zeng & Hesketh, 2017) . With some minor exceptions, the policy was strictly enforced in urban areas. In most rural areas, the one-child policy was deemed unfavourable and practically unenforceable, as children were regarded as both part of the workforce, due to the labour capital of children, and the main provider of care in old age (Cameron et al., 2013; Liu, 2014; Zeng & Hesketh, 2017). Since then, the policy has undergone several amendments (for a thorough overview see Zeng & Hesketh, 2017: 389-394), leading to the abolition of the one-child policy in 2015 and the subsequent introduction of the universal two-child policy.

Figure 1. Changes in China's population age structure, 1960–2015 and 2020–2050 UN projections
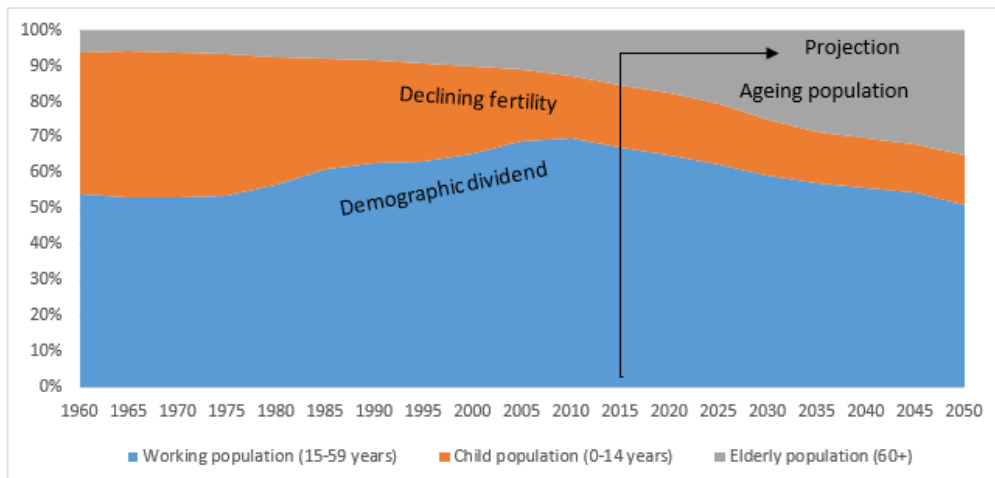
Source: UN, 2017

In this case, the elderly population is set at 60+ years, rather than the customary 65+ years, as 60 years old is the traditional marker of being old in China, as well as the current pension age.

Figure 2. Changes in Denmark's population age structure, 1960–2015 and 2020–2050 UN projections
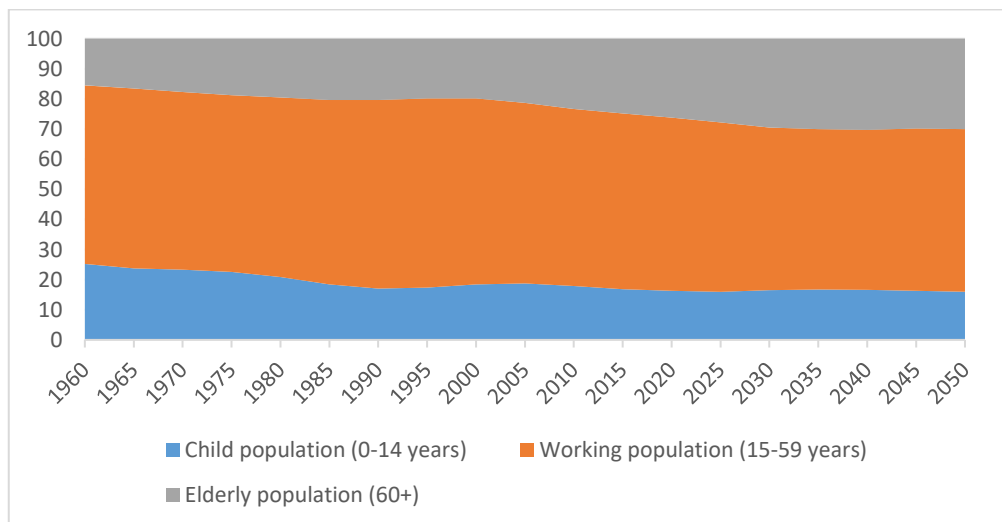
Source: UN, 2017

China has experienced significant demographic change since the 1960s (see Fig. 1). A combination of increasing life expectancy and lower fertility rates has provided China with a

large demographic dividend from a relatively young and productive population group. According to some calculations, 10 to 20 percent of China's growth over the past three decades can be attributed to this demographic dividend, which has now reached a point of exhaustion (Cai & Cheng, 2014; Cai, 2016).

China's population is currently ageing at an unprecedented rate, and future projections (see Fig. 1) indicate that this trend will continue. The projections suggest that China has entered an accelerated period of ageing. For a comparison with Denmark, see Fig. 2. A sustained low fertility rate means that the size of the working age population (defined here as 15-59 years old) will decline rapidly as the elderly population rises significantly. At its peak in 2010, the working age population reached 70% of the population. By 2050, the proportion is estimated to decline to about 50% of the population (as shown in Fig. 1).

Many have blamed the Chinese family planning policies for the current demographic situation, and some have suggested that these policies have prevented upwards of 400 million births (Wang & Fong, 2009; Zeng & Hesketh, 2017). However, this is contested by others, claiming that modernisation (and over-burdening young families with care obligations) can account for a major part of the fertility decline. Similar trends have been observed in other developing countries in Eastern Asia, such as South Korea, where the TFR decreased from 4.3 to 2.3 between 1970 and 1990, and Thailand, where the TRF decreased from 5.6 to 2.1 during the same period (WB, 2017). Since 1990 fertility rates in South Korea have plummeted far below the Chinese figures during the one-child regime. This also holds for Japan and for European countries that have failed to relieve families sufficiently from their obligations of care for children and the elderly. Danish fertility figures have remained closer to the reproduction level.

Table 1. Life expectancy and total fertility rate for Denmark, China, and other comparable countries, 1960 & 2016

	Life expectancy at birth, total (men and women) (years)		Total fertility rate (TFR)						
	1960	2016	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2016
Denmark	72.2	80.7	2.6	2.0	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.7
Germany[1]	69.3	80.6	2.4	2.0	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.5
China	43.7	76.3	5.7	5.6	2.6	2.4	1.5	1.6	1.6
Thailand	54.7	75.3	6.1	5.6	3.4	2.1	1.7	1.5	1.5

[1] Germany is included as an example of a typical Continental European country. The figures for Germany are a compilation of data from BRD and DDR.

| Japan | 67.7 | 84 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| South Korea | 53 | 82 | 6.1 | 4.5 | 2.8 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 1.2 |

Source: WB, 2017

Table 1 presents the development of life expectancy and TFR in Denmark, Germany, China, and other East Asian countries, from 1960 to 2016. No country reveals an increase in life expectancy comparable to China, though South Korea comes close, and apart from Thailand and South Korea, no countries can match China's decline in fertility. China has a high dispersion of life expectancy, for instance, in 2010 life expectancy ranged from 78 years in the richest cities, such as Shanghai, to around 64 years in the poorest (e.g. the autonomous region of Tibet) (NBS, 2010).

Regarding fertility, China's decline from a TFR of 5.7 in 1960 to 1.6 in 2016 is dramatic. However, the decline is not unique when compared to Thailand. Moreover, China's TFR of 1.6 is well above countries like Japan or South Korea. Actually, it is around the European average, though it is slightly lower than in Denmark.

Figure 3. Old-age dependency ratios (ratio of population aged 65+ per 100 population aged 15-64) in Denmark and China from 1950-2015, and with 2020-2050 UN projections
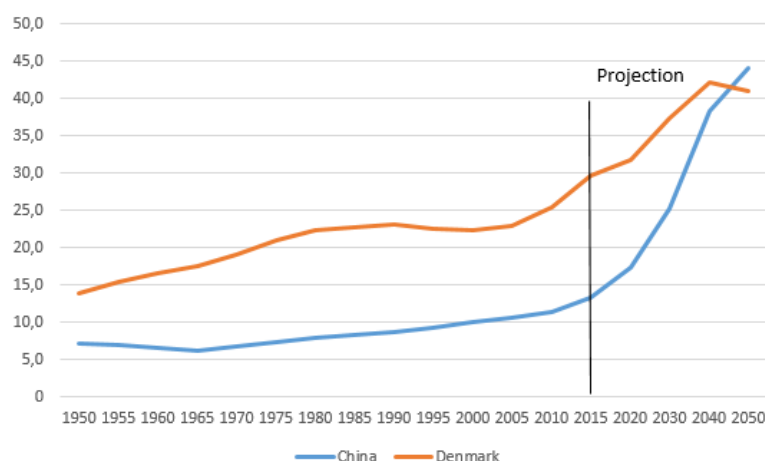
Source: UN, 2017

As life expectancy increases and fertility decreases, the old-age dependency ratio rises. As compared to Denmark and Europe in general, China's population has remained extremely young until now, with an old-age dependency ratio of only 13.3 in 2015 (Fig. 3). It should be noted, though, that some regions have a much higher ratio. According to the China Statistical Yearbook 2018 (NBS, 2018), the old-age dependency rate is highest in Chongqing (20.6),

followed by Sichuan (19.8), and Jiangsu (19.2). However, a great deal of these differences are likely a result of migration, as the old-age dependency ratio is calculated based on the residing population. At the other extreme, Tibet has an old-age dependency ratio of 8.2 (NBS, 2018), which is most likely due to low life expectancy in the region.

As shown in Fig. 3, China is predicted to overtake Denmark in terms of old-age dependency ratio by 2050. Of course, this depends on future fertility rates and mortality, but it is certain that there is rapid and dramatic change ahead.

Support capacity

Given the worrying demographic trend in China, the current and future capacity to support the elderly people will be briefly examined, through the society-support ratio. Support ratios provide an overview of the capacity of the working age population to provide support for the elderly (the ratio of 20-64 year olds to the number of people aged 65 years and above), whereas the old-age dependency ratio (Fig. 3) shows the opposite, that is, the proportion of the elderly in need of support. It is important to examine these ratios to gain insight into the sustainability of the Chinese pension system.

Table 2. Society-support ratios in China and Denmark

	Society-support ratio, 1950	Society-support ratio, 2015	Est. society-support ratio, 2050
China	11.8:1	6.9:1	3.1:1
Denmark	6.4:1	3.0:1	2.2:1

Society-support ratio: Age 20-64 / Age 65+
Source: UN, 2017

As revealed by Table 2, the society-support ratio in China in 2015 was 6.9:1, meaning that there was almost seven working-age people to support one person aged 65 or above. Even though this has changed much since 1950, it remains very favourable as compared to society-support ratio of 3.0:1 in Denmark.

However, in universal welfare states (such as Denmark), there is universal access to the public pension system. Therefore, it suffices to examine the society-support ratio, because the entire population participates in the pension scheme. Conversely, in China a far smaller proportion of the population contributes to the public pension system, because coverage is not yet universal. Due to this, the measure is not representative of the 'actual' support capacity in

China. To show this, we need knowledge on the amount of people contributing to the public pension system and the amount of people receiving pension benefits; known as the system-support ratio.

According to the China Statistical Yearbook 2018 (NBS, 2018) the Chinese system-support ratio stood at 3.3:1 in 2017. However, it is highly likely that this differs greatly across the country.

Thus, examining the system-support ratio in China enables us to observe the ratio of people contributing to the public pension system to those receiving pension benefits. The Chinese system-support ratio is much lower than the society-support ratio, because firstly the number of people who actually participate in pension schemes is far lower than the number eligible for participation, and secondly because of the low pension age in China. There was a 3.3:1 ratio of benefit contributors to retirees in 2017. These system-support ratios are similar to the Danish society-support ratios in 2015. However, considering China has not yet attained its demographic target, without further reforms these are likely to change significantly, as the workforce reduces, the ageing cohort grows, and the contributors become fewer. This raises questions about the sustainability of the Chinese welfare system and the capacity to handle an ageing population.

Overview: the Danish response to demographic challenges

As illustrated in the figures above, China has entered a period of accelerated ageing and is projected to overtake Denmark by 2050 in terms of old-age dependency ratios by a small margin. Even though projections for 2050 are roughly similar for China and Denmark, the demographic challenges differ according to their magnitude.

Unlike China, Denmark has adopted wide ranging policy reforms to address the demographic challenge. This pertains to pension reforms, stimulating labour supply through 'activation' of the entire social and tax system, and through pro-natal policies. Several initiatives have been targeted at postponing retirement, creating incentives to work longer, and seeking employment (see e.g. Ebbinghaus, 2011; Andersen, 2011; Jensen & Madsen, 2015).

Employment rates among 55-64-year olds has for decades been high in Denmark since the traditional homemaker family model began to lose importance in the 1980s. In addition, in recent years the employment rate of those over the age 70 years has increased rapidly. An analysis made by the Danish trade union 'Ledernes Hovedorganisation' in spring 2019, revealed that the age of working people over the age of 70 has risen from around 31.000 in 2006 to 55.340 in 2016. An increase of 77% (Lederne, 2019).

At the same time, provision of public childcare and elderly care has ensured comparatively high fertility rates, alleviating the demographic challenge. Still, the Danish government considered this insufficient, and the demographic challenge has been addressed proactively. First, by pension reforms to ensure adequate and sustainable pensions, and second, by extracting as much labour as possible from the working age population, including initiatives to prolong the working age. The initiatives can be divided into two categories: 'pull' and 'stay'. Pull factors view retirement as voluntary and related initiatives focus on (for example) making retirement less attractive by raising retirement age, or by creating economic incentives not to retire. In Denmark, a voluntary early retirement scheme enabling people to retire at favourable conditions from the age of 60 has been almost phased out through a series of reforms in 1998, 2006 and 2011. Stay initiatives have included a number of initiatives that emphasise the importance of good working conditions and competitive salary, by framing seniors as 'grey gold' in order to encourage employers to retain and recruit elders, and by providing consultancy for companies wishing to form policies aimed at senior employees (Jensen & Madsen, 2015) . Equally important, the Danish pension system has been changed towards providing strong economic incentives to prolong working life.

The political agreement over the Danish 2019 budget favours seniors, with new initiatives to secure their willingness to continue working, such as a cash reward for working more than 30 hours a week (Lederne, 2019). Finally, government has placed great emphasis on preventing early exit to disability pension, through rehabilitation and subsidized part-time employment. Overall, these initiatives have resulted in significantly rising employment among the elderly (Andersen & Jensen, 2011; Jensen & Madsen, 2015; Lederne, 2019).

A major issue in the Danish pension system is their 'one size fits all' approach to pensions, with a fixed pension age for all groups. Previously, a voluntary early retirement system had enabled people to retire up to 5 years before pension age. This was used by most unskilled workers, but by very few academics.

The issue has caused great controversy, as many Danes believe that the pension age should be regulated according to your type of job. Leading up to the Danish election in 2019, the debate was reignited as political parties debated the probability of a differentiated pension age. However, while some believe that, those who entered the labour market early and have been worn down by years of manual labour should have the possibility of earlier retirement; other political parties deem the plan of a differentiated pension age impossible.

Provisions of old age security

In the late 1960's the Scandinavian countries began to move away from their former pension model, which was a universal, flat-rate, state-funded 'people's pension' available to all citizens. However, rather than straying, Denmark continued along the former path and improved the people's pension to a very generous level. However, the costs for the state were high, and the replacement rate was insufficient for middle class wage earners, this led to a *crowding in* of private or occupational pensions. To avoid a 'dual pension system' and to enhance private savings which were too low, fully funded labour market pensions were introduced as a second pillar of the pension system for nearly all workers from 1991 (see Table 3). These labour market pensions were not enacted by legislation, but via collective negotiations between the social partners; trade unions and the employers. Some employers and employees were not covered by collective negotiations, but the collective agreements set a standard which nearly all employers had to follow if they would be able to compete for labour power. Over the years, coverage has become nearly universal.

Hence, Denmark was a laggard in introducing earnings-related pensions, but became a frontrunner in developing a multi-pillar system where the occupational pillar is a defined contribution system with the size of pensions depending on the contributions of the employee/employer.

The Danish system may be described as a socially balanced variant of a World Bank (1994) system, even though it was introduced several years before the World Bank recommendations were issued (Andersen & Hatland, 2014; Andersen, 2015). The Danish people's pension (see Table 3) is divided into a basic amount and a pensions supplement, means tested against income. Besides this, there are supplementary pensions and individual supplements for the poorest pensioners. Taken together, this elevates the poorest pensioners well above the relative poverty level and justifies the application of the term "universal" to characterize the system as a whole, even though the individual components have been de-universalized.

To a large degree, China's pension reforms also reflect a multi-pillar approach, as recommended by the World Bank (CDRF, 2012). The overall structure of the Chinese and Danish pension systems are compared in Table 3.

Table 3. Overall structure of China and Denmark's multi-pillar pension systems

	China		Denmark	
	Content	Characteristics	Content	Characteristics
The first pillar	Urban employee basic pension system Urban-rural resident basic pension system Pension system for civil servants and public employees	Mandatory: social pool and individual account	Peoples pension ATP: supplementary labour market pension Means-tested supplementary schemes (Ældrecheck - a supplement to pensioners with available funds less than 86.000 dkr., housing benefits and individual supplements).	Mandatory: tax financed Mandatory for wage earners: Fully funded (savings based)
The second pillar	Enterprise annuity schemes Occupational annuity schemes	Voluntary and defined contribution	Labour market pensions Civil servants' pensions	Semi-mandatory
The third pillar	Private savings	Voluntary	Personal pensions (rent pension, old-age savings scheme, rate pension and private savings)	Voluntary

Sources: based on Andersen, 2016: 188; Peng, 2016: 52

The Chinese government first initiated pension reform among urban employees, and later expanded pension coverage to rural residents and urban non-working residents; these programs were called 'the urban employee basic pension system', 'the new rural social pension system' and 'the urban resident social pension system'. However, in 2014, the latter two schemes were merged into 'the urban-rural resident basic pension system'. Together with a pension scheme for civil servants and public employees, these schemes are regarded as the first pillar of the pension system.

In addition, the Chinese government established supplementary programs; 'the enterprise annuity and 'occupational annuity schemes' as the second pillar of the pension system. Finally,

private savings are regarded as the third pillar of the pension system (Peng, 2016) (see Table 3).

There is no unified public pension system in China; participation is based on working conditions and residence. However, the Chinese pension system has undergone several reforms in recent times (for an overview see Peng, 2016), in an attempt to achieve full coverage. The multi-pillar system is set up to share the burden of old age security between state, enterprises, and individuals, as is the case in Denmark. The reform has been successful in several ways: the urban employee basic pension system expanded rapidly from providing cover to 61.7 million people in 1990, to 304.3 million in 2012. The number of participants in the new rural pension system, which as of February 21st 2014 merged into the 'urban-rural resident basic pension system', grew by more than 200% from 2010 to 2011 alone, and by the end of 2012 there were 483.7 million people covered by the scheme (Peng, 2016: 58-59). However, the pension system continues to be underdeveloped and possibly not well equipped for the challenge to come. The pension system faces a number of issues. These include inequality and equity, low replacement rates, fragmentation in social security old-age benefit, limited coverage, system deficit/financial unsustainability, and fragmentation across the rural/urban boundary (Cai & Cheng, 2014; Chen & Turner, 2015; Peng, 2016; van Dullemen et al., 2017) as illustrated in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Different pension arrangements among different sectors in China

Sector	Scheme	Features	Average coverage (CNY per month)
Government and institutional units	Pension system for civil servants and public employees	Non-contributory and defined-benefit	2543.44
Urban enterprises	Urban employee basic pension system	Defined-contribution and funded	1813.84
Urban and rural residents	Urban-rural resident basic pension system	Defined-benefit and funded	127.47 (The basic 70 CNY pension can be supplemented by local government revenue)

Source: based on Zhu & Walker, 2018: 1410-1417

The unequal institutional pension arrangements across different sectors and segments of the labour force (see Table 4), is testimony to the varying stability, coverage, and generosity of the different pension schemes in China.

The disparities are particularly discernible across the rural/urban divide. An urban pension system was initiated in the early 1950s, whereas old age insurance for rural residents

was not initiated on a large scale until 2009 (Wu, 2013). Among other things, this has resulted in a high degree of stratification.

The rural/urban divide is not only a geographical matter, but also a systemic one. Rural residents have been deprived of entitlements to which urban residents are privy. As a result, informal support has formed the basis of welfare provision in rural China. A study conducted by Liu (2017), found that the State relies directly or indirectly upon households' support capacity as the State's contribution to rural pension is minimal and inadequate and entitlement to a pension is dependent upon all family members participating in the scheme (Liu, 2017: 293-294). The rural elderly are dependent upon their family for support, however given rapid migration by the working population, dependence patterns in rural areas have changed. Actual contact between adult children and ageing parents has been reduced, while remittances have become a major source of household income, and by extension pension supplement, in many rural areas.

By comparison, many ageing countries have had comprehensive pension systems, including rural people, in place at a much earlier stage of population ageing. Denmark was the first country in the world to establish a comprehensive, residual pension system in 1891; the United Kingdom began to provide universal coverage of social security in 1946, and Japan and South Korea initiated their rural pension systems in 1971 and 1990, respectively (Cai, Giles, O'Keefe, & Wang, 2012).

However, Zhu & Walker (2018) argue that those most marginalised by the stratified Chinese pension system are women with low human capital. Though it is not comparable, women are also worse off compared with their male counterparts within the Danish pension system. 'Magisterbladet' (Magisterbladet, 2019), a magazine for the Danish trade union 'Dansk Magisterforening', reported in spring 2019 that men save 37% more in pension savings, compared to women. However, this number is down from 51% in 2008, reportedly due to higher educational attainment among women, higher parity in salaries and more men being entitled to and making use of paternity leave.

Raising retirement age

The eligibility age for retirement varies greatly across the different pension schemes in China. In some professions, the retirement age is 60 years for both men and women, whilst in managerial positions, it is 55 years for women, and 50 years for women in other roles (Chen & Turner, 2015; Chen, 2016; Peng, 2016) as stated in Table 5.

Table 5. Basic pension system characteristics in Denmark and China

	China	Denmark
Recipients of basic pension	Sectoral and local residency, in some cases voluntary.	Residence.
Length of residence/participation required to obtain basic pension	15 years	40 years
Pensionable age	50-60 depending on residence, employment and gender.	Semi-automatic adaption of retirement age to longevity.
		65 (increases to 68 by 2030 and 77 by 2095).
Coverage (2012), basic pension (the first pillar)	Urban employee basic pension: 304 million insured. The new rural pension system: 326 million insured.	Universal.

Sources: Chen, 2016; Nordiska ministerrådet & Nordiska ministerr, 2017; Peng, 2016)

The retirement age in China is low. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average normal pension age in 2016 was 64.3 years for men and 63.7 years for women, across all schemes for an individual reaching retirement (OECD, 2017).

The pension age in Denmark has traditionally been quite high (67 years until the 1980s). The same can be said for labour market participation for people in their sixties. Denmark has adopted a 'semi-automatic adaption of retirement age to longevity' approach; fixed pension ages have lost some meaning due to the defined contribution principle. The pension age, in age brackets, is indexed to life expectancy at age 60 as a result of the 2006 welfare reform. The pension age is regulated every fifth year, effective from the 1st of January 15 years later. The pension age was last regulated in 2015, and is set to increase to 68 years by 2030. Given the projected development in life expectancy, the indexation mechanism is projected to increase pension age to 77 years for those born in 2018 (Department of Labor and Recruitment, 2018).

Increasing the pension age in China has been a prevalent topic in academia (see e.g. Liu & Miao, 2004; Peng et al., 2013; Chen & Groenewold, 2017; Feng et al., 2018), among politicians, and in the media (see e.g. China Economic Review, 2015; Xinhua, 2016; ECNS, 2018). All suggest that it should be increased incrementally, until a non-gender specific pension age of 60–65 years is reached. However, this can only be considered a stepping-stone.

With the expected decline of the working age population in China (see Fig. 1), an increase in retirement age could be an effective way to increase the labour force participation rate (Chen & Turner, 2015; Peng, 2016; Peng & Mai, 2013). However, there are other cultural concerns in relation to China, namely the issue of grandparenting. Grandparenting in China is rooted in traditional family values and norms; childcare is considered an intergenerational collaboration between parents and grandparents. Despite an increasing demand for formal care solutions, family continues to be the primary source of care. The same is true in several other Asian countries; however, grandparenting appears to be more prevalent in China. As an example, a study conducted by Ko and Hank (2014: 649) suggests there are significant differences in the proportions of grandparents having provided any childcare between China (58%) and Korea (6%). This is a striking difference, although it corroborates previous research within the field. It is argued that the high participation of mothers in the labour force is likely to explain the significantly higher demand for grandparenting in China, together with the government's failure to satisfy the demand for formal childcare facilities. Grandparents therefore provide a complementary source of care where the government fails. Because of this, it is likely that increasing the retirement age might place greater pressure on welfare provision in other areas.

A related issue is that of ageism in the labour market. In China, 'old age' is traditionally recognised as occurring at 60 years, and this is considered the appropriate time to retire and make room for younger people in the labour market. According to a survey by Manulife (2014), approximately 64% of Chinese people who were interviewed had a negative attitude towards an increase in the official retirement age (Feng et al., 2018). As previously mentioned, the elderly have been pro-actively represented as grey gold in Denmark—helped by the dissemination of insights from gerontology—enabling employers to realise that the elderly can be as productive as younger workers (Jensen & Madsen, 2015). However, despite popular and political support, raising the pension age remains a difficult political subject, especially whilst the one size fits all approach to pensions in Danish politics seems an ongoing, unresolved issue.

Assessments and conclusion

China will face a steeply increasing old-age dependency ratio, a shrinking labour force, and a tense intergenerational relationship. Reforming China's pension system is a demographically pressing issue, as well as socially vital.

Recent literature has proposed numerous solutions to China's demographic challenge, e.g. to strengthen and unify the pension systems, to create equality and social justice across sectors, to accommodate labour mobility and protect pension rights of migrant workers, to

create universal and adequate coverage and raising the pension age (see e.g. Cai & Cheng, 2014; Chen & Turner, 2015; Fang, 2016; Peng, 2016).

However, China is not alone; many countries are ageing, but their approaches to stemming the demographic challenges differ widely and from these approaches, there are insights to be gained. Denmark is one of the most well-adjusted countries in terms of dealing with demographic change and though the Danish demographic challenge has never been as urgent as those faced by China, there are still lessons to be learned in the way that China addresses the challenge of population ageing.

Below follows an outline of three factors from which China arguably could gain insights from Denmark in its attempt to meet the challenges of demographic change under current conditions.

1.   *Avoiding the one size fits all problem*

China's current retirement policy was initiated in the 1970s, at a time when the life expectancy was around 60–65 years. However, the longevity of Chinese citizens has since increased to more than 76 years (see Table 1). A gradual adaptation of the retirement age could increase the workforce and lower the expected increase in labour costs. Furthermore, it could reduce the pressure on the pension system. Extending the pension age could have significant consequences for social and economic prospects in China. Delaying the pension age could enhance the fiscal sustainability of the pension system and enhance their system-support ratios, with more contributors and fewer benefit receivers.

Raising the retirement age is by far a new suggestion and awareness of this issue is high among Chinese policymakers. Meanwhile, China should take notice of the Danish problem of a one size fits all approach to pension age, which remains a major unresolved issue. A fixed pension age allows social inequality within health and life expectancy to manifest, as some will have a relatively short retirement – in poor health.

In China, the pension age is differentiated depending on residence, employment and gender. Despite, as mentioned earlier, that both academia, politicians and the media suggest that the Chinese retirement age should be increased incrementally until a non-gender specific pension age of 60–65 years is reached, China should take note of the Danish issues when reforming the pensions system and maintain a differentiated pension age.

2.   *Swaying public opinion*

Postponing the official retirement age and persuading the public to contribute to the mandatory public pension system is a thorny political initiative, which is facing much resistance, as willingness is low. Delaying retirement may also challenge the stereotype of the

elderly in China, where 60 years is the traditional marker of being old and there exists strong ageism against elderly people at work. Studies from Denmark have shown that employers in general hold a more positive view towards older employees (Larsen, 2006). Correspondingly, Danish employers feel a sense of urgency when it comes to population ageing and a shrinking workforce, with approximately 70% of Danish employers suggesting that population ageing poses an important challenge to society (Jensen, 2012).

A sustainable pension reform thus needs to effectively address issues related to ageism in society and create awareness about the demographic challenges, rather than just postpone the pension age. As mentioned earlier, Denmark had great success with framing seniors, as grey gold to encourage employers to retain and recruit seniors, as well as to enable employers to realise that seniors can be as productive as younger workers. In order for China to fully make use of the capacity of seniors, they need to make the public realise their potential as an active part of the workforce.China has abolished the one-child policy and enacted a two-child policy to balance its demographic development. This could potentially lessen the demographic burden and ease the unintended consequences of the one-child policy, such as a reference for male children, high levels of abortions and female infanticide (Zeng & Hesketh, 2017). This is an important step, because as Esping-Andersen (2009: 9) puts it "pension reform begins with babies" and pro-natal policies (along with net-immigration) are the main reason why Denmark (along with the other Scandinavian countries) has faced lees demographic pressure compared to other European countries, as their TFR's have remained comparatively high (Andersen & Hatland, 2014).

However, in China there is little institutional support for women who choose to have two children. Childcare in China continues to be a mixed regime; families are considered as the main providers of childcare and the government merely plays a residual role.

Due to the lack of policies to provide protection and support for families, young women are likely to experience problems when entering the labour market, as companies are reluctant to pay for repeated maternity leave and could therefore discriminate against young women. Since the abolition of the one-child policy, China's ranking in the World Economic Forum's global index of gender parity has fallen from 87th (2014) to 100th (2017) (World Economic Forum, 2014; 2017). Supporting women in their endeavours to raise a family and at the same time have a career is a necessary step to achieve balanced demographic development.

The traditional role of grandparents has been to care for grandchildren, which lessens the need for social welfare. However, considering that, the proportion of grandchildren to

grandparents is declining quite drastic (according to Fig. 1); grandparents are at risk of being 'underutilized', if the retirement age remains unchanged.

It seems that Chinese social welfare is at a crossroads, the system had not yet adapted to the demographic changes, which could potentially leave a great deal of elderly people outside the labour market and with no other utility, as well as many families with only one child because the system does not support their endeavours to have two.

The experiences of the development of the Danish pension system have been explored, with the aim of seeing to what extent they can add insights that are useful for the development of a sustainable approach to population ageing in China.

It is evident from studying the Danish approach to demographic changes that pensions are not the sole focus; stimulating labour force participation, creating initiatives to postpose retirement and work longer and enforcing pro-natal polices are all part of the solution.

This might be the greatest lesson to be learned from Denmark; it is unlikely that a sole focus on the elderly cohort will be enough to stem the demographic transition in China. There is a need to create a comprehensive policy approach, which addresses the demographic challenges as a many-facetted issue in society. A long-term, sustainable solution should be found in a holistic welfare state approach to ageing - as has been the case in Denmark. This is only possible if China addresses issues of care for the elderly, increasing the pension age, while at the same time addressing issues related to declining fertility and gender parity.

The changes proposed here are by no means straightforward. The Danish demographic transition has been slow and started about 100 years before the Chinese transition. Though China still has the opportunity to build social welfare and there continues to be room for socio-political reform, it will not be an easy task. As shown in Fig. 1, the demographic composition of China is changing rapidly, and the changes needed to accommodate this development will be expensive and will likely lead to some opposition.

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, changes within one policy field, may lead to greater pressure on welfare provision in other areas, for example raising the retirement age may place greater pressure on public childcare. China is nearing a crossroads in determining the relationship between family, state and market in terms of welfare provisions.

Transferring the provision of social security and care from the family to the state/community will reach beyond social policymaking. In Denmark, this development happened gradually, however, given rapid demographic change the Chinese population will have to adapt to these new citizenship rights much faster. Due to this, any pension reform must

take into consideration the capacity for adaption on a personal and societal level to secure a sustainable approach to population ageing.

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"All Under Heaven as one Family":
Tianxiaist Ideology and the emerging Chinese Great Power Identity

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Abstract

The rise of China is perhaps the most important development in world politics today. It is challenging the very foundations of the liberal international order that the Western great powers have created. Yet, as China emerges as an economic and political powerhouse with global influence, it is not at all clear what kind of a great power it will become, and what kind of a world order it sees as its ideal. Chinese official foreign policy rhetoric on the subject offers only vaguely described slogans and concepts. Another approach for studying "China's mind" is to study China's academic discourse on world politics and foreign relations. In this article, the academic debate around the concept of *tianxia* (天下. in English: all under heaven) is analyzed, in order to study the great power identities that China is constructing for itself as it prepares for a bigger role in world politics. The article argues that the "*tianxia* theory" is attempting to distance China from "the West" by creating a completely unique civilizational identity for China. The *tianxiaist* narrative argues that, because of its unique character and because of its "harmonious" and "worldly" *tianxia* conception of world politics, China can offer fresh and relevant alternatives for the international community. This is not only a concern for political philosophers, as the concepts of *tianxia* theory also seem to be influencing and inspiring the foreign policy thinking of the Chinese government.

Keywords: Tianxia theory, tianxiaism, Chinese foreign policy, Chinese great power identity

Introduction

The rise of China is perhaps the most important development in world politics today. It is challenging the foundations of the international order the Western great powers have created. The rise has recently gained even more momentum as the leading superpower, the United States, seems to be backing away from its international commitments and is offering China even more responsibility in global affairs. China appears to be ready too – in the words of President Xi Jinping: "China [is] moving closer to center stage and making greater contributions to mankind" (*China Daily,* 2018).

Yet, a saying goes that "China's mind has been left behind of its body". In other words, as China emerges as an economic and political powerhouse with far reaching influence, it is not

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at all clear what kind of a great power it will become, and what exactly would be its "great contributions to mankind".

During the early decades of the People's Republic (1949–1978), the Chinese interpretation of Marxism, *Maoism,* offered a consistent identity, as well as a worldview for China. It answered such questions as who the Chinese were (vanguards of the world proletarian revolution), who they were against (capitalists, imperialists, and other class enemies), and what was their plan for the world was (a world communist utopia). After Maoism was practically abandoned in the 1980's, China projected its energies into developing its economy. Questions about its identity could wait, for the time being.

Now that China is moving into "the center stage", these kinds of question are surfacing again. How can a giant state like China be peacefully incorporated into the international system, and what kind of world will China want to create as it emerges as a global rule maker? The official Communist Party rhetoric offers only vaguely-described concepts and slogans as answers. For going beyond this bold yet hollow rhetoric, this article suggests analyzing Chinese academic discussions on world politics as a means for deepening and expanding our understanding of official Chinese foreign policy.

Questions like the ones above are being widely discussed by scholars of world politics in China, and it is a growing consensus that China should not rely on Western ideas for analyzing the world anymore. Instead, it should develop its own theories and concepts, as it possesses a long and illustrious intellectual tradition which goes back thousands of years from which to draw inspiration. Thus, during the early 2000's, a search for a "Chinese theory of world politics" intensified. Studying these "new" ideas offers important insights into Chinese conceptions of world politics and into the new identities which are being constructed for the rising China. These ideas are also not of mere academic, theoretical, or philosophical interest, as they are increasingly influencing the official foreign policy imagination of the Chinese government.

For example, Yan Xuetong's "Qinghua School" of international relations studies ancient Chinese political philosophers such as Xunzi (ca. 310–237 BCE) and Han Feizi (ca. 279–239 BCE) and applies their ideas on "moral leadership" and the "kingly way of governance" to the contemporary world political situation (Yan, 2011). Another important branch of this search is the *tianxia* theory (天下论, *tianxia lun*) or *tianxiaism* (天下主义, *tianxia zhuyi*). *Tianxia* theorists study imperial China's traditional system of foreign relations, claiming that the current international order, which is based on competing national states, should be replaced with some kind of world government that would oversee the good of the whole planet.

This kind of new thinking is important as, in the strictly controlled academic environment of China, it can be seen as an enlargement of the "official" political discourse which is dominated by the Communist Party of China. The party controls the broad direction of academia, yet the dominant ideas flow back to influence the political leadership in a dualistic, two-way relationship. The party, which is shedding its ideological skin, needs the input of academic circles as it is forming a new identity and a new outlook for China after communism (Mokry, 2018).

This article will study these academic visions of world politics, focusing on the *tianxia* theory. The discussion around the *tianxia* theory offers fascinating views into the emerging great power identities of the rising China. At a closer look, it resembles a complete ideology – rather than a scientific theory – with its own political worldview and a normative program for creating a new cosmopolitan world order.

Interestingly, these *tianxiaist* ideas seem to be inspiring China's official foreign policy too, at least on the rhetorical level. In addition to analyzing the worldview and the core concepts of the *tianxiaist* ideology, the article attempts to point out how these same ideas are offering support for the Chinese government as it constructs its grand narrative of a benign and peacefully-rising China with its unique and "worldly" solutions for reforming the international order. This connection is briefly examined in the last section. In the article, *tianxia* theory is approached as a form of political rhetoric, following the conceptual framework proposed by Quentin Skinner and Michael Freeden.

What is the tianxia theory?
Tianxia, roughly translated, means "all under heaven". It points to an ancient Chinese conception of the world in which everything – literally all under heaven – was considered to be under the authority of the Chinese Emperor, the Son of Heaven (天子, *tianzi*). According to this cosmology, the supreme god, Heaven bestowed a mandate on the emperor to rule the Earth (the so-called "Mandate of Heaven"), but only as long as he ruled it righteously.

Tianxia theorists study this traditional cosmology, and their core claim is that, for most of its history, China indeed was the center of a unique, East Asian international order, "the *tianxia* order". This order was strictly hierarchic and centrally organized, but it was also a "harmonious" and loose system, allowing for cultural diversity and autonomy within its domain. It was an alternative system for organizing international relations before the Western great powers forced their Westphalian order upon the world. According to *tianxiaist* thinkers, studying the principles and institutions of this ancient order might offer a lot of insight for

solving the various problems that globalization has intensified: extreme nationalism, international terrorism, or global warming, to name just a few (Sheng, 2014). One could briefly describe *tianxiaism* as a Chinese variant of cosmopolitanism.

Historians, however, debate whether such a unique system ever existed. Without going too deeply into the details, a compromise can be made that, at least during some parts of history (the early Tang, Ming, and Qing Dynasties), China's foreign relations were arranged hierarchically around a "tributary system" in which the smaller political entities acknowledged China's supremacy (at least rhetorically) and received autonomy and economic benefits in return. Even during periods of when China was weak and this was not the case, Chinese emperors did still hold an idealistic, Sinocentric cosmology of being the Sons of Heaven, ruling all under heaven.[1]

This *tianxia* cosmology – even if at times in contradiction with reality – dominated the worldview and philosophy of the Chinese Empire for thousands of years, up until the 19th century when the Western great powers arrived with technologically-advanced gunboats and forced its downfall. The Western political cosmology differed considerably from *tianxia*. It was based on an idea of equal sovereign nation states which would interact within the international system according to certain universal laws and institutions. Competition, diplomacy, trade, and war were all integral parts of this Western international system, which was formalized in the treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (Zheng, 2011).

During the 19th century, China had to learn the hard way that its worldview of being the center of "all under heaven" had been a complete delusion. During these painful years, China was forced to accept that, instead of being the center of everything under heaven, it was simply another state (国, *guo*) within the larger system of states (万国, *wanguo*). The concept of *tianxia* was slowly replaced with the Western concept of the world (世界, *shijie*). Other new concepts such as the nation (民族, *minzu*), the Chinese (中国人, *Zhongguoren*), and the people (人民, *renmin*) had to be invented, as in the all-embracing world conception of *tianxia* there had been neither place nor need for such ideas (Zheng, 2011).

After the revolution of 1911 and the establishment of the Republic of China, China fully acknowledged the principles of the Western international order. It set its aims to become a "normal" modernized nation state and pushed the old cosmology of *tianxia* aside. The creation of the Communist People's Republic of China in 1949 seemed to finalize this disengagement

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[1] For a modern classic that set the stage for studying this 'Chinese world order', see Fairbank 1968

from the imperial past. Indeed, during the reign of Chairman Mao Zedong (1949–1976), all traditional thinking was heavily criticized and even physical objects such as statues or buildings – most notably perhaps the home of Confucius – were demolished (Paltemaa & Vuori, 2012).

After the death of Mao in 1976 and the rise in power of the pragmatically oriented Deng Xiaoping, China was finally stabilized. Economic reforms were launched and strict Maoism was pushed aside, both in practice and in theory; China initiated its search for a new, post-communist identity. In this process, traditional culture and philosophy were slowly rehabilitated and, since the 1990's, large scale research projects on Confucianism, for example, have been heavily funded by the government (Brady, 2012).

It is against this "traditional learning fever" that we witness the re-emergence of the *tianxia* worldview. This was first mentioned by Sheng Hong in a short but influential article *From nationalism to tianxiaism* (从民族主义到天下主义，*Cong minzuzhuyi dao tianxiazhuyi*) in 1996, but was brought into the mainstream by Zhao Tingyang with his 2005 book *Tianxia system* (天下体系:世界制度哲学导论, *Tianxia tixi: Shijie zhidu zhexue daolun*) After the publication of Zhao's book, the *tianxia* theory was noted also in the West, and many notable sinologists such as William Callahan (2008) and Peter Perdue (2015) have commented on it.

Both Sheng and Zhao suggest that the traditional Chinese *tianxia* order, with its centralized leadership and its hierarchically arranged international relations, would be more stable and peaceful than the current "liberal order" of equal and sovereign nation states in endless competition against one another. They argue that *tianxia* was forgotten during the decades of Western supremacy, but it is now time to resurrect the concept, for it might just save the planet from the enormous challenges of globalization.

Zhao and Sheng are the main proponents of *tianxiaism*, but the idea has been commented on and developed by many other scholars, such as Ren Xiao, Li Mingming, Bai Tongdong, and Xu Jilin. Among these scholars, a vibrant discussion on the possibilities and prospects for the *tianxia* cosmology has emerged. However, strong critics of the concept have also taken part in such discussions (Ge, 2015).

Even though the word that is often used by the discussants is *tianxia* 'theory', one must ask if it is indeed an actual theory in the usual understanding of the concept. *Tianxia* theory does not seem to offer a precise framework for explaining how world politics functions in the manner of *neorealism,* for example. It is much more about sharply criticizing Western politics and proposing vague schemes for a global federation of some kind. Therefore, *tianxia* theory

can perhaps be better understood as an ideology of *tianxiaism*, with its philosophical worldview and its normative framework for guiding action.

How then to approach an ideological construct such as *tianxiaism*? As Quentin Skinner, among many others, has pointed out, political theories – as well as political ideas – are not pieces of timeless cumulative wisdom. They are arguments in debates, embedded in their particular historical and sociopolitical contexts, and they should be studied as such (Skinner, 2002). This is the case also with theories of world politics, as no universal agreement on the nature of world politics exists. What we have instead is different kinds of theories and -isms, offering their distinctive interpretations and normative arguments.

Keeping this in mind, we must ask: why is the ancient concept of *tianxia* being brought forth right now, at this moment in history? What is the historical context, and what are the debates in which it is taking part? I would argue that, for the *tianxia* theory (and for the "Chinese theories of world politics" at large), the context is the ongoing change in global great power relations: China is rising, and the Western powers are declining – at least comparatively. A rising great power will need its own interpretation and narrative of the world, and its own identity: where does it come from, and where is it heading? What shall its contribution for the world be?

We can, thus, define *tianxiaism* as an ideology that argues for the reform of the international order. In this article, a conceptual approach inspired by Michael Freeden is applied, to analyze it. According to Freeden, ideologies should be approached by studying the main concepts that are in use within them. It is through the definition and arranging in the order of its core concepts that an ideology relates itself to other ideologies and to the world (Freeden, 2003).

Although the *tianxia* theorists differ on many accounts, many points of agreement and many similar definitions of the concepts also exist. In this article, following Freeden, these areas of agreement are studied, in order to identify the main elements of *tianxiaism* and to recognize the essential beliefs and assumptions that make up its worldview. The research data consists of monographs, as well as articles in leading Chinese journals, such as *World Economy and Politics* (世界经济与政治, *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*), which discuss and develop the *tianxia* theory and its concepts. Using this approach, a rather coherent picture of *tianxiaism* can be constructed.

One of the central themes that the theorists agree upon is that *tianxia*, whatever it is, was completely different from "the West". Thus, when explaining *tianxia's* merits, critical descriptions and narratives of "the West" and its seemingly eternal features constantly emerge. The West works as a reflective concept: it is an anti-China, in which all the aspects which are

not part of China's can be stacked. The West is "the other" in which China reflects itself as it attempts to create a unique great power identity for itself.

This is, by no means, a new phenomenon in Chinese thinking. For example, Fei Xiaotong's classic sociological study *From the Soil* (乡土中国, *Xiangtu Zhongguo*) specifically explained China's societal idiosyncrasies by comparing them to their Western counterparts. Fei argued that Western and Chinese societies operate on completely different principles, and it does not make sense to apply Western sociological theories in the Chinese context. One of the most important Chinese philosophers of the 20th century, Liang Shuming, claimed in a similar fashion that:

> Chinese people will never gain a clear understanding if they only remain within the structures of Chinese society; if only they first look to others and then at themselves, then they will immediately understand (quoted in Lu & Zhao 2009: 52)

The main premise of Liang's most important work, *Substance of Chinese Culture* (中国文化要义, *Zhongguo wenhua yaoyi*), was to compare the Chinese and Western civilizations and their cultural origins.

In order to understand *tianxiaism*, we will thereby first have to take a look at its historical narrative of the West. We will then examine how this is "West" is contrasted with *tianxia* and what kind of a great power identity is thus proposed for the rising China. In the last section, these ideas are briefly compared to the prevailing foreign policy concepts of Chinese leadership.

West – The civilization of chaos

According to Zhao Tingyang, it is because of the independent historical and philosophical foundations of the West and China that both civilizations developed completely different political worldviews, thought systems, and institutional arrangements (Zhao, 2011). The current world order was created by the Western great powers according to their own historically contingent image and conception of international politics. It is, thereby, not "universal", and nor does it offer the best possible system for organizing international politics. On the contrary, it is actually the very source of the global troubles which become more acute every day.

According to most accounts, the current international order developed after its main elements (the sovereignty of national states, diplomacy, etc.) were institutionalized in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The order then spread all over the world, forcing all other political units and regional arrangements to accept its logic (Bull & Watson, 1985). Zhao argues that the seed of the same system can be found in the city state (*polis*) system of Ancient Greece. It is in the

polis-system that the Western conception of world politics was initially created: a conception in which the political world was divided into small units which would compete against one another (Zhao, 2016).

Sheng Hong points out that China was in a similar situation during its "warring states period" (475–221 BCE.). It was divided into small independent kingdoms which fought and fiercely competed against one another. China, however, managed to unify and pacify the warring states in 221 BCE by creating the Chinese Empire, and it has been able to uphold this unification until today. The West, on the other hand, has remained in its own "warring states" period throughout most of its history and, more dangerously, has forced this "warring states logic" upon the rest of the world (Sheng, 1996).

Because of this historical trajectory, the *tianxiaist* argument goes, the West is only capable of imagining international politics through nation states and their interactions. In the Western mind, above the national state there is only the level of "*internationalness*" (国际, *guoji*), not the world as a whole political unit, like in China's *tianxia*.

The West has never been able to overcome this kind of "dividing conception of politics" (Zhao, 2016:). Even such illustrious philosophers as Immanuel Kant have failed to think in *tianxia*-like global terms. Kant's cosmopolitan vision, as laid out in the book *For Perpetual Peace* (*Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf*), is only a world federation of nation states, and for Zhao, it was under the influence of Western, narrow minded tradition of world politics (Zhao, 2011).

For the West, the world is simply a geographical concept. It is an arena in which sates can draw their borders, compete, and continue their destructive tendencies. Zhao argues that, from the Chinese perspective of *tianxia*, there is a "non-world" (非世界, *fei shijie*) or a "chaotic world" (乱世, *luanshi*). As a result of this conception of the world, the current international order also operates according to a "Hobbesian law of jungle", and the West is incapable of stabilizing it. On the other hand, it does not even want to, as it sees the order and its competitive character as natural, and even desirable. The West hopes to correct the flaws of the order by making the competition more market-based and civilized, but by leaves the logic of division intact (ibid.).

Zhao offers the United Nations as a case in point. On the surface, it might seem like a genuine world institution, but it is merely a forum for the nation states to gain benefits for themselves. The interest of the whole world is absent from its scope, and hence it is "an agora without its polis" (Zhao, 2009).

Zhao (2016) and Li Mingming (2011) both agree that the West has only been able to imagine two ways to bring stability to the Westphalian chaos: the first is by setting up a hegemony of one great power which will dominate all others. This can be efficient for some time, but the hegemon will never have the acceptance of everybody, and mutinies against it will always emerge. The hegemony will, sooner or later, end up collapsing back into an all-out war. The second way is to set up a "balance of power" between the great powers and their alliances. This is also an unstable situation, as it will eventually burst into wars of massive scale. And, even during peaceful times, the risk of a great power war is always lingering (Zhao, 2016). The Western world order is, thereby, always on the verge of collapse, and the West – because of its philosophical roots – is unable to see the core problem

According to Zhao, the Western institutional arrangement, based on the "warring states logic", is, however, not the only problem, since the Western ethical vision of the world is also limited because of its monotheist origins. When Christianity emerged, the Western worldview ceased to develop towards a universal happiness between the humans on the Earth. With Christianity, Zhao goes on, this utopian society was moved into the afterlife, heaven, but on the planet, the mission was set to convert everybody to the one true faith (Zhao, 2011: 33).

Zhao sees Christianity as an intolerant religion whose main effect is to sharply divide the world into the world of Christianity and the world of the pagans. Zhao argues that, even though Christianity has lost its influence as a political theory in Western thinking, its legacy of dualist "confrontational thinking" has not. It is because of this legacy that the West is constantly searching for "others" to suppress or transform into its own image (Zhao, 2011).

This "confrontational thinking" has, since, taken many different forms. It can be found in Carl Schmitt's concept of "enemy consciousness" and in his metaphor of "politics as warfare". This same attitude also influences Western countries (especially the United States), as they keep spreading their "universal values" (Ibid.). Because of the legacy of Christianity and its dualist worldview, the West sees its own conception of world politics as the only and universal one. The current Western international order is, then, like the Christendom of the old, and every state and culture in it must be converted into its "universal" principles, values, and doctrines.

From these core elements, a sinister image of the West is narrated. According to this image, the perils of the international order – wars, conflicts, and competition – are the results of Western worldview which is based on divisions and opposites. The West is not able to see the whole, and nor can it ever tolerate a diversity of values and beliefs. From the point of view of *tianxiaism*, the perils of the international order, hence, do not originate from a fixed human

nature or any other inevitably determined source. They could and should be overcome with a new *tianxia* system.

Within this narrative, the concept of the West is never problematized or even defined clearly. It is taken as a civilizational entity with its essential elements, in the same manner as in Samuel Huntington's theory of the "Clash of Civilizations". The civilization of the West is filled with all the elements that are not part of the Chinese civilization, and this image is then used as a mirror for creating the unique alternative order of *tianxia*.

China – The civilization of peace and harmony

According to the *tianxiaist* narrative described above, the Western conception of politics developed around nation states and their interactions. The Chinese conception of politics, on the contrary, developed from the viewpoint of the whole world as a political unit and the Chinese ideal has, since the dawn of history, been that 'all under heaven' should be unified and pacified.

Zhao argues that the *tianxia* conception first emerged during early Zhou-dynasty (1046–771 BCE), when a loose feudal order – *fengjian* (封建) – was created. Within this system, the Zhou court served as a leading center, and the various feudal states, tribes, and bands accepted its central status. The feudal states had a high degree of autonomy in their domestic policies, so the Zhou court's main task was to maintain the stability, peace, and prosperity of the whole realm. Zhao argues that this was an ideal situation: instead of constant war and insecurity, the whole known world was unified, yet remained a diverse and harmonious whole (Zhao, 2010).

Sheng Hong offers a different starting point for *tianxia*. For him, *tianxia* emerged much later, during China's Han-dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), when the warring states were pacified and unified under one emperor (Sheng, 1996). The centralized empire of the Han is clearly different from the loose feudal system of the Zhou, but the core idea is the same for both Sheng and Zhao: the whole known world was united and considered to be one political unit. The competition of sovereign, regional units was seen as a dangerous, unstable anomaly which should never again be allowed to re-emerge.

Tianxiaists argue that, because of this historical tradition, Chinese political thinking evolved towards a worldly approach to politics. It valued stability over liberty, peace over war, and hierarchy over anarchy. For Zhao, the difference is evident in the etymologies of the concepts of politics in both civilizations. The Western concept of 'politics' originates from the name of the Greek city state, *polis*, whereas the Chinese word *zhengzhi* (政治) means

'governance', more broadly. The main political question for China was, from the beginning, how to harmonize and pacify the whole world (Zhao, 2010).

From the point of view of *tianxia* cosmology, the collapse of the world into smaller competing entities means chaos (乱, *luan*). Li Mingming has argued, that because of this experience, the Chinese have developed a mass-psychological "order complex" which forces China to analyze world politics from the point of view of "order". Peaceful chaos, such as in the liberal international order of our day, is not "order" in a Chinese sense, as a kind of "ethical order" also has to exist in the world (Li, 2011).

What does this ethical order mean? Whereas the Western concept for the world is only geographical, the Chinese concept of the world, *tianxia*, consists of three important aspects:

First, like the Western concept, *tianxia* also means the geographical world: all under heaven and thus all the geographical formations in it. Second, it has a (social) psychological meaning. *Tianxia* included all the people under heaven and, for *tianxia* to enjoy peace and prosperity, all the people needed to acknowledge its legitimacy. For the emperor to obtain his mandate to rule all under heaven, it was not enough to simply conquer all the territories through warfare. One had to obtain the approval of the world, the so-called "will of the people" (人心, *renxin*) (Zhao, 2016).

Third, *tianxia* bears an ethical or political meaning. *Tianxia* was considered to be an ethical order, resembling a big family (天下一家, *tianxia yijia*). The emperor was thought to be like a respected father who was expected to wield his power righteously. Smaller political entities were the "children", which would need to demonstrate their submission, but which would also enjoy the security and economic benefits offered by the emperor (Ren, 2014).

Tianxia was a complete cosmology in which all and everything, humans and nature, had their rightful places under the emperor's protective shadow. Indeed, according to *tianxiaism*, an important element was that there was "no outside" (无外, *wuwai*). Because *tianxia* covered everything, it could not have clear outer borders, and nor could it leave anyone outside of it. *Tianxia*, therefore, did not have pagans or "others" which it would need to convert or repress (Zhao, 2011). Peoples living far away from the center were considered to be "strangers", but not heretics who needed to be conquered or converted. As one traveled further from the center, the might of the emperor withered, but there was never a clear outer border (Ren, 2014).

Tianxia was a hierarchical and relational world order, and the Western concept of sovereignty was simply not comprehensible within it. Instead of sovereign units, different kinds of relations between the center and the political units around it existed. Some were close and

intimate, some friendly, and some more distant (Ren, 2014). Because *tianxia* was based on relations of varying intimacy between the political entities instead of clear-cut borders, nationalism was also an unknown concept within it. Nationalism, and all of its curses, arrived in China only with the Westerners, and after the collapse of *tianxia* (Sheng, 1996).

In a striking contrast to the West, *tianxia* is also presented as a realm of cultural diversity, as it is claimed to have allowed religious, cultural, and ethnic heterodoxy to exist within it. Different religions, such as Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, and even Christianity were all allowed coexist. *Tianxia*, however, did make a distinction between the civilized center and the barbarian people living on the rim. But, according to *tianxiaist* interpretation, the center never attempted to forcibly proselytize the barbarians. Instead of converting them, China believed in a patient "transformation" (化, *hua*) of the barbarians. This meant that, given time, the barbarians would witness the cultural supremacy of the center, and would slowly adopt its civilized ways (Ren, 2014).

An important element of this transformation is that "one does not go and teach the rites" (礼不往教, *li bu wang jiao*). In general, using force for achieving *any* needs was considered to be shameful, as this meant that the emperor's virtuous conduct had not been enough (Ren, 2014). The *tianxiaist* narrative sets this defensive and morally superior attitude in stark contrast with that of the West, with its aggressive tendency of forcing "universal ideas" upon others, and most definitely with weapons if necessary.

Li Mingming has argued that these differences originate from different conceptions of human nature. Western civilization sees human nature as evil and power hungry. Thus, the Western conception of world politics follows: the world is an anarchic battleground of states fighting for power and hegemony. China, on the other hand, has always believed in a gradual change: human nature is open and it can be cultivated through proper education and with a proper virtuous example. The Chinese conception of world politics is similarly optimistic and cooperative in nature (Li, 2011).

Central elements of Tianxiaism

To sum up the above, the worldview of *tianxiaism* presents a grand narrative of two civilizations, the West and China, which evolved in very different directions during the course of history. Both civilizations developed their own philosophies and value systems, as well as unique institutional solutions for the political realities surrounding them. The Western solution was efficient for some time, but now, during the era of globalization, it has run out of steam. It

needs to be replaced with the long-forgotten *tianxia* solution, which is better suited for the globalized world politics of the future.

According to the *tianxiaist* argument, China was once the center of its own order which was, in many important ways, superior to the current Western order. But, because of its peaceful nature, the *tianxia* order could not resist the "warring state" logic of the West, and it had to surrender. After the fall of *tianxia*, the West was able to force its own world order upon the globe (Sheng, 1996).

The core of this narrative is that, historically, China has not been a great power like the others. Similarly, the zero-sum great power competition of the modern world is only a Western phenomenon, and a result of regional developments in the West. Already, thousands of years ago, China had overcome of this kind of mentality, and instead contemplated politics in worldly terms. The traditional Chinese *tianxia* conception thus superseded the *realpolitik* logic of world politics, and it could be resurrected again for the salvation of the world.

From the comparison of the two civilizations, a table of value concepts can be made:

Table 1.

China / Tianxia	The West
Stability / Order	Chaos
Hierarchy	Anarchy
Harmony	Competition
Acceptance of difference	Confrontational thinking
'No outside'	Strict division between units
World	State
Family	Individual

Source: Author's own work

By such an interpretation of history, *tianxiaism* attempts to unite modern China with its glorious imperial past. The values of *tianxiaism* can then be understood as values for China's "new" great power identity. It is an identity of a great power that has a unique, peaceful, and worldly approach to world politics. It is a great power which strives for stability, yet also cherishes harmony and cultural and political diversity within the world.

Tianxia, although peaceful and tolerant, did, however, have a center of authority to which all the smaller political units had to pledge loyalty and submission. *Tianxiaists* also generally propose that a kind of world institution should be established, but nowhere in the discussion is it explicitly stated that China should establish this new center. Yet, it is impossible not to gain the impression that the rising China should strive for such a position, because the West is unable to see a solution for the troubles of the globalized world. It is the task of China to realize on a global scale the harmonious and peaceful order it commanded for millennia. After the long and tormentous years of foreign intrusion and inner instability, China is now finally returning to reclaim its title as a middle kingdom, *Zhongguo* (中国).

Tianxiaism and China's Foreign policy

At the end, we should briefly return to the original premise of this article; that is, what kind of a great power is China going to become, and what kind of a world order is its top leadership dreaming of? And how does the study of Chinese academic ideas on world politics, such as *tianxiaism*, help us to decipher the official foreign policy thinking of the Chinese leadership?

These questions will be discussed in detail elsewhere (Puranen, *upcoming*) but, to put it briefly, the relationship between *tianxiaism* and China's official foreign policy line is not straightforward yet it is recognizable. The official rhetoric of the Chinese government does not apply the exact same wording, and nor does it directly quote any of the *tianxia* theorists. However, many implicit elements of *tianxiaism* can be found below the surface. Already, during the reign of President Hu Jintao (2002–2012), such core foreign policy concepts as the "harmonious world" (和谐世界, *hexie shijie*) and a "new type of great power relationship" (新型大国关系, *xinxing daguoguo guanxi*) were introduced. Both imply a world order in which political units and even civilizations would coexist peacefully, respecting each other's unique characters. States, and especially great powers, should focus on building mutual trust and "win-win cooperation" and the dangerous, competitive, Cold War mentality should be set aside (Keith, 2012).

During the tenure of President Xi Jinping (2012 onwards) the general tone of Chinese foreign policy rhetoric has become more assertive and confident. A turn from "the discourse of humiliation" into "the discourse of rejuvenation" is taking place; a shift in identity from the "modest, victimized, developing country China" into a "confident and assertive great power China" is happening. At the same time, the rhetoric has gained even more cosmopolitan and – one could say – *tianxiaist* overtones. (Mokry, 2018)

The main foreign policy concept of President Xi Jinping, and also the best concept to define Xi's vision for the future international order, is the "community of common future for mankind" (人类命运共同体, *renlei mingyun gongtongti,* thereby CCFM)[2]. According to this idea, the international community will be more and more tightly tied together during the age of globalization, and all the states should let go of their grievances and concentrate on economic and political cooperation. Although the concept is rather vaguely described, the vision of a harmonious *tianxia* can be easily recognized as the inspiration for the concept, and Xi Jinping himself has described CCFM using the *tianxiaist* concept of "all under heaven as a one family" (CCTV, 2017).

Remarkably, officially or semi-officially sanctioned Chinese scholarship which interprets the meaning of the CCFM usually confirms the *tianxia* cosmology as one of its core elements. For example, a recent book *Building a community of shared future for mankind*, whose publication has been overseen by Renmin University Communist Party General Secretary Jin Nuo, argues that the philosophical sources of CCFM can be traced to, firstly, the traditional Chinese *tianxia* worldview; secondly, to the ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics; and thirdly, to modern Chinese experiences in diplomacy. The book states poetically that "when the great way prevails, all things under heaven are shared equally and justly" and that this traditional ideal "communicates the Chinese sense of responsibility that goes beyond national boundaries" (Chen & Pu, 2017: 21).

An article written by Jiang Shihong, a Professor of Law at Peking University, offers another interesting example of a semi-officially sanctioned scholarship on China's foreign policy. In his article, Jiang interprets the lengthy speech given by Xi Jinping at the Nineteenth Party Congress held in Beijing in October 2017 in which Xi described China's new ideology of "socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era" (新时代中国特色社会主义思想, *xinshidai Zhongguo tese shehuizhuyi sixiang*). Jiang argues that the foreign policy components of China's new ideology is drawn from Marxism, but also from China's historical tradition, especially from the *tianxia* cosmology. He goes even further by claiming that the communism that the party is striving to build is actually the age old Confucian ideal of the "great unity under heaven" (天下大同, *tianxia datong*) (Jiang, 2018). Marxism and *tianxiaism* thus seem to coexist peacefully in the ideology and foreign policy of China's "new era".

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[2] Interestingly, the official English translation uses the word "future", although the original Chinese term 命运 (*mingyun*) means 'destiny' or 'fate'.

Non-Chinese scholars such as Jyrki Kallio and Didi Kirsten Tatlow have arrived at similar conclusions. Kallio points out that Chinese scholars such as Jiang would not dare to "go out in public explaining the national leader's thoughts" unless they had some backing from the high level of Chinese leadership for their ideas. Kallio thus sees *tianxiaism* as influencing the thoughts of Xi Jinping and the Communist party leadership at large (Kallio, 2018). For Tatlow, *tianxiaist* ideas are not simply a concern of rhetoric or ideology, as they are already evident in the actual methods and strategies of Chinese foreign policy (Tatlow 2018).

Conclusions

To conclude, it can be argued that the Chinese leadership is tapping into various different ideational sources as it is modernizing its great power identity. Officially sanctioned academic debates on China's position in world politics are one such source, and the article argues that the analysis and understanding of these debates and the prevailing ideas in them forms an important part of illuminating the "black box" of Chinese foreign policy thinking.

Tianxiaism can be seen as an ideational resource which is helping China's leadership primarily in writing a new grand narrative of world politics – a narrative that differentiates China from the West and the core elements of the Western international order which China wants to reform. With foreign policy concepts inspired by *tianxiaism*, China wants to argue that it has always had a unique approach to world politics, and that it can thereby offer a relevant alternative vision for the whole of mankind. Underdeveloped, and even clumsy as a proper theoretical argument, *tianxiaism* still serves well as a powerful rhetorical device in this project of China's search for discursive power (话语权, *huayu quan*) on the world stage.

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China's Stadium Diplomacy and its Determinants:
A Typological Investigation of Soft Power

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Abstract

Since 1958, China has constructed over 140 sports facilities around the world. Previous research into stadium diplomacy lacks definitional clarity, has not systematically investigated the phenomenon, and crucially, has failed to explain why China employs stadium diplomacy where it does. This article defines the phenomenon and locates all known cases without temporal or geographic restrictions. We create a classification system and typology, permitting a comparison of theoretically-like types to develop and test a multi-determinant theory. We find empirical evidence that China employs stadium diplomacy to secure natural resources and to secure diplomatic recognition in line with the One-China policy. These findings have important implications for scholarship into the use of soft power within interstate rivalry, and the methodology demonstrates that a clear typology of soft power which is mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive can be created and is informative.

Keywords: China, stadium diplomacy, soft power, interstate rivalry

Introduction[1]

Several dozen photographers and reporters hurried into position while onlookers jostled for view, dodging the earthmovers and dust of the construction site. The President's limousine was pulling up, but no one had come to see him. Lionel Messi was here! The best player of the world's most popular game was in Port-Gentil, Gabon, a world away from his home in Barcelona, to lay the cornerstone of China's newest stadium (Djellit, 2015). Just the latest example of China's stadium diplomacy, a soft-power push dating back to 1958, reaching from Antigua, to Vanuatu, to Dar es Salaam.

Stadium diplomacy is a form of check book diplomacy invented by and almost entirely unique to China, whereby the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) funds the construction of sports facilities as one option among many on a menu from which recipient states select their

preferred infrastructure projects. Other projects on offer include roads, bridges, and even government buildings (Brautigam, 2009). This phenomenon has never been systematically investigated nor convincingly explained with sufficient scholarly rigour, leaving unanswered why China employs stadium diplomacy where it does, and which determinants guide its use. This analysis, for the first time, operationally defines stadium diplomacy in order to determine whether soft power is or is not in play; locates 142 cases in 61 countries to identify and measure soft power. It classifies all observed cases within a typology with clearly defined domains and criteria for failure. And it identifies patterns between typological groups to develop and test an issue-based, multi-determinant theoretical explanation that China employs stadium diplomacy to secure friends and resources. Additionally, by delineating mutually exclusive typological groups capable of guiding future case selection, this methodological approach offers international relations scholars a generalizable framework to operationalize and investigate other forms and uses of soft power.

This empirical investigation into the determinants of China's stadium diplomacy is particularly timely. China's rise and its disruptive potential is often considered in terms of China's material capacity. Yet, China's soft power, the ability to get other countries to want what it wants through attraction as opposed to coercion (Nye, 1990), is perceived as ineffective: coming last in a ranking of thirty states, behind minor-powers such as New Zealand and the Czech Republic (McClory, 2015: 25). As a rising superpower, China actively seeks to increase its soft power (Li, 2009: 1), and anecdotal evidence suggests stadium diplomacy may be an effective, scalable form of soft power for China.

Theoretical Foundations

Scholars' understanding of power's sources, its scope, and its use has progressed beyond Dahl's (1957: 201) A making B do what B would otherwise not. One of the most significant theoretical advances has been the identification of an alternative, an attractive, form of power (Nye, 1990). To wield soft power is to "achieve desired outcomes because others want what you want," (Nye, 1999) with a state's culture, ideology, and values attracting others to follow it; to borrow its techniques and experiences; to emulate its example; to admire its values and traditions; to seek to achieve its level of development and prosperity (Nye, 2002: 8-11; Vuving, 2009: 8-12). States seeking major-power or great-power status must be able to use both hard and soft power in the international system, much as a three-dimensional chess player's success depends on her ability to simultaneously play both horizontally and vertically (Nye, 2004: 72).

Within traditional soft power scholarship, however, there exists both a conceptual and a logical hurdle which together hold back theoretical progression. In conceiving soft power, Nye makes a clear distinction between soft power and economic power, which he considers coercive (Nye, 2002: 8-11); though whether this distinction between economic and soft power even exists, and if it does where that dividing line is, remains unspecified (Li, 2009). Indeed, the US does not wield hegemonic power through "guns and Hollywood alone" (Mead, 2009). Rather it uses economic power in ways other states find attractive, not coercive (e.g. humanitarian disaster assistance). Secondly, it is logically unclear why culture, ideology, and values must be the source(s) of attractive power, as Nye (1990: 11) insists. Indeed, certain cultures, ideologies, and values may be repulsive, depending upon the audience.

The deficiencies of traditional soft power research suggest a deeper definitional problem. If soft power really is "like love, easy to feel but hard to define," (Nye, 1990: 11) that is problematic. Without defining the phenomenon under investigation, how can scholars 1) know whether soft power is in play, 2) measure soft power, and 3) recognize if soft power translates into policy outcomes (Li, 2009: 4)? Without these basic data, generalizable scholarship is impossible. Li (2009: 7) succinctly sums up the problem and the path forward. Instead of classifying power by its source, scholars ought to instead classify it by how it is wielded: whether power is used to attract or to coerce (Li, 2009: 7). This simple but radical rethink of 'power-used-softly' makes conceptual sense and offers the greatest analytical clarity and power, because it permits a broader range of interstate behaviour to be placed and studied within the framework of soft power.

Soft power translated into practice on-the-ground may be the best way to conceive of public diplomacy, where states promote positive and attractive images to those outside its borders by building relations and influencing foreign publics' perceptions (Melissen, 2013: 1). Culture, especially, offers an effective medium for presenting an appealing image and attracting others' admiration (Nye, 2002: 8-11), because "it is [through] cultural activities that a nation's idea of itself is best represented" to the world (US Department of State, 2005: 1). Government sponsored institutions such as the Cervantes [Spain], Goethe [Germany], or Confucius [China] Institutes of Language & Culture are perhaps the most well-known examples, but movies & television (Otmazgin, 2008; Thussu, 2013), food (Reynolds, 2012), clothing (Macleod, 2013; Ramzy, 2014), and art can also be powerful tools of value transmission and cultural attraction. When Tutankhamun's mask toured America in 1976, visitors waited in line for hours, even bringing sleeping bags, to catch sight of it (Burghart, 2006). The tour sparked 'tut-mania' in America, and everything from Egyptian hair and

makeup styles to 'tut-inspired' dances became part of the zeitgeist (Kamp, 2013). The attractive power of Egyptian culture is evident still, and it gives the regime political leeway. Internationally, Egypt is known as the land of the Nile, King Tut, and the Pyramids, not Tahrir Square or the violence following the Revolution.

The political value of cultural attraction is not lost on China's leaders. Its public diplomacy has become increasingly sophisticated over the last twenty years (Zhu, 2013: 6,16,29). China has created its own version of the American Peace Corps and brought thousands of students a year to China on university scholarships (Brautigam, 2009: 123-124). But China's most famous ambassadors, cultural or otherwise, are its pandas loaned to zoos around the world as 'panda diplomacy' (Hartig, 2013). China has proven to be pragmatic with its use of public diplomacy, and its willingness to experiment has led to novel methods of wielding soft power, including the use of sport and its facilities as public diplomacy.

The effectiveness of sports diplomacy as public diplomacy stems from sport's salience to participants and its capacity to shape public opinion (Jennings, 2011: 7). Billions participate,[2] and it bypasses verbal or written communication, making it suitable for friendship-building (Maguire, 2005: 1). However, international relations scholarship into sports diplomacy has been limited to a set of theoretically similar dyads[3] (Murray, 2013: 12), where sport plays a de-escalatory role within enduring rivalries (Diehl & Goertz, 2000: 143), especially those born feuding in which bellicose rivalrous behaviour is particularly intense (Wayman, 2000). Repeatedly selecting theoretically similar cases for investigation results in a narrow understanding of sports diplomacy. The lens of power-used-softly permits scholars to broaden the study of sports diplomacy by identifying sports facilities, beyond sport itself, as attractive forces. This creates a new theoretical intersection between sports and soft power: stadium diplomacy whose effectiveness, just as any other form of public diplomacy, depends upon engaging and attracting a broad audience (Melissen, 2013). These modern stadiums are highly visible, tangible symbols of China to even the most marginal members of society in a way that traditional (western) and more anonymous forms of assistance are not (Pazzanita, 1996: 47).

Existing theoretical explanations of China's stadium diplomacy differ on which issues-at-stake shape China's policy preferences. The dominant research programme posits that

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[2] Football alone claims more adherents than the Catholic Church (Kunz, 2007).
[3] Wrestling [Iran-USA](Chehabi, 2001; Marks, 1999); Ping pong [USA-China](Griffin, 2014); Football [Turkey-Armenia](Gunter & Rochtus, 2010); Cricket [India-Pakistan](Næss-holm, 2007); Baseball [USA-Cuba](National Security Archive at the George Washington University); Chess [USA-USSR](Edelman, 2006); 1980-84 Olympic Boycotts [USA-USSR](Goldberg, 2000).

China's engagement with the global south, and Africa in particular, is driven by pursuit of the mineral and energy resources required to maintain domestic economic growth and by extension, regime stability (The Economist, 2008a; The Economist, 2008c; Alm, 2012; Barranguet, 2010; Blenford, 2007; Ferdinand, 2012; Guest, 2009; Hawksley, 2010; Ross, 2014; Will, 2012). This resource-seeking foreign policy is informed by and contributes to Mearsheimer's (2006) China-threat theory scholarship, whose advocates explain Chinese engagement by observing that the global south is home to two thirds of the world's natural resources (Winter, 2010). The alternative research programme contends the issue-at-stake for China is diplomatic recognition in line with the One-China policy. The few states which diplomatically recognize Taiwan are disproportionately located in the comparatively resource-poor Caribbean and Oceania, and anecdotal evidence points towards a concentrated use of stadium diplomacy in these regions. For these scholars (Erikson & Chen, 2007; McElroy & Bai, 2008), the PRC's enduring rivalry with the ROC on Taiwan is key to understanding its soft-power push, and the otherwise unusual behaviour of stadium construction in minor-power states is a tool to diplomatically isolate a rival (Kurlantzick, 2007; Sheringham, 2007; Zhu, 2013).

These competing research programs identify separate issues-at-stake for China and delineate foreign policy goals which it pursues using stadium diplomacy. However, the existing scholarship has two primary short comings. It fails to develop explicit operational definitions of the phenomenon under investigation, and its hypotheses are developed deductively from limited geographic or temporal domains. This fragmented approach results in case-specific explanations which offer no generalizable insight into either China's use of soft power or the policy goals which guide it.

Inventory of Stadium Diplomacy and Initial Observations

This inventory represents the first attempt to identify all cases of stadium diplomacy regardless of where or when they were constructed, a necessary step for generalizable, empirical study. In order to distinguish between cases which are and are not available for investigation, China's stadium diplomacy is operationally defined as:

The construction or renovation of sporting facilities, funded by China, outside its borders.

If China consciously employs this soft power tool in pursuit of particular policy goals as Will (2012: 38) predicts, there should be identifiable patterns between recipient states. We use these characteristic patterns to develop a new, multi-determinant, explanatory theory of

stadium diplomacy. We employ an *ex ante* theoretical classification scheme to create a mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive scientific typology with clearly defined explanatory domains (Baily, 1994: 3), allowing us to differentiate between types (George & Bennett, 2005: 234). The classification scheme delineates and operationalizes the typological criteria (Vasquez & Valeriano, 2010: 293), permitting the typology to be tested against data and potentially falsified – crucial to any theory-building exercise (Popper, 1959: Chapter 1, section 6). Any new theory of stadium diplomacy, in order to be considered progressive, must be capable of providing domain-specific explanations of the phenomenon and guiding future empirical research (Lakatos, 1970:182-191). The methodology employed in this analysis delivers on both counts. It offers novel insight and can serve as a template for future empirical enquiry into other forms of soft power. Table 1 reports all observed cases of stadium diplomacy grouped by the recipient state.

Table 1. Inventory by State

Recipient State	n	Recipient State cont.	n
Senegal	12	Somalia	2
Ghana	6	Uganda	2
Laos	6	Vanuatu	2
Mali	6	Zimbabwe	2
Cameroon	5	Antigua & Barbuda	1
Fiji	5	Bahamas	1
Tanzania	5	Benin	1
Angola	4	Burkina Faso	1
Cambodia	4	Cape Verde	1
Samoa	4	Central African Republic	1
Sierra Leone	4	Chad	1
Zambia	4	Cook Islands	1
Congo	3	Costa Rica	1
Equatorial Guinea	3	Cote d'Ivoire	1
Gabon	3	Dominica	1
Mongolia	3	Democratic Rep. Congo	1
Papua New Guinea	3	Micronesia	1
Algeria	2	Gambia	1
Barbados	2	Guinea	1
Djibouti	2	Kiribati	1
Grenada	2	Malawi	1
Guinea Bissau	2	Mauritania	1
Jamaica	2	Mauritius	1
Kenya	2	Mozambique	1
Liberia	2	Rwanda	1
Morocco	2	Sri Lanka	1
Myanmar	2	St. Lucia	1
Nepal	2	Suriname	1
Niger	2	Syria	1
Pakistan	2	Togo	1
Seychelles	2		

Source: Authors own work

Table 1 identifies 142 cases of stadium diplomacy in 61 countries on every continent but Europe. The average distribution is 2.32 stadiums per recipient state, but 43 of 61 recipients have two or fewer, resulting in a modal distribution of one stadium per recipient state. The count data exceed the estimates of all previous authors (Alm, 2012; Barranguet, 2010) and even the most recent self-reported data by more than half (SCIO, 2011). The total number of stadiums and recipient states is not the only intriguing observation. There is also a marked acceleration in the use of stadium diplomacy which is immediately apparent in Graphs 1 and 2. Between 1958 and 1989, there are 25 identified cases (0.8 per year). From 1990-2009, there are 62 observations (3.3 per year); and from 2010 through summer 2016 there are 57 examples (8.8 per year). This acceleration of soft-power usage mirrors China's overall foreign aid expenditures (Brautigam, 2009: Chapter 6) and is in line with what one would expect to see from an economy that saw near double digit year-on-year growth for over a decade. It also suggests that China finds increasing utility in this particular form of soft power

Graph 1. Cumulative Stadium Diplomacy by Region (n=142)
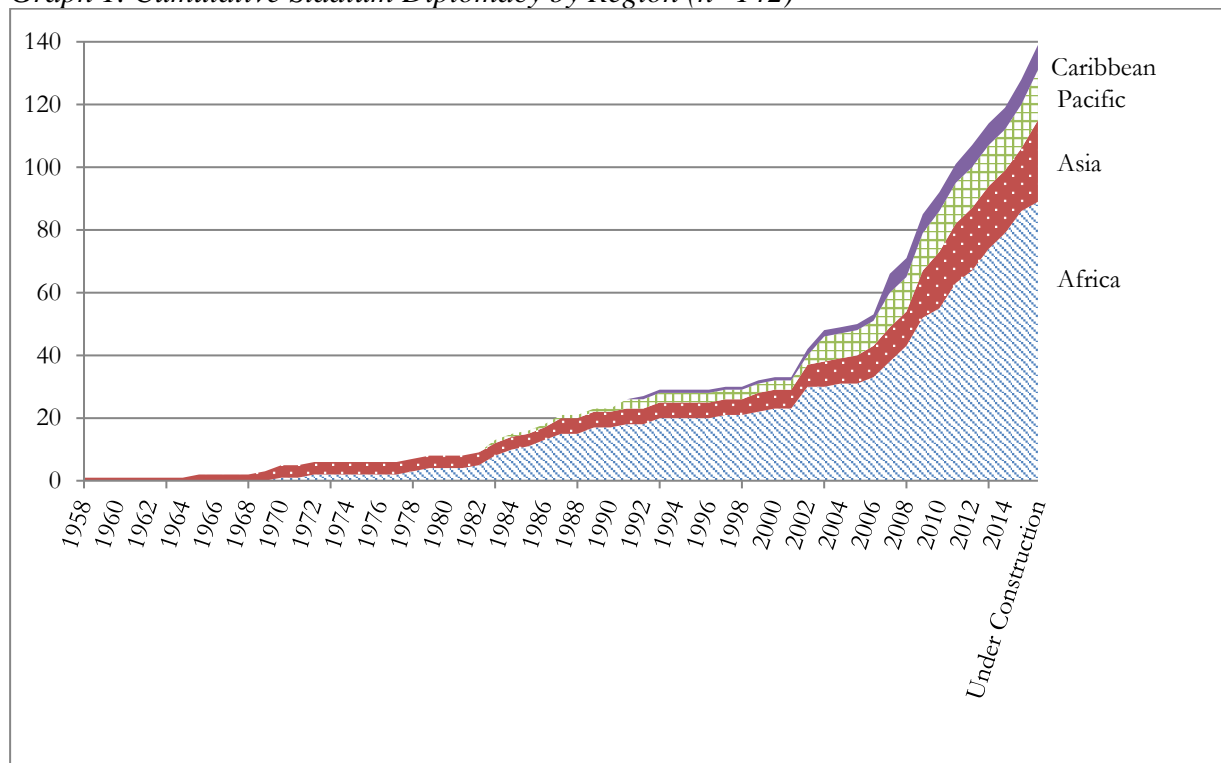
Source: Authors own graph

Graph 2. Cumulative Stadium Diplomacy by Region 2000 – 2016 (n=108)
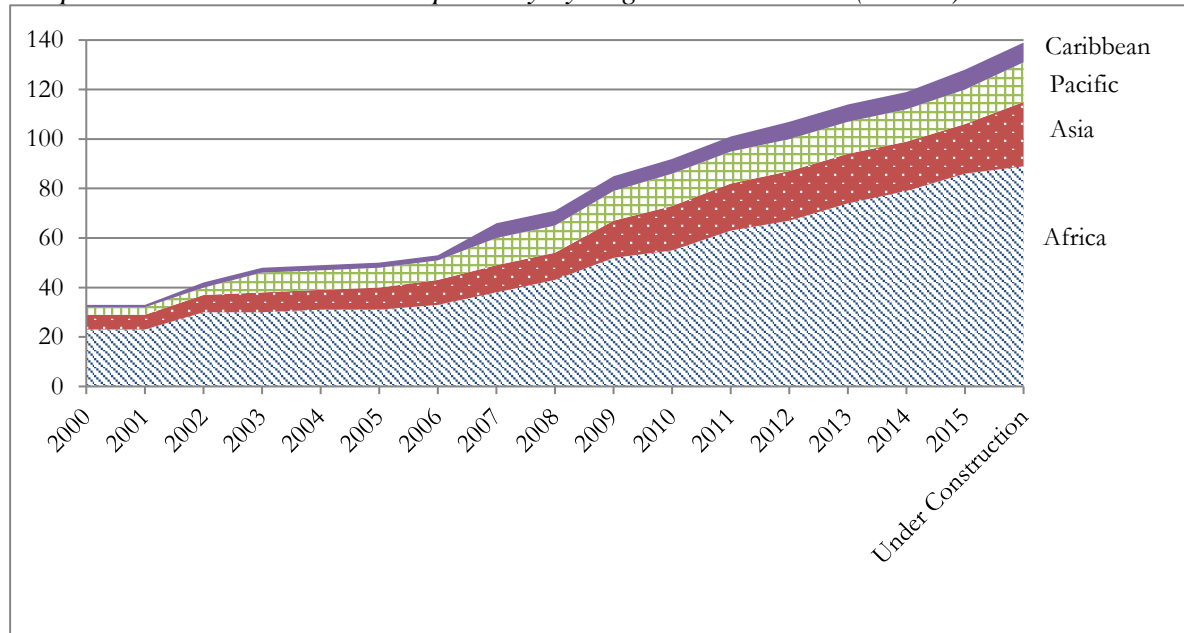
Source: Author's own graph

The acceleration of stadium diplomacy takes on added theoretical significance when considered with its regional distribution. The recipients of Chinese-built stadiums are disproportionately located in Africa, the Caribbean, and Oceania with 114 of 142 of all cases, and 87 of 108 since 2000, found in these three regions. These data suggest that both the '*stadiums-for-resources*' and '*stadiums-for-friends*' explanations may be in play, though they may operate in separate regions. Additionally, this pattern of regional clustering suggests these regions are not only salient to China but increasingly so.

A New Multi-Determinant Theory of China's Stadium Diplomacy

The inventory of all observed cases of stadium diplomacy suggests the phenomenon has multiple determinants with distinct domains. Existing research programmes have arrived at two superficially credible, partial-explanations of stadium diplomacy which are capable of identifying issues-at-stake for China and linking those issues to the geographic regions with a high number of cases. Considered in tandem, the '*stadiums-for-resources*' and '*stadiums-for-friends*' theories appear to hold explanatory power over a significant number of cases. Reconciling the two may result in a more robust theory capable of explaining an even greater number of cases. Presented here is a new theory of stadium diplomacy capable of accounting for the simultaneous existence of multiple determinants with distinct explanatory domains: *China employs stadium diplomacy to secure diplomatic recognition in line with the One-China policy and to secure natural resources*.

The Classification Scheme and Typology

The classification scheme presented here categorizes the recipient states of stadium diplomacy by their shared characteristics along two theoretical dimensions identified by previous research into salient issues-at-stake for China: durability of diplomatic recognition; and resource richness. The ordering principle reflects China's policy of diplomatic recognition as a precondition for economic relations (McElroy & Bai, 2008: 239). The resulting typology leads to the creation of ten genotypes as laid out in Figure 1. Type 1, for example denotes a stadium where the recipient state is an enduring friend that is resource rich. Type 9 on the opposite end of the spectrum represents a stadium constructed for a new friend that is not resource rich.

Figure 1. Classification System of Stadium Diplomacy by Genotype

Dimension	Enduring Friends			Stable Friends			New Friends			Non-Friends
	Resource Rich	Potentially Resource Rich	Not Resource Rich	Resource Rich	Potentially Resource Rich	Not Resource Rich	Resource Rich	Potentially Resource Rich	Not Resource Rich	
	(Type 1)	(Type 2)	(Type 3)	(Type 4)	(Type 5)	(Type 6)	(Type 7)	(Type 8)	(Type 9)	(Type 10)

Source: Authors own work

Within the typology, Types 1-9 lie within the domain of our proposed theory that China engages in stadium diplomacy to secure friends and resources. Cases classified as Type 10 lie beyond the explanatory domain of the theory and represents a failure of Chinese soft power to secure its predicted policy preferences. For future theory appraisal, it is important to identify in advance those observations beyond the explanatory domain that could falsify the theory. Observations classified as Type 10 could call into question the theory's validity and potentially falsify it.

Table 2. Cases by Type (n=142)

	n
Type 1	46
Type 2	21
Type 3	32
Type 4	2
Type 5	0
Type 6	10
Type 7	5
Type 8	2
Type 9	21
Type 10	3

Source: Author's own work

Table 2 classifies 142 cases of stadium diplomacy observed since 1958 and reports the number in each category. In the following two sections, the utility of each theoretical dimension as a determinant will be assessed. Each section begins with a research design which lays out the operationalization criteria for each genotype, followed by the findings.

Durability of Diplomatic Relations

The dimension consists of four hierarchical categories derived from Rich (2009). An *enduring friend* (Type 1, 2, 3) is operationally defined as a state that has recognized China and the One-China policy since at least 1976 without interruption;[4] a *stable friend* (Type 4, 5, 6) is a state that has recognized China and the One-China policy since at least 1977 without interruption; and a *new friend* (Type 7, 8, 9) is a state that has recognized China and the One-China policy since 1990. A *non- friend* (Type 10) is defined as a state that does not currently recognize China or the One-China policy.

-   Findings

We observe 99 stadiums (70% of all cases) have been directed to enduring friends, 28 (20%) to new friends, and 12 (8.5%) to stable friends; while 3 cases (2.1%) have been directed to non-friends.

How to differentiate between beneficiaries of stadium diplomacy is of major concern in Dunmore's (2011) attempt to make sense of the phenomenon. By examining patterns of stadium diplomacy in the Caribbean, he hypothesizes stadium diplomacy is associated with recent changes in diplomatic recognition away from Taiwan. Will (2012) also identifies an association between stadium diplomacy and the PRC vs. Taiwan rivalry; however by looking at the PRC's use of stadium diplomacy in other regions, specifically Africa and Central America, she arrives at the opposite conclusion as Dunmore and hypothesizes stadium diplomacy is directed towards early supporters of the PRC. Our observation that 127 stadium diplomacy projects (90% of the total) are directed towards Types 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and 9 appears to support both Dunmore's and Will's hypotheses.

Scholarship into soft power within interstate rivalry is remarkably underdeveloped (for one of the few examples, see Mabon, 2013). This is surprising, because the rivalry research programme is robust, and states employing soft power to resolve issues-at-stake would be

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[4] Enduring Friends are early-adopter states which supported China's initial application or recognized China within five years of its successful admission to the UN in 1971.

consistent with rivals' behaviour and a win-at-all-costs mind-set. Rivals will go to extraordinary lengths to win, even if it harms themselves (Diehl & Goertz, 2000). They carry historical and psychological baggage and have a reason to mistrust the other (Colaresi, Rasler, & Thompson, 2007), because their relationship forms through a series of repeated negative interactions, each deepening the rivalry spiral (Valeriano, 2012). And for those rivals who have been "born-feuding," these patterns of bellicose behaviour are especially pronounced and harder to modify (Wayman, 2000). China's rivalry with the ROC on Taiwan dates to the end of the Chinese Civil War and the 1949 birth of the People's Republic on the mainland. The PRC's foreign policy has been coloured to a great extent by its continued efforts to isolate its rival, the ROC (Ellis, 2012: 11), and it has expended a disproportionate amount of effort to pursue this policy goal (Erikson & Chen, 2007: 69). To realist observers, Taiwan ought to be an afterthought: recognized by less than two dozen other minor-powers, its economy is dwarfed by its mainland rival. But for the PRC, the relationship *vis-à-vis* Taiwan has become loaded with intrinsic, emotional value, making it highly salient (Erikson & Chen, 2007; Vasquez, 2009).

It is significant that 14 of the 17 states which recognize Taiwan are in the Caribbean and Oceania (Archibold, 2012; Kurlantzick, 2007: 42,142-144). These states, although "miniscule and little known [are] vitally important in the diplomatic game between Beijing and Taipei;"(Zhu, 2013: 156) and they appear to be serial targets of Chinese soft power, suggesting China does indeed use stadium diplomacy as a soft power tool within the context of rivalry. Scholarship on China's international relations grounded in realist logic, e.g. China-threat theory, cannot account for the China vs. Taiwan rivalry as a salient issue-at-stake for decision-makers in Beijing. Critically, realist logic cannot explain the empirical evidence of China's preference for directing stadium diplomacy to enduring and new friends.

Considering our observations through the lens of interstate rivalry is a novel approach that brings theoretical clarity to the uneven geographic distribution of China's soft power: accounting for the intersection of regional salience and rivalry in China's foreign policy (Brautigam, 2009: 125; Erikson & Chen, 2007: 69; Reveron, 2007: 26,31-32). The evidence broadly supports the assertion that China uses stadium diplomacy to reward diplomatic recognition – and rejection of Taiwan. With 90 percent of cases directed towards enduring and new friends, durability of diplomatic recognition appears to offer at least partial explanatory power as a determinant of stadium diplomacy. However, 12 cases directed towards stable friends had no clear association with the historical development of the China vs. Taiwan rivalry. Additionally, three cases were classified as Type 10, falling beyond the

explanatory domain of the proposed theory. These three failures of soft power to secure diplomatic recognition demonstrate China's stadium diplomacy is often but not always effective. Together, these 15 cases suggest the durability of diplomatic recognition on its own lacks explanatory power over the entire phenomenon.

Resource Richness

To identify cases where resource acquisition may be in play, our typology classifies states into three hierarchical categories: resource-rich, potentially resource-rich, and not resource-rich. A state is operationally defined as *resource-rich* if resource export revenues equal at least 20 percent of total state revenues or exports averaged over five years (International Monetary Fund, 2007; International Monetary Fund, 2012: Appendix 1, table 2); or it has proven reserves in excess of 10 billion barrels of oil or 3 trillion cubic meters of gas (BP, 2014). A state is operationally defined as *potentially resource-rich* if it has 'identified reserves but production has not yet begun or reached significant levels;'(International Monetary Fund, 2012: Appendix 1, table 2) or has proven reserves less than 10 billion barrels of oil or 3 trillion cubic meters of gas (BP, 2014); or if it possesses proven reserves of rare earth elements (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015). A state is operationally defined as *not resource-rich* if it fails to meet the criteria for the above two categories.

The resources used in the operational definitions are previously identified as particularly salient to China for its continued economic growth (Ferdinand, 2012: 88), and by extension, regime stability (Will, 2011). To protect against over-sensitivity towards small, resource-driven economies, our classification criteria also consider states with large absolute resource reserves to be resource-rich, even if resource exports represent a smaller share of the state's more diversified economy.[5] Potentially resource-rich states have reserves of natural resources that are neither particularly large nor are they primary economic drivers. Such potentially-rich states represent a different type of partner for China which may be behaving as a savvy investor or talent scout, identifying untapped sources of future value in order to maximize its return on investment. Dichotomizing states as either resource-rich or resource-poor as Barranguet (2010) and Ross (2014) do is methodologically questionable, because it assumes identical resource richness across the entire domain and cannot account for China's 'moneyball' behaviour with these types of partner states.

- Findings

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[5] e.g. the USA whose natural resource-wealth is large in absolute terms but whose economy is diverse.

Our observations reveal that of 142 cases, 53 (37%) have been directed towards resource-rich states (Types 1, 4, 7); 23 (16%) towards potentially resource-rich states (Types 2, 5, 8); and 63 (44%) towards not resource-rich states (Types 3, 6, 9). This bi-modal distribution is unexpected given the preponderance of literature support for a resource-seeking Chinese foreign policy.

The pursuit of natural resources is often used to explain China's international economic relations, particularly with developing states (The Economist, 2008a; The Economist, 2008b; New African, 2008; Naim, 2009). Such hypotheses rest on the claim that China's domestic political stability is dependent upon maintaining the economic growth that has lifted over 500 million out of poverty since Deng's market reforms (Ravallion, 2009; Will, 2011). The raw materials to fuel this development, though, increasingly lie beyond China's borders, necessitating that China import its "industrially vital" natural resources (Ferdinand, 2012: 88) and pushing China towards new, non-traditional suppliers with higher risks but potentially higher rates of return (Brautigam, 2009: 56). Barranguet (2010), Alm (2012), and Ross (2014) adopt this '*stadiums-for-resources*' perspective in their analyses to credibly explain the majority of cases within Africa where Graphs 1 and 2 show most cases are located. Unfortunately, their distinctions between resource rich and poor states are implicit, lacking definitional, and subsequently, analytical clarity.

The typology allows us to make claims about stadium diplomacy which are supported by empirical data. Fifty-four percent of cases are directed towards resource-rich or potentially resource-rich states. One interpretation of this finding is the predictions of previous investigations are correct about half of the time. On the other hand, those resource-seeking predictions fail about half of the time, unable to account for 46 percent of cases, including in regions with diplomatic though not economic rationales for Chinese investment (Chen, 2010; Sheringham, 2007). This suggests China pursues multiple policy goals through the use of stadium diplomacy. Both the resource-richness of China's partners and the durability of diplomatic recognition individually offer partial explanatory power over China's stadium diplomacy; indicating that we are on the correct path when we consider the two determinants in tandem to explain China's use of stadium diplomacy as a soft power foreign policy tool.

Analysis, Discussion, & Conclusions

Three final tasks remain for our investigation. We must appraise the multi-determinant theory, assess stadium diplomacy's place within China's foreign policy, and delineate the implications of our findings for international relations research programmes. Theory appraisal

is crucial for progressive research (Vasquez, 1998: Chapter 10). "Good theory" must describe observations of the world with empirical accuracy. If it cannot, it ought to be discarded (Vasquez, 1998: 230). We employ a two-tailed Pearson's chi-square test to determine whether the observed distribution of stadiums statistically differs from the predicted distribution. Figure 2 displays the crosstab of the nine typological groups within the explanatory domain of the multi-determinant theory. Observed values are listed above, with expected values in parentheses. Typological groups whose observed value exceeds the expected value are bolded.

Figure 2. Chi-Square Analysis of Stadium Diplomacy (valid n=139)

	Enduring Friends	Stable Friends	New Friends	
Resource Rich	**46** (37.75)	2 (4.58)	5 (10.66)	*53*
Potentially Resource Rich	**21** (16.38)	0 (1.99)	2 (4.63)	*23*
Not Resource Rich	32 (44.87)	**10** (5.44)	**21** (12.69)	*63*
	99	*12*	*28*	*139*

χ^2=24.0133; p<0.001

Source: Author's own work

The analysis finds that a statistically significant difference exists between the observed and the predicted distribution of cases across the nine typological groups (χ^2=24.0133; p<0.001). This allows us to conclude that a relationship between the determinants *does* exist: the multi-determinate theory that *China employs stadium diplomacy to secure diplomatic recognition in line with the One-China policy and to secure natural resources* is empirically accurate, and it offers explanatory power. Furthermore, as we will see, it is capable of providing new insight into the phenomena and guiding future inquiry.

Within China's foreign policy, stadium diplomacy fits a pattern of both hard and soft power-projecting behaviours typical of a major-power state. In the past decade, China has demonstrated military strength through a new aircraft carrier (Lockie, 2016) and sought to build alliances, even joining international efforts to combat piracy (BBC News, 2010). It has promoted national values of toughness, resolve, strength, success, and non-interference; and it has increasingly demonstrated its economic power and the vitality of its economic system

through foreign aid, scholarships, and investment. Some of China's power-used-softly might seem familiar (cultural exchanges, food, pandas); but China also attracts by appealing not to western liberal-democratic values of free speech or political rights but rather to values of political non-interference and economic development whose only conditionality is adherence to the One-China policy. These atypical attractive values are channelled through atypical mediums. Sport is a particularly effective medium, because it is extremely salient. It "is as old as we are… When we watch sport we're more than spectators" (Jennings, 2011: 393), which enables it to shape public opinion and transmit values of rivalry, group-identity, competition, power, and glory, which are all familiar to international relations scholars. Sport's multi-functionality, its ability to simultaneously transmit political and social values makes stadium diplomacy an appealing form of power-used-softly. Stadiums and the events they host are attractive to recipients, because they are tangible symbols of prestige and status (Rhamey & Early, 2013), highly visible markers of a country that is modern and "world-class'" (Bloomfield, 2010: 279).

The presence of at least 142 stadiums in 61 different countries demonstrates just how attractive they are to both recipients *and* to China. There is a clear, accelerating distributive pattern giving quantifiable, empirical support to the proposition that China is deliberate and selective in using stadium diplomacy. It projects conspicuous economic capability and ambition and can be a powerful attractive tool for achieving China's core foreign policy objectives: recognition vis-à-vis the One-China policy and securing natural resources for sustained economic development. China's international economic engagement takes political considerations into account (Dreher & Fuchs, 2011), but this is no different than other major-powers' preference for diplomatically aligned partner-states (Dreher, Nunnenkamp, & Thiele, 2008; Dreher & Fuchs, 2011). Stadium diplomacy is not deviant behaviour by a rogue superpower flouting the norms of the international community. It is a new form of attractive economic power being used by a superpower to achieve policy goals.

As an emerging superpower, China has become increasingly willing to play a part in affairs beyond its backyard. Its newly prominent place in the international community shouldn't come as a surprise. The only surprise is that a country of China's size and wealth took so long to punch its weight. However, China must be careful to avoid throwing away gains it secured through its soft use of power. China's rise has bred suspicion about its motives (Mearsheimer, 2006; Naim, 2009), and its soft power is less attractive if China is perceived as threatening (Reveron, 2007; Vuving, 2009: 8-12). No matter how many roads, bridges – or indeed, stadiums – that China builds, if it earns a reputation, deserved or not, as

an aggressive bully operating outside of international norms, China's ability to leverage its attractive power could be severely limited. Such a constraint would be self-inflicted and would impede China's peaceful pursuit of its foreign policy goals.

From this analysis we can conclude that the classification system serves several purposes, but its most useful role is the power to demarcate the differences which exist between cases. The ten genotypes presented in Figure 1 delineate the two intersecting policy goals which underlie China's use of stadium diplomacy, and they make explicit those cases which fall beyond the explanatory domain. The typology provides empirical evidence that China's use of stadium diplomacy is guided by its ongoing rivalry with the ROC on Taiwan and its pursuit of natural resources.

Further, this analysis demonstrates that operationalizing a specific form of soft power, the issues-at-stake, and the intended policy outcomes can yield novel and generalizable conclusions; and the methodology is capable of guiding the selection of theoretically meaningful cases for future empirical research. The utility of this methodological approach should be of particular interest to the rivalry and the soft power research programmes. China may be unique in employing soft power to gain an advantage over an interstate rival, but that seems unlikely knowing what we do about rivals' mind-sets (Bremer, 1992). Li's power-used-softly (2009) offers a framework where illiberal values such as toughness and political non-interference can be seen to be equally attractive as western-democratic values, which make a wider range of political behaviour available for investigation. China's continued rise as a global superpower will see its increasingly frequent and sophisticated use of soft power, and social scientists must be equipped to engage with a world in which soft power plays an increasingly important role.

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Appendix 1. Classification of China's Stadium Diplomacy

Recipient State	Completion Date	Stadium Name	Location
Type 1: n=46			
Mongolia	1958	Mongolia Central Sports Palace	Ulaanbaatar
Syria	1980	Tishreen Stadium	Damascus
Mauritania	1983	Stade Olympique	Nouakchott
Suriname	1987	Anthony Nesty Sporthal	Paramarbiro
Papua New Guinea	1991	Sir John Guise Stadium	Port Moresby
Papua New Guinea	1991	National Indoor Sports Complex	Port Moresby
Mali	2002	Stade du 26 Mars	Bamako
Mali	2002	Stade Modibo Keita	Bamako
Mali	2002	Stade Abdoulaye Nakoro Cissoko	Kayes
Mali	2002	Stade Barema Bocoum	Mopti
Mali	2002	Stade Amari Daou	Segou
Mali	2002	Stade Babemba Traore	Sissako
Congo	2007	Municipal Stadium	Pointe Noire
Equatorial Guinea	2007	Estadio de Bata	Bata
Equatorial Guinea	2007	Estadio de Malabo	Malabo
Congo	2008	Denis Sassou-Nguesso Stadium	Dolisie
Angola	2009	Estadio 11 de Novembro	Luanda
Angola	2009	Estadio Nacional de Ombaka	Benguela
Angola	2009	Estadio Nacional do Chiazi	Cabinda
Angola	2009	Estadio Nacional da Tundavala	Lubango
Cameroon	2009	Yaoundé Multipurpose Sports Complex	Yaoundé
Congo	2009	Marien Ngouabi Stadium	Owando
Laos	2009	South-East Asia Games Stadium	Vientiane
Laos	2009	National Aquatics Stadium	Vientiane
Laos	2009	National Tennis Complex	Vientiane
Laos	2009	Gymnasium Tanggo Buntug	Vientiane
Laos	2010	Gymnasium Pahoman	Vientiane
Mongolia	2010	Buyant Ukhaa Sports Complex	Ulaanbaatar
Papua New Guinea	2010	Prince Charles Oval	Wewak
Equatorial Guinea	2011	Estadio de Bata	Bata
Gabon	2011	Stade de l'Amitie	Libreville
Guinea	2011	Nongo Stadium	Conakry
Laos	2011	National Indoor Shooting Center	Vientiane
Zambia	2011	Levy Mwanawasa Stadium	Ndola
Cameroon	2012	Stade de Limbe	Limbe
Zambia	2012	Olympic Youth Development Centre Pool	Lusaka
Zambia	2013	National Heroes Stadium	Lusake
Algeria	2014	Stade Abdelkader Fréha	Oran
Algeria	2015	Grand Stade d'Alger	Alger-Baraki
Cameroon	2015	Bafoussam Omnisport Stadium	Bafoussam
Zambia	2015	Independence Stadium	Lusaka
Cameroon	*Under Construction*	Stade OmniSports	Yaounde
Cameroon	*Under Construction*	Stade de la Reunification	Douala
Mongolia	*Under Construction*	New Mongolia Central Sports Palace	Ulaanbaatar
Gabon	*Under Construction*	Stade de Port-Gentil	Port-Gentil
Gabon	*Under Construction*	Stade de Oyem	Assok Ngomo
Type 2: n=21			
Tanzania	1969	Uhuru Stadium	Dar es Salaam
Tanzania	1970	Amaan Stadium	Zanzibar
Somalia	1978	Mogadishu Stadium	Mogadishu

Sierra Leone	1979	National Stadium	Freetown
Uganda	1997	Mandela National Stadium (Namboole)	Kampala
Togo	2000	Kegue Stadium	Lome
Sierra Leone	2002	National Stadium	Freetown
Sierra Leone	2006	Bo Stadium	Bo, S. Province
Ghana	2008	Sekondi Takoradi Stadium	Sekondi Takoradi
Ghana	2008	Tamale Stadium	Tamale
Ghana	2008	Accra Sports Stadium	Accra
Ghana	2008	Baba Yara Stadium	Kumasi
Tanzania	2009	Mkapa National Stadium	Dar es Salaam
Mozambique	2010	Estadio Nacional do Zimpeto	Maputo
Tanzania	2010	Amaan Stadium	Zanzibar
Ghana	2011	Ghana Armed Forces Sport Complex	Accra
Tanzania	2011	Uhuru Stadium	Dar es Salaam
Uganda	2011	Mandela National Stadium (Namboole)	Kampala
Sierra Leone	2014	Bo Municipal Stadium	Bo, E. Province
Ghana	2015	Cape Coast Stadium	Cape Coast
Somalia	2015	Mogadishu Stadium	Mogadishu

Type 3: n=32

Cambodia	1965	Olympic Stadium	Phnom Penh
Pakistan	1970	Jinnah Stadium	Islamabad
Benin	1982	Stade de l'Amite	Cotonou
Morocco	1983	Moulay Abdallah Stadium	Rabat
Morocco	1983	Salle Omnisports Moulay Abdallah	Rabat
Samoa	1983	Apia Park Stadium	Apia
Rwanda	1986	Amahoro National Stadium	Kigali
Kenya	1987	Moi International Sports Center	Nairobi
Myanmar	1987	Thuwunna Indoor Stadium	Yangon
Mauritius	1991	Stade Anjalay	Belle Vue Maurel
Nepal	1999	Dashrath Stadium	Kathmandu
Seychelles	2002	Piscine Olympique	Victoria
Fiji	2003	National Hockey Centre	Suva
Fiji	2003	Damodar Aquatic Centre	Suva
Fiji	2003	National Netball Centre	Suva
Fiji	2003	Victoria Tennis and Squash Court	Suva
Fiji	2003	Vodafone Arena	Suva
Myanmar	2003	Thuwunna Youth Training Center Stadium (track)	Yangon
Jamaica	2006	Sligoville Mini Stadium Complex	Sligoville
Jamaica	2007	Greenfiled Stadium	Trelawny
Samoa	2007	Samoa National Natatorium	Tuanaimato
Samoa	2007	Apia Park Stadium	Apia
Pakistan	2007	Liaquat Gymnasium	Islamabad
Sri Lanka	2010	Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium	Hambatota
Seychelles	2011	Piscine Olympique	Victoria
Kenya	2012	Moi International Sports Center	Nairobi
Nepal	2012	Dashrath Stadium	Kathmandu
Cape Verde	2014	Estadio Nacional de Cabe Verde	Praia
Samoa	2015	Apia Park Stadium	Apia
Cambodia	*Under Construction*	Cambodia National Stadium	Phnom Penh
Cambodia	*Under Construction*	Cambodia National Tennis Complex	Phnom Penh
Cambodia	*Under Construction*	Prek Phnov Stadium	Phnom Penh

Type 4: n=2

Democratic Rep. Congo	1993	Stade de Martys	Kinshasa
Cote d'Ivoire	*Under Construction*	Stade National de la Côte d'Ivoire	Abidjan

Type 5: n=0

Type 6: n=10

Zimbabwe	1987	Zimbabwe National Sports Stadium	Harare
Barbados	1992	Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium	Wildey
Djibouti	1993	Stade du Ville	Djibouti City
Micronesia	2002	FSM-China Friendship Sport Center	Pohnpei
Djibouti	2004	Omnisport Cener	Dikhil
Barbados	2005	Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium	Wildey
Antigua & Barbuda	2007	Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	North Sound
Zimbabwe	2010	Zimbabwe National Sports Stadium	Harare
Vanuatu	*Under Construction*	Korman Stadium	Port Vila
Vanuatu	*Under Construction*	Vanuatu Multi-Sport Complex	Port Vila

Type 7: n=5

Chad	1972	Stade Nacional	N'Djaména
Liberia	1986	Doe Sports Complex	Paynesville
Niger	1989	Stade General Seyni Kountche	Niamey
Niger	1999	Stade General Seyni Kountche	Niamey
Liberia	2007	Doe Sports Complex	Paynesville

Type 8: n=2

Central African Republic	2006	Barthelemy Boganda Sports Complex	Bangui
Malawi	2015	Civo Stadium	Lilongwe

Type 9: n=21

Gambia	1984	Gambia Independence Stadium	Bakau
Senegal	1985	Leopold Senghor Stadium	Dakar
Guinea Bissau	1989	Estadio 24 de Setembro	Bissau
Dominica	2007	Windsor Park	Roseau
Grenada	2007	Queen's Park	River Road
Cook Islands	2009	Telecom Sports Arena	Avarua
Senegal	2009	Stade Alassane Djigo	Pikine
Senegal	2009	Stade Ely Manel Fall	Diourbel
Costa Rica	2011	Estadio Nacional de Costa Rica	San Juan
Bahamas	2012	Thomas Robinson Stadium	Nassau
Senegal	2012	Stade Kamine Gueye	Kaolack
Guinea Bissau	2013	Estadio 24 de Setembro	Bissau
Senegal	2013	Caroline Faye Stadium	Mbour
Senegal	2013	Stade Massene Sene	Fatick
Senegal	2013	Stade Al Boury Ndiaye	Louga
Senegal	2013	Stade de Kolda	Kolda
Senegal	2013	Stade de Tamba	Tambacounda
Senegal	2014	Stade Regional de Matam	Matam
Senegal	2014	Stade Mawade Wade de Medina	Saint Louis
Grenada	2015	Kirani James Stadium	River Road
Senegal	2015	Stade Aline Sitoe Diatta	Ziguinchor

Type 10: n=3

Burkina Faso	1984	Stade du 4 Aout	Ouagadougou
St. Lucia	2002	George Odlum Stadium	Vieux Fort
Kiribati	2007	Betio Sports Complex	Tarawa

(Data collection cut-off: 1 May 2016)
Source: Author's own data collection

Reassessing China's Growing Presence in the Arctic:
A World-System perspective

Xiaowen Zheng[1]

Abstract

This paper intends to provide an analytical framework to interpret China's growing presence in the Arctic from the perspective of world-system theory. I have set up the analytical framework from the following four aspects. Firstly, China's externalizing behavior in the Arctic region is governed by the internalized law of value of the modern world-system, i.e., the endless accumulation of capital. Secondly, China has benefited and is still benefiting from the division of labor, with Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, and most recently the Arctic serving as a relatively subordinated resource periphery. Thirdly, driven by a strong upward mobility, China has leapfrogged the periphery and semi-periphery and gained a semi-core position with an upward trend towards the core, by offering a favorable external environment to the Arctic (invitation to promote). Lastly, since the world-economy is currently in a Kondratieff B-phase, China, as an emerging global core power, is logically dedicated to the relocation of productive activity and the probability of alternative profitable outlets, where the Arctic is highly compatible.

Keywords: China, Arctic, world-system theory, endless accumulation of capital, division of labor, upward mobility, Kondratieff B-phase

Introduction: China's Growing Presence in the Arctic

Within IR studies, specific geographical locations, such as the Arctic, being isolated and treated as "independent or semi-independent systems" has had a long tradition (Wegge, 2011: 166). However, the abnormally warm winter has made the Arctic a major cause of global concern among IR and IPE researchers. Recently, much academic, media and diplomatic attention has been paid to China's participation in Arctic affairs. With its extraordinary economic growth, China has become more visible in issues concerning the global economy as well as international monetary policies and has gradually moved its policy focus abroad.

Briefly speaking, "Beijing pursues its polar strategy across multiple domains: political, economic, scientific, and military" (Pincus, 2018). Despite being considered an "Arctic newcomer", China is earning increasing focus in the Polar North. During the past decade, "the Chinese see the Arctic and the Antarctic as a high priority in China's national policy on global presence" (The Arctic, 2018). Both Wong (2018) and Goodman & Freese (2018) agree with

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this sentiment. Wong (2018) gives the following examples of China's "ambition" in the Arctic, "the country [China] entered into joint ventures with Russian gas companies, it built a large embassy in Iceland, it helped finance the Kouvola-Xi'an train in Finland, it thawed its relations with Norway and it invested into Greenland"(Wong, 2018).

It is frequently advocated that China has been interested in the Arctic since 1995, "when a group of Chinese scientists and journalists travelled to the North Pole on foot and conducted research on the Arctic Ocean's ice cover, climate and environment" (Jakobson, 2010: 3). China's first Arctic expedition was conducted, as a milestone of carving out a foothold in the High North, by a wide range of scientists in June 1999. Soon after, the Arctic Yellow River Station, was established in Norway's Svalbard in July 2004, by the Polar Research Institute of China. After completing their eighth Arctic expedition, the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) announced in October 2017 that, "China will double the frequency of Arctic expeditions to once a year from this year" (Fang, 2017). Consequently, China's ninth Arctic expedition departed from Shanghai on July 20, 2018, carrying out the mission of constructing an Arctic operational monitoring network with its research vessel Xue Long (Snow Dragon) as a platform. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that China has started building its second icebreaker (the Xue Long II), and its first polar expedition cruise ship, which are expected to be to be operational by 2019. These scientific expeditions reflect China's willingness and capacity in conducting polar research, which laid the foundation of China's growing presence in the Arctic.

After constantly expressing its polar interest for years, China, in May 2013 in the Swedish town of Kiruna, successfully obtained the formal status of permanent observer member in the Arctic Council, which can be interpreted as a historic step towards China being seen as a key player in the Arctic region. On December 10th of the same year, the China-Nordic Arctic Research Center (CNARC) was formally inaugurated in Shanghai by 10 member institutes, four of which are from China, with capacities to push forward Arctic research.

After a long period of speculation, the State Council Information Office of the PRC published a white paper titled "China's Arctic Policy" on January 26th 2018, vowing to actively participate in Arctic issues as both a "near-Arctic State" and a major stakeholder in the region (Gao, 2018). According to the released white paper, China's attention will be focused on the following four aspects: 1) the development of Arctic shipping routes; 2) the exploration for and exploitation of oil, gas, mineral and other non-living resources; 3) utilizing fisheries and other living resources; and 4) developing tourism as "an emerging industry" (ibid). Put simply, China's interests in the High North can be traced through two categories. On the one hand, China will actively participate in scientific research, resource exploration and exploitation,

shipping and security. On the other hand, China, being part of the globe, will keep an eye on climate change and its potential consequences as a matter of course (Wong, 2018). Furthermore, China has been trying to embrace the Arctic as part of President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative, aiming at constructing a "Polar Silk Road" or "blue economic passage", on which China and Europe are interconnected through the Arctic Ocean (ibid; Lanteigne & Shi, 2018). Therefore, the "Polar Silk Road" should be taken as "a new route through the unfrozen Arctic, dominated by Chinese trade and tied into Beijing's global ambitions" (Goodman & Freese, 2018).

Understanding the Debate on China's growing presence in the Arctic

By the avoidance of being aggressive and thus seen as a revisionist power challenging the existing governance regime, China considers the relationship between itself and the Arctic region as a "win-win situation" (Ross, 2017). However, China's Arctic policies, summarized in its White Paper, have also imaged "concerns about being marginalized from what the Chinese government sees as an economically important region due to the country's lack of Arctic geography" (Lanteigne & Shi, 2018). Why then, with borders lying over a thousand miles away from the Arctic Circle, is China so keen on the Arctic? Could the vast reserves of oil, gas, marine bio-resources and mineral resources or enormous economic potential from the utilization of new shipping routes, which have been raised and emphasized repeatedly, be the essential reason? In the following parts, the article intends to review the existing literature regarding *China's growing presence in the Arctic* and identifies the knowledge gap for proposing the research objectives and research questions.

It is frequently advocated that China's growing presence in the Arctic could be taken as one of these "new areas of interest" (Wegge, 2014: 83). The overriding driving forces behind China's desire to the Arctic are economic: "how China can benefit from new economic opportunities offered by the warming Arctic" and "how a warming Arctic will adversely affect China's economy" are China's top concerns related to the Arctic (Jakobson & Peng, 2012: 10). As many scholars and commentators have pointed out, China has become an increasingly significant economic actor with stakes in shipping, resource utilization and consumption, climate change, as well as scientific research (Jakobson, 2010; Campbell, 2012; Jakobson & Peng, 2012; Guschin, 2013; Hsiung, 2016; Chen, 2012).

However, China's participation in the Arctic has been described as "China's ambition", "intrigue", "voracity" or even a "Chinese ghost" by the western media (Fu, 2013). Without having any direct geographic access to the High North, China's economic, scientific and

diplomatic efforts in the Arctic region have aroused innumerable debates and negative reactions in academic and policy making circles (Lasserre et al, 2017: 31). To some extent, the Arctic has been an emerging destination where "China threat" with an "ambitious and arrogant" portrait (ibid) might materialize (Beck, 2014: 306). Although the Arctic, as many observers have asserted, is not and will not be a priority of China's foreign policy in the near-to-medium term, China's growing presence in the Arctic raises concerns about their intentions in the region.

By reviewing China's scientific, economic and political interests in the Arctic, Alexeeva and Lasserre (2012: 80) held a relatively optimistic attitude and claimed that China had been seeking cooperation with Arctic countries based on the Arctic exclusive economic zone (EEZ) projects, mainly because of its energy demand, rather than the aggressive ambition of securing access to resources and shipping lanes as many commentators had warned. Likewise, Liu (2017: 55) regarded China, in the foreseeable future, as a collaborative partner rather than a challenging one by examining China's Arctic policy and its performance in the Polar Code development and fishery regulation process.

Some scholars are standing between pessimism and pragmatism, taking a relatively "value-free" position when analyzing and interpreting China's behavior in the Arctic. "What purposes do Chinese sources have in viewing the PRC's Arctic approach, and what does China's recent course of action appear to be? Are all these Chinese sources in accordance with what China appears to be doing, and if not, what purposes do they serve?" After examining the above questions, Wright summarized China's Arctic approach into two phases: "the rhetoric and culmination of idea" phase and "the strategic buyer" phase (2013: 1-2). While the former has created awareness, wary or even skeptical voices in the western world, the latter approach has worked well and given China a "stronger foothold" in the Arctic. Taking a different conceptual angle, Wu (2016) located "China's presence in the Arctic" in the broader context of global governance and argued that China-Arctic relations will follow the "push in" strategy with its own "active advocacy, lobbying and outside activities" (Wu, 2016).

As mentioned, there is considerable debate in Western academia over how to interpret China's ongoing behavior in the High North. More specifically, the attitudes towards China's growing presence in the Arctic vary a lot from positive to negative and with some scholars standing in between. However, the political science literature (esp. IR) has come to a general consensus that China is keen on natural resources as well as the maritime transportation potential of the melting Arctic.

According to the numerous existing literature on the subject, most scholars believe that China has been/will become an increasingly active and important player in the Arctic, since the

Arctic could function as a source of oil and gas. Furthermore, the profitability of new shipping routes due to the great reduction of sea ice cover in the Arctic Ocean can be considered as one of the new economic potentials, which have evoked China's growing focus in the region. While a substantial body of literature has targeted the functional driving forces of China's engagement in the Arctic, much less attention has been devoted to the systematic level or underlying causes. In other words, none of these analyses has systematically elaborated the structural causes of China's growing presence in the Arctic. Given the above discussion, the article poses the main research question as: *How can China's growing presence in the Arctic Region be better conceptualized and understood?*

Methodological Consideration: The World-System Perspectives

Enlightened by Immanuel Wallerstein and his world-system approach, I take a broad theoretical perspective to conceptualize and interpret China's increasing engagement in the Arctic, refraining from a superficial phenomenon-to-phenomenon or surface-level understanding. To put it another way, China's growing presence in the Arctic cannot solely be attributed to either the economic potential of resources and new shipping routes or a latent negative impact from climate change. Rather, actors' behaviors in world politics are influenced by their "positions" in a social structure (White et al., 1976: 730-780). That is to say, it also involves the underlying systemic, contextual, and historical causes: it is the structural position (China is located within the world-system) that matters. Similarly, from a holistic standpoint, "the system contextualizes the instance, and the instance gives further expression to the development of the system" (Baronov, 2018: 12). According to the theory, each country's activities are embedded into the world system, therefore, it is imperative for us to analyze and understand China's behavior in the specific historical context, which is so far a gap in the Arctic research field.

A question can be raised regarding the applicability of world-system theory in the nexus of China-Arctic relationships. Based on world system theory's original core, semi-periphery, periphery stratification, all countries in the Arctic region (apart from Russia), be they small or large, belong to the classic "core" of the capitalist world system. Despite this paper's unit of analysis being the nation state, its analytical category is centered on the contemporary global division of labor in connection with global production chain (GPC) and global value chain (GVC). China's global economic rise is altering the status quo of the world system's established structure and "global arrangement". In other words, China's rise is generating different implications and impacts on different stratifications of the world economy, a new challenge on the already divided stratifications of the world economy. The further intensification of

China's industrialization and the increasing share of China's GPC and GVC since the 1990s went hand in hand with two parallel processes, the "intended" deindustrialization in the North and the "un-intended" deindustrialization in the South. The consequence is that China is further moving into the core (North), while at the same time other semi-peripheral countries are being pushed out of the semi-periphery and into the periphery. In a nutshell, the rise of China is changing the conventional North-South dichotomy, and China is creating a new North-South axis.

As mentioned, the states in the Arctic region are not peripheral ones according to the original stratifications of world-system theory. However, the new reality is that some core countries, including the US and Canada, have been exporting raw materials to feed the global "made in China" phenomenon, and China is the largest high-tech exporter in the world. In this regard, the Arctic states can be understood as, in relationship to the "made in China" phenomenon, "resource peripheries" in the current world economy. Today, most topics and debates surrounding China-Arctic relations are resource-related: raw material, transportation, environment, etc.

As a macro-sociological perspective, world-system theory has made great contribution to the explanation of the dynamics of the "capitalist world economy" from a holistic and integral approach which uncovers latent structures. Taking a holistic perspective, China's behavior should be understood from its "position" and the "change of position" in the overall structure of the world economy, rather than narrowly interpreted from the "internal" factors. Therefore, a world-system perspective is selected as an analytical tool in this project with the purpose of examining and explicating the substantial causes of China's growing presence in the Arctic.

In order to set up the conceptual framework, I will here summarize key views that Wallerstein has explained at length by means of a list of propositions most relevant to the research question of this article:

a) The modern world-system is a capitalist world-economy, governed by *law of value*, i.e., the drive for the *endless accumulation of capital*.

b) Over the long historical spectrum, this world-system has expanded through successively incorporating other parts of the world into its *division of labor*, which creates cross-border flows of labor, capital and commodities through chains of exchange, investment and production and ultimately results in the system's embedded inequalities (X. Li, 2017).

c)   The world-economy is dominated by *core/periphery* relations, with *semi-core* (Kick et.al. 2000: 133) and *semi-peripheral* as intermediate positions. Most of the countries within the semi-core/semi-peripheral position have a strong *upward mobility* in the system.

d)   In contrast with the Kondratieff A-phase, the B phase is perceived as a downturn with the *relocation of productive activity* or the probability of alternative profitable outlets.

e)   The hegemonic cycles consist of the rise and decline of *successive guarantors/hegemons* of global order, each one with its particular pattern of control, or in other words, *mode of governance*.

Since officially joining the capitalist world-economy with its opening-up policy in 1978, China has experienced an evolutionary process from a *peripheral* to a *semi-peripheral* position. Although whether China should currently be taken as a definite *core* state or not is still a matter of controversy, no one has questioned or criticized its upward tendency. In line with the cyclical rhythms, one of the fundamental features of the capitalist world system, China has been increasingly regarded as an emerging political and economic *system-guarantor* with its economic performance benefitting from the *law of value*. Xing Li went further with his optimistic comment that "the rise of China will eventually generate 'promotion by invitation' and bring about the enlargement of 'room for maneuver' and 'upward mobility' for the global periphery that is tempted to 'seize the chance'" (X. Li, 2017). In accordance with the rationality of the *relocation of productive activity*, this argument might, to some extent, interpret China's growing presence in the Arctic during the last decade after pouring money into Latin American and Africa. More importantly, the Arctic has been targeted as the next destination of labor, capital and commodities according to the essence of the world-system, to be specific, the process of successively incorporating the other parts of the world into its *division of labor*.

Based on the above analysis, we might draw a preliminary conclusion that world-system theory could be an appropriate theoretical tool of setting up a conceptual framework for understanding China's growing presence in the Arctic from a holistic and systematic perspective.

Analysis: it is not China but its position in the world economy that matters

The purpose of this section is to attempt to review and appraise Wallerstein and his world-system perspective, to identify the applicability and explanatory power of such an analytical tool to my understanding and interpretation of China's growing presence in the Arctic, specifically, to seek systemic-level answers to the research question: "why has China been increasingly involved in Arctic issues?" by establishing a conceptual framework. In answering

this question I will be better able to answer the aforementioned main research question. According to Wallerstein, "state structures and their external relations" should be regarded as the "political organization of the capitalist world economy" (Wallerstein in Linklater, 1990: 119). Therefore, the role of the state has been limited and has not been taken as the unit of analysis, which ultimately places the capitalist world-economy at the center of the analysis.

To get to the heart of China's growing presence in the Arctic, the world-system perspective must situate China's behavior within a rigorous approach to the evolution of world capitalism on a much longer schedule. In this regard, I argue that the basic and main points extracted from world-system theory may help explain the underlying causes of China's behavior in the last few decades.

This article seeks to explain China's growing presence in the Arctic by reexamining Wallerstein's writings, arguing first that China's externalizing behaviors in the Arctic region are governed by the internalized law of value of the modern world-system, i.e., the endless accumulation of capital. China has benefited and is still benefiting from the division of labor, with Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, and most recently the Arctic serving as a relatively subordinated periphery. Third, driven by a strong upward mobility, China has leapfrogged periphery and semi-periphery and gained semi-core status with an upward trend towards the core, by offering a favorable external environment to the Arctic (invitation to promote). Finally, since the world-economy is currently in Kondratieff B-phase, China is logically dedicated to the relocation of productive activity and the probability of alternative profitable outlets, where the Arctic is highly compatible.

The endless accumulation of capital

Most would regard the capitalist world-economy/capitalism as a social system on the basis of the "production for profit" and the "endless accumulation of capital" (M. Li, 2008: ix). Therefore, the pursuit of "the endless accumulation of capital" is seen as the defining and unique feature of capitalism.

> The modern world-system, in existence in at least part of the globe since the long sixteenth century, is a capitalist world-economy. This means several things. A system is capitalist if the primary dynamic of social activity is the endless accumulation of capital. This is sometimes called the law of value. Not everyone, of course, is necessarily motivated to engage in such endless accumulation, and indeed only a few are able to do so successfully. But a system is capitalist if those who do engage in such activity tend to prevail in the middle run over those who follow other dynamics. The endless accumulation of capital requires in turn the ever-increasing commodification of everything, and a capitalist world-economy should show a continuous trend in this direction, which the modern world-system surely does. This then leads to the second

requirement, that the commodities be linked in so-called commodity chains, not only because such chains are "efficient" (meaning that they constitute a method that minimizes costs in terms of output), but also that they are opaque (to use Braudel's term). The opacity of the distribution of the surplus-value in a long commodity chain is the most effective way to minimize political opposition, because it obscures the reality and the causes of the acute polarization of distribution that is the consequence of the endless accumulation of capital, a polarization that is more acute than in any previous historical system (Wallerstein, 1999: 57).

Stated most simply, the essence of the core, semi-core, semi-periphery, periphery conception is "the fact of unequal exchange", achieved by a range of fundamental mechanisms "that continually reproduces the basic core-periphery division of labor itself" (Hopkins & Wallerstein, 1977: 117). Some have taken the mechanism as the "distribution of gains from technical progress", which increases in productivity. To be specific, these gains, for various reasons, result in higher wages in the core countries and in turn lower prices in the peripheral areas. In short, the core benefits from technical progress while the periphery suffers from the same process (ibid), where unequal exchange takes place.

> The length of the commodity chains determines the boundaries of the division of labor of the world-economy. How long they are is a function of several factors: the kind of raw materials that need to be included in the chain, the state of the technology of transport and communications, and perhaps most important the degree to which the dominant forces in the capitalist world-economy have the political strength to incorporate additional areas into their network (Wallerstein, 1999: 58).

Being part of the world economy in an interdependent era, China has no choice but to follow the deep-rooted law of rule of the modern world-system, i.e., the endless accumulation of capital. Since "the capitalist world-economy depends on the nonrenewable resources for nearly 90% of its total primary energy supply" (M. Li, 2008: 148), China, as an increasingly emerging world power in recent decades, is obliged and expected to explore potential raw materials and bring such additional area into the domain of the capitalist world-economy. It is acknowledged that, "the extensive Arctic continental shelves may constitute the geographically largest unexplored prospective area for petroleum remaining on earth" (USGS, 2008). As Borgerson (2008: 67) stated, Arctic reserves are around a quarter of the remaining undiscovered and commercially accessible oil and gas deposits and resources. Not unexpectedly, with the vast potentially recoverable reserves of crude oil (90 billion barrels), natural gas (1,700 trillion cubic feet) and liquid natural gas (LNG) (44 billion barrels) (USGS, 2008), the Arctic is hardly negligible as a reserve pool of raw materials. Therefore, the ongoing relationship between China and the Arctic, specifically, China's effort at incorporating Arctic raw materials into the

commodity chain, reflect both the basic rule of law, the endless accumulation of capital, and the above-mentioned mechanism that instantly reproduces the core-like/periphery-like division of labor. In other words, such effort will help to expand the geographic boundaries of the division of labor of the world-economy.

Division of labor

Contrasted to the prominent position of class in Marxist literature, "the world-system theorists repeat their claim that the unequal exchange of the core/periphery division of labor is the central fact of the world economy" (Bergesen, 1984:369). Simplified, the capitalist world economy is perceived as a world division of labor (Wallerstein, 1979: 159-275), that are "constitutive of, continually reproduce, and regularly alter relational structures of production" (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1977: 114).

> On a world-scale, the processes of the division of labor that define and integrate the world-economy are dyadic, dividing the "world" into a complex set of paired opposites, which we designate as "core" and "periphery". (ibid)

One of the distinct characteristics of a capitalist world-economy was described later on as "an axial division of labor in which there is a core-periphery tension, such that there is some form of unequal exchange that is spatial" (Wallerstein, 1990: 288-289). In other word, the world-economy, known as a "largely self-contained" entity following Wallerstein, is based on a "geographically differentiated" division of labor (Skocpol, 1977: 1976-1977). Each major zone core, semi-periphery, and periphery, has a distinct economic structure, partly because of its "particular mixture of economic activities" (e.g., core activities commanding the vast majority of surplus; peripheral activities with little or no surplus) and partly because of its "characteristic form of labor control". Therefore, the three major zones are treated and rewarded differentially by the world economy, "with surplus flowing disproportionately to the core areas" (ibid:1077). More explicitly:

> Commercial capitalism grew out of and substantially developed a territorial system of exchange of fundamental commodities. The division of labor in this exchange network was not only functional but also geographic, involving the exchange of relatively processed and differentiated goods for raw materials. The main structural feature of this world-system came to be this division of labor between the emerging core areas producing manufactured goods and the emerging peripheral areas producing raw materials. The boundaries of the system were determined by the extent and intensity of economic production and exchange. (Chase-Dunn & Rubinson, 1977: 454; Wallerstein, 1974b)

As demonstrated above, the operational logic of the modern world-system (the unique mode of production), claimed by Wallerstein (1974a: 126-127), is profitable commodity production through a labor exploitation process of the peripheral areas. In line with Wallerstein, Xing Li defined the division of labor more simply as follows:

> Historically, the division of labor within the capitalist world economy brought about and resulted in flows of commodities, labor, and capital across different geographical areas through chains of production, exchange and investment…the different positions in the global division of labor and the change of patterns of competition and competitiveness planted the system from the very beginning with contradictions that led to the dichotomy of development vis-à-vis underdevelopment. (2016:10)

It is, therefore, imperative to mention that the core/periphery division of labor, as a "structural constant" of the world-system (Chase-Dunn & Rubinson, 1977: 460), is among integrated production "processes" rather than particular "products" (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1977: 116). As has often been noted, the various geographical areas which constitute the division of labor are specialized according to specific productive tasks with distinct economic rewards (ibid: 127).

> Historically, geographic expansions have been a major mechanism through which   the system brought in new areas of low costs that helped to check the secular tendency of rising pressure on profitability (M. Li, 2008: ix-x).

 Accordingly, China was once regarded as "one of the last large geographical areas that was incorporated into the capitalist world-economy and did not actively participate in the system-wide division of labor until very recently" (ibid). This situation, however, has been more or less changed due to the chances for a total meltdown at the North Pole, since the Arctic region began to emerge as the next geographical area, which is to be incorporated into the capitalist world-system. To put it in another way, China once functioned as "a strategic reserve" (ibid) for the capitalist world-economy after it was included in the international division of labor. Following the same logic, when China upgrades itself to a core-like country, the function of "strategic reserve" shrinks gradually and new areas should, in turn, be brought in.

In recent months, the world is witnessing an increasing number of Chinese investment and infrastructure projects taking place in the Arctic. More specifically, cooperating with Russia, China's National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) plays an important role (20% stake) in the Yamal Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) project (Gran, 2018). Though currently on the precipice of a tense trade war, China and the US have pushed forward a $43 billion Alaska LNG project, aiming at strengthening China "economic and strategic position in the world's largest emerging

frontier" (Feng & Saha, 2018). Moreover, the ongoing mining projects in Greenland, namely the Citronen Fjord Zinc project and Kvanefjeld REE project, also reflect China's footprint in accessing the Arctic. Equally important, the Polar Silk Road should be regarded as another ambitious effort made by China with the purpose of smoothing the chains of exchange, including cooperating with Russia on the Northern Sea Route (NSR), promoting Iceland as a logistical hub, establishing a 10,500-kilometer cable in Finland, and investing in roads, railways, and bridges in Norway and Sweden.

Taken together, China, as part of the emerging core areas, has endeavored to bring about flows of commodities and capital in the Arctic region through chains of production in the domain of raw materials. In other words, China is currently following the operational logic of the world-economy, i.e., the profitable commodity production from the peripheral Arctic region. It is no exaggeration to draw the conclusion that China's specific productive tasks are highly dependent on its core-like position in the world-economy, whereas the Arctic's is on its periphery-like position.

Upward mobility

From the world-system perspective, upward mobility refers to either the peripheral countries moving to the semi-peripheral position or the semi-peripheral countries moving to the core position. Conversely, either the core countries moving to the semi-peripheral position or the semi-peripheral countries moving to the peripheral position is called downward mobility. Bilotti (2003) has empirically examined economic development in Japan as a case for upward mobility. After incorporation into the world-economy in the mid-19th century, Japan gained semi-peripheral status which could be seen from its trade pattern. Specifically, Japan exported light manufactured products to the core and heavy industrial products to the periphery in the late 19th century. Having been trapped by its limited domestic market and barren natural resource base, Japan was unable to move from the semi-periphery to the core. Driven by upward mobility, Japan carried out the "flying geese" model (Kojima, 1977: 150-151) which highlighted the importance of technological development and industrial diffusion across countries and earned Japan's core status regionally in the 1970s and globally in the 1980s.

Most world-system scholars would agree that, without being plagued by the inherent nature of the world-system and the extractive logic of global capitalism, i.e., the core gets wealthier and more developed at the expense of the stagnation or even degradation of the non-core, some developing countries have experienced the upward mobility process aiming at "occupying an integrated 'core' position" over the past few decades, which at the same time

would challenge the hierarchical stability of the world-system (Clark, 2010: 1123-1128). The peripheral countries with upward mobility striving to upgrade themselves to the semi-periphery are more likely to achieve economic growth as a result of the alternation of their relative position in the world-system (ibid).

It is frequently advocated that "upward mobility" is highly dependent on promotion by invitation (the external forces offered by the core) and seizing the chance (the internal advantages of the semi-periphery/periphery). As Figure 1 shows, the existing hegemon or a group of core countries, with the purpose of realizing their own geopolitical and geo-economic interests, offer an invitation for the non-core nations to be promoted within the world-system (X. Li, 2016: 11). Such an invitation to promote gradually forms a favorable external environment for the semi-peripheral/peripheral countries with internal capabilities of benefiting from a new situation or condition to seize the chance. Therefore, the upward mobility takes place on the basis of the combination of promotion by invitation and seizing the chance.

Figure 1. The Upward Mobility Path
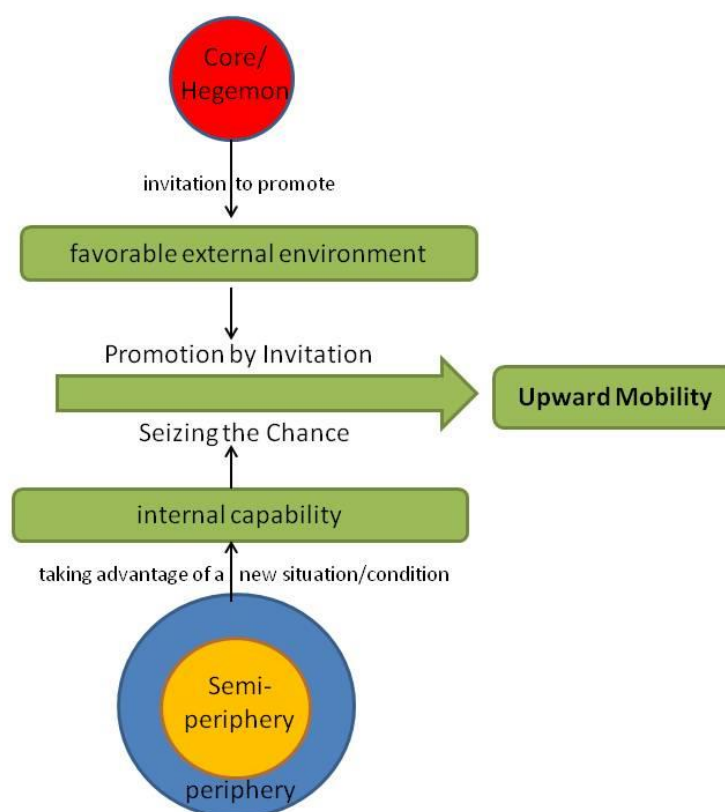
(*Source*: Author's own work)

Reading Figure 1 from the top, China, as a core-like country or an emerging economic hegemon, has already put forward an invitation for the Arctic region to promote the Polar Silk

Road. Such an invitation provides a favorable external environment in the field of investment, infrastructure and technology. Similarly, reading from the bottom, the peripheral Arctic could take the advantage of the new situation created by China's Polar Silk Road with its unique internal capability (rich in unexplored resources, emerging new trade routes, etc.). Accordingly, promotion by invitation and seizing the chance jointly pushes forward upward mobility.

As Xing Li (2016:10) has claimed, driven by upward mobility, the emergence of China as "a new political and economic system-guarantor" can be plausibly taken as part of the cyclical rhythms of the system. The rise of emerging powers, especially China, symbolizes "the strength and success of the world system in bringing more untapped parts of the world to the logic of capitalism without changing the fundamental relations of inequality within the system" (ibid: 11). To make it simple, the periphery has always been needed even if China carries out its upward mobility and successfully gains core status in the future. In this regard, the Arctic region should be perceived as the next destination of Beijing's capital and hegemonic outward expansion after Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the South Pacific. China's economic expansion, most recently to the High North, accelerates the "structural profit squeeze" of the capitalist world economy.

Kondratieff B-phase

In the modern world economy, Kondratieff waves (also written Kondratiev waves or K-waves) is taken as cycle-like phenomena ranging from 40-60 years with a rise stage, the Kondratieff A-phase, and a decline stage, the Kondratieff B-phase (Korotayev & Tsirel, 2010:3-57).

Figure 2. Kondratiev Cycles
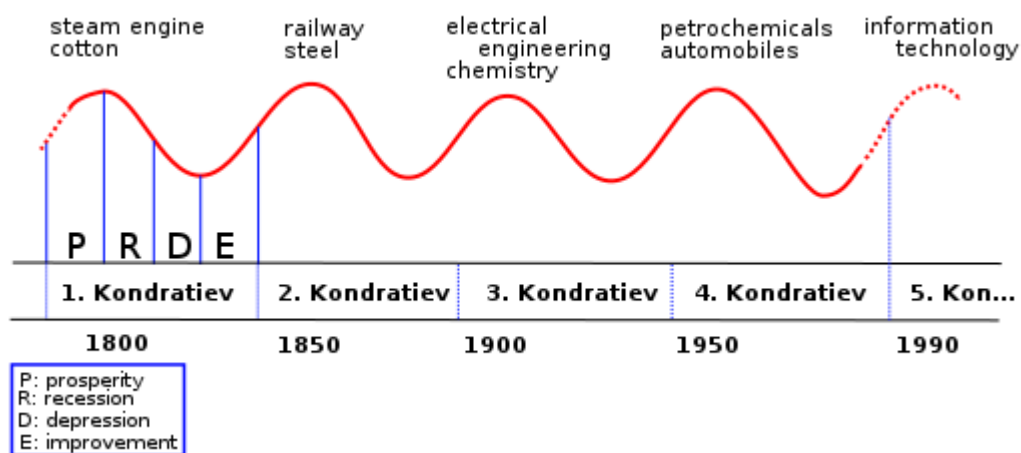
Source: http://www.irenses.ie/2010/04/27/kondratiev-wave-economic-theory/.
[Accessed August 30, 2018]

As is shown in Figure 2, the world economy is currently experiencing the Kondratieff B-phase.

> What has happened is what always happens in B-phases: acute competition among the core powers in a situation of contraction, each trying to maximize its profit margins and minimize its unemployment at the expense of the others; a shift of capital from seeking profits in production to seeking profits in financial manipulations; a squeeze on governmental balance of payments, resulting in debt crises. There has been a relocation of production at the world level. (Wallerstein, 1993:3-4)

Such a downturn has, however, not been claimed as definitively bad times according to Wallerstein. On the one hand, it poses a chance for large capitalists to seize in order to find alternative profitable outlets which will ultimately lead to the rise of capital accumulation on an individual level. On the other hand, given the relocation of productive activity, one of the above-mentioned features of B-phases, it is hardly surprising that "some zone in the world-system sees a significant improvement in its overall economic standing" (Wallerstein, 1999: 36). With abundant oil reserves and navigable waterways, the Arctic region is showing its profitable potential by constructing thriving economies and rising energy prices in the context of globalization (Hastedt et al., 2015: 249). Therefore, China's huge enthusiasm in the Arctic could be understood as "seizing" the chance of searching for "alternative profitable outlets" and "relocating" its "productive activity". Korotayev & Grinin have contended that:

> The change of K-wave upswing and downswing phases correlates significantly with the phases of fluctuations in the relationships between the World System Core and Periphery, as well as with World System Core changes (the growth or decline of its strength, emergence of competing centers, their movements, and so on) (2012: 47).

Through military expenditures, FDI, aid or emigration, there is a resource flow from the core to the semi-periphery and periphery for the sake of obtaining certain concrete gains, including the acquisition of colonies, making profits, opening markets, getting access to raw materials, etc. In line with such argument, it is understandable that China is pouring human, physical and financial resources into the Arctic in search of profits, markets, and most importantly raw materials.

Undoubtedly, the rise of East Asia, including China's recent rise, occurred during a Kondratieff B-phase. As Wallerstein bluntly pointed out, "it is East Asia that has been the great beneficiary of the geographical restructuring of this Kondratieff B-phase" (1999: 37). There has been fierce debate, especially in the sphere of international political economy, "whether the capitalist world-system is able or not to be rejuvenated by the take-over of a Chinese hegemon"

(Komlosy, 2013:375). Claimed by Komlosy and supported by Griffiths/Luciani (2011), Frank (1998), and Menzel (2015), "renewal would allow China to continue building up its industrial capacity (1990-2007/08) into a new cycle, by then transforming the initial dependency from Western impetus into the capacity to self-reliant R&D, setting new standards in product and process innovation within the next 25 years" (ibid).

Table 1. Kondratiev Cycles and Hegemony

Hegemon	Kondratiev A-phase	Kondratiev B-phase	Hegemon
GB up	1790-1820 Textiles	1820-1850	GB peak
GB maturity	1850-1873 Rail roads, steel	1873-1896	GB decline
U.S. up	1896-1914 Electro, chemistry, food	1914-1945	U.S. peak
U.S. maturity	1945-1973 Mass consumer goods, automobiles, petro-chemistry	1973-1990	U.S. decline
China up	1990-2008 Building up industrial capacity	2008-2030? Transforming dependent into leading capacity, setting standards	China peak?
China maturity?			China Decline?

Source: Komlosy, 2013:376

According to Table 1, the world is experiencing a Kondratieff B-phase, "the decline of U.S. hegemony would open a period of competing great powers, old cores striving to maintain, new ones to achieve a globally leading position, whether this position would open a new hegemonic cycle of the capitalist world-system or a posthegemonic Chinese-led market-economy" (Komlosy, 2013: 377).

Concluding Remarks

The paper concludes firstly that, China's externalizing behavior in the Arctic region is governed by the internalized law of value of the modern world-system, i.e., the endless accumulation of capital. The ongoing relationship between China and Arctic, to be specific, China's effort of incorporating the Arctic's raw materials into the commodity chain, reflect both the basic rule of law, endless accumulation of capital, and the above-mentioned mechanism that instantly reproduces the core-like/periphery-like division of labor. In other words, such effort will help to expand the geographic boundaries of the division of labor of the world-economy.

The paper concludes secondly that, China has benefited and is still benefiting from the world-economy's division of labor, with Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, and most recently the Arctic serving as relatively subordinated resource peripheries.

The paper concludes thirdly that, driven by a strong upward mobility, China has leapfrogged the periphery and semi-periphery and gained a semi-core position with an upward trend to the core, through offering a favorable external environment to the Arctic (invitation to promote). China's economic expansion, most recently to the High North, accelerates the structural profit squeeze of the capitalist world economy.

The paper concludes lastly that, since the world-economy is currently in Kondratieff B-phase, China, as an emerging global core, is logically dedicated to the relocation of productive activity and the probability of alternative profitable outlets, where the Arctic is highly compatible. China's huge enthusiasm in the Arctic could be understood as seizing the chance of searching for alternative profitable outlets and relocating its productive activity.

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Complexities of Representation: Chinese Outbound Tourists as De Facto Ambassadors in Southern Africa

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Abstract

Exploring the representational effect of tourism, this study examines factors that influence perceptions that Chinese outbound tourists are representatives or de facto ambassadors of the Chinese government advancing its national objectives abroad. The paper finds that the Chinese government is ambivalent, and at times inconsistent about endowing individual tourists with the responsibility to serve as its de facto ambassadors. In addition, the paper argues that the role of tourism in China's bilateral relations with South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe influence general perceptions among bureaucrats and elites in the three countries that Chinese outbound tourists are representatives of the Chinese government.

Keywords: Outbound Tourism, Tourists, Representation, China, Bilateral Relations

Introduction

For political elites in select Southern African countries, what does Chinese tourism represent? Do they regard Chinese tourists as representatives of the Chinese government, advancing its national objectives abroad?[3] What is the representational power of Chinese tourists to the making of Sino-African people-to-people engagement and foreign policy relations? In general, the study of interlink between tourism (and tourists) and a country's national interests is crucial to understanding the 'instrumentalisation' of tourism, which increasingly, beyond the revenue and tourism statistics, has 'representational meaning' in state-to-state relations. This is essential because as put by Linda Richter, tourism is generally seen "largely in economic terms, with little awareness of its potential political impact" (1989:3). Important to note is that, the representational meaning is not universal but contextual and relatable to a country's national interests and foreign policy objectives. It is therefore an idea that is given localized geospatial meanings. For instance, in basic terms and based on findings of our empirical research in China and Southern Africa, for Beijing, burgeoning outbound tourism *represent* national rejuvenation and realisation of the 'China Dream', evoking nationalism and legitimation of the Communist Party of China (CPC). The fact that in 2018, Chinese travelers made a total of 149.72 million outbound trips, spending over US$120 billion, solidifies the image of a prosperous and confident China on path to becoming a 'moderately prosperous society'. For Zimbabwe, an

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[3] In this paper, we use the term [unofficial] representatives, agents, and [unofficial or citizen] ambassadors interchangeably mostly for our analytical framing, although sometimes Chinese literature also refers to these terms.

Approved Destination Status (ADS) and subsequent hosting of Chinese tourists represent its burgeoning bilateral relations with Beijing, and its regional competitiveness - proving to the West that it has political legitimacy. On the other hand, in Namibia, Chinese tourists represent its independence from a historical dominance by South Africa over its tourism industry and economy - suggesting its ability to compete with Pretoria for Chinese tourists as an equal-status sovereign nation. In sum, the three examples, which are discussed in detail in this paper, imply that the same group of Chinese tourists can represent and have different meanings attributed to them in relation to a country's national interests and foreign policy objectives.

The representations are, however, the consequences of actors and processes often situated outside the contours of the state and its foreign policy making processes. They depend on flows of tourists, and their individual and collective behaviour abroad. In addition, perceptions of national tourism agencies and other stakeholders in the hospitality industry regarding tourists from abroad matter, and feed into production of the representations. Suggesting the critical role played by tourism in advancing national objectives and shaping of states' foreign policies. Existing scholarship in International Relations (IR) and foreign policy analysis eschews this political and representational role of tourists and tourism, particularly outbound tourism. This is because tourism, whether inbound or outbound, has generally been considered too private and ad hoc to systematically influence foreign policy or national objectives; or in cases where a link is made between tourism and foreign policy, it is regarded as a soft power instrument (Kwek, Wang & Weaver, 2013; Tse, 2013; Chen & Duggan, 2016; Xu, Wang & Song, 2018). However, the rise of China's state-driven outbound tourism is demanding a relook on the role of tourism in foreign policy. This paper contributes to this critical and emerging debate on the instrumentalisation of tourists by states to advance foreign policy objectives. Specifically, it explores how and why Chinese outbound tourists have come to be seen in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia as representatives or de facto ambassadors of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Notably, there is no lack of impressionistic observations framing Chinese tourists as instruments of China's soft power. For instance, Kwek, Wang and Weaver, by using "analytical auto-ethnography to explore the package tour experience of overseas Chinese," argue that China's "international tourism policies highlight the interdependency between inbound tourism growth, economic development and soft power projections" (2013:37). Similarly, Xu, Wang and Song maintain that through its ADS scheme, promotion of tourism culture activities abroad, use of tourism as a form of foreign aid and strengthening of bilateral tourism cooperation, the Chinese government is increasing "China's soft power through outbound tourism" (2018:6).

However, there is a dearth of empirically grounded scholarship on the role of tourism, in particular, Chinese outbound tourism in Beijing's foreign policy. In arguing that the Chinese state instrumentalises outbound tourism to achieve its national objectives, this paper goes beyond the tourism-as-soft-power argument and contributes to the development of empirically-based research by focusing on Chinese tourism in three Southern African countries; South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. The three countries were selected for two reasons. Among the 16 countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) - a regional organization of countries in the Southern Africa region, the three are among Southern Africa's biggest tourist destinations with the most significant tourist attractions; Kruger National Park (South Africa), Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe) and the Namib Desert (Namibia). Between 2009 and 2017, according to the World Bank, Zimbabwe and South Africa were Southern Africa's top two receivers of international tourists (see table 1 below).

Second, although Mozambique and Botswana received more international tourists than Namibia, their national tourism boards do not focus on Chinese tourists. Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa have the ADS, enabling them to market their tourist destinations in China and, among the 16 SADC countries, they have had the most significant tourist marketing campaigns and have tourism marketing offices in China (Chen & Duggan, 2016). Their interaction with Beijing and contact with Chinese tourists make them useful in investigating factors influencing perceptions, in the three countries, that Chinese tourists are representatives of the Chinese government.

Table 1: International Tourism - Number of Arrivals (in thousands)

Rank (2009-17)	Country	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	**TOTAL**
1	South Africa	7 012	8 074	8 339	9 188	9 537	9 549	8 904	10 044	10 285	**80 932**
2	Zimbabwe	2 017	2 239	2 423	1 794	1 833	1 880	2 057	2 168	2 423	**18 834**
3	Mozambique	1 461	1 718	1 902	2 113	1 886	1 661	1 552	1 639	1 447	**15 379**
4	Botswana	1 721	1 973	..	1 614	1 544	1 966	1 528	1 574	..	**11 920**

Table 1: International Tourism - Number of Arrivals (in thousands)

Rank (2009-17)	Country	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	TOTAL
5	Namibia	980	984	1 027	1,079	1 176	1 320	1 388	1 469	1 499	**10 922**
6	Mauritius	871	935	965	965	993	1 038	1 151	1 275	1 342	**9 535**
7	Tanzania	695	754	843	1,043	1 063	1 113	1 104	1 233	1 275	**9 123**
8	Eswatini	908	868	879	888	968	939	873	947	921	**8 191**
9	Zambia	710	815	920	859	915	947	932	956	1 083	**8 137**
10	Malawi	755	746	767	770	795	819	805	849	837	**7 143**
11	Lesotho	344	426	398	423	433	1 079	1 082	1 196	1 137	**6 518**
12	Angola	366	425	481	528	650	595	592	397	261	**4 295**
13	Seychelles	158	175	194	208	230	233	276	303	350	**2 127**
14	Madagascar	163	196	225	256	196	222	244	293	255	**2 050**
15	Congo, Dem. Rep.	53	81	186	167	191	334	354	351	..	**1 717**
16	Comoros	11.3	15.3	18.8	22.8	21.9	22.8	23.6	26.8	28	**191.3**

Source: World Bank

Considering that the three countries have the most elaborate campaigns to attract Chinese tourists (Kromberg, 2014; Chen & Duggan, 2016), we selected them to examine whether they regarded Chinese tourists to be representatives of the Chinese government , able to advance its foreign policy objectives in the countries. Furthermore, we explore whether the Chinese government regard Chinese tourists as its representatives abroad. In investigating these issues, we argue that the representation of tourism in China's bilateral relations with the three Southern African countries influence perceptions that Chinese outbound tourists are agents of

the Chinese government. This argument is based on findings deduced from expert interviews we conducted in China and the three countries. Details of the interviews and the sensitivity of conducting research on China in the three countries is discussed in the next section. The sections that follow analyse the incorporation of Chinese tourists into Beijing's foreign policy processes; the instrumentalisation of Chinese outbound tourists and factors influencing perceptions that Chinese tourists are representatives of Beijing. The conclusion sums up the main implications.

Researching Chinese tourism in Southern Africa: the tourists, elites and the sensitivities
Research on China related matters in Africa is often problematic due to the secretive nature of some African governments' engagement with China (Asongu & Aminkeng, 2013:12). From our experience, even the seemingly 'politically unencumbered' subject of Chinese outbound tourism is considered sensitive by some government officials in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia making access to information on the subject a challenge for researchers. At the same time, Chinese tourists in group tours, such as the ones we encountered in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe simply have too strict and heavy-laden itineraries to spare a moment for an interview. For instance, the two groups that we managed to informally engage with were seemingly uncomfortable discussing in public whether they represented the Chinese government's national interests in their touristic activities. The sensitivity and discomfort of both the government officials and Chinese tourists suggest, in some respects, the political and diplomatic signification of Chinese outbound tourism to Africa.

Regardless, in examining why the three Southern African countries regard Chinese tourists as representatives of China, it seemed prudent to focus on experts and policy-implementers. This is because our focus was to examine perceptions of national tourism agencies, who have a mandate to market their countries as tourist destinations in China; and actors in the hospitality industry, who host Chinese tourists. Yet, accessing these experts in Zimbabwe, China, South Africa and Namibia proved to be challenging, but surmountable because of gatekeepers who required convincing about the academic objectives of the research. Inevitably, there were several last-minute cancellations because some high-level government officials withdrew their consent to being interviewed. For example, an official in a local governmental tourist agency in Cape Town, South Africa cancelled a confirmed interview appointment without explanation and stopped responding to emails. Accordingly, negotiating for an audience with the experts and/or their gatekeepers constituted an integral part of our research preparation.

Regardless, our research was guided by qualitative approaches, and data collected

between June and October 2017 in Windhoek, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Victoria Falls, Harare and Beijing. The main sources of data were key informant interviewees selected for their expertise in Chinese tourism as well as their strategic and professional positions in government, national tourism agencies, the hospitality industry and tour agencies. In sum, respondents to our face-to-face, semi-structured qualitative interviews can be categorised into four distinct but interdependent tourism stakeholders. (1) Policymakers and implementers; directors in ministries responsible for tourism and directors at national tourism boards. (2) Tourism service providers; tourism agencies bringing Chinese tourists to the three African countries, hoteliers and hospitality associations. That is, umbrella bodies representing the interests of private hotels and actors in the hospitality industry. (3) Chinese tourists in tour groups in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. (4) Academic experts on tourism and China's foreign policy.

To get an understanding of the PRC's foreign policy objectives regarding Chinese outbound tourists, we interviewed academics specialising in tourism and the foreign policy of China at the Renmin University of China, Peking University, Tsinghua University and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). In Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa, interviewing directors at the Namibia Tourism Board (NTB), the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) and the Department of Tourism in South Africa enabled us to expand our access in the field. The officials we interviewed pointed us to potential interviewees. As noted by Alexander Bogner, Beate Littig and Wolfgang Menz, when targeted experts who hold key positions in their organisations are willing to participate, they present: "opportunities for expanding the researcher's access to the field […] and indicate additional potential interviewees with expertise in a particular field during the interview itself " (2009: 2). For instance, in Zimbabwe, a high-level official at the ZTA instructed a junior manager to give us access to statistical data that the junior manager had previously refused to give us access to. In Namibia, an official at the Hospitality Association of Namibia drove us to places where we could meet tour groups of Chinese tourists and referred us to other potential interviewees. However, to reduce the homogeneity of informants' views and voices in snowball sampling, multiple initial contact points representing a maximum variation were accessed.

Nonetheless, considering the sensitivity of China-related issues in the three countries, expert interviews proved to be a difficult but effective means of obtaining critical data that would have been impossible to get without the support of the experts we interviewed. In our case, the expert interviews shortened 'time-consuming data gathering processes [because we regarded] the experts as 'crystallization points for practical insider knowledge" and we

interviewed them "as surrogates for a wider circle of players" (Bogner, Littig and Menz, 2009: 2). Accordingly, we gained extensive access to reports and statements on outbound Chinese tourism issued by the governments of Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe that were not easily accessible to the public. For example, we were given access to a Memorandum of Understanding signed by China and one of the three countries on the promotion of tourism between the two countries.

In sum, we interviewed more than ten expert informants in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and China. Three respondents were heads of national tourism agencies in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia. One was a director of tourism in South Africa's Department of Tourism. Two Chinese tour companies in Windhoek and Cape Town were interviewed. Three other informants work in the tourism industry as hotel front-of-house staff and in hospitality associations in the three countries. In Johannesburg, we interviewed a hotel staff member who participated in a public-private partnership initiative to instruct hotel staff in Mandarin and Chinese culture. In Windhoek, we interviewed, the head of the Hospitality Association of Namibia and in Victoria Falls we interviewed a hotel porter at the Kingdom Hotel. One of the informants is a traditional chief in Victoria Falls. In Beijing, we interviewed academics working on Chinese foreign policy and soft power strategies at the Renmin University of China, Tsinghua University, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Peking University. To ensure a holistic view of how China and the Chinese in general are perceived in African countries, brief interviews with locals and Confucius Institute staff at the University of Zimbabwe were also conducted, lasting between 10 and 30 minutes. They offered supplementary information for our analysis. The following sections discuss main factors contributing to general perceptions that the Chinese state regards its outbound tourists as its representatives.

Historical analysis of the development of tourism in China

China's historical and political development since 1949 has led to the state playing a dominant role in tourism, controlling both domestic and international travel by Chinese nationals. Thus, tourism was regarded as both a political and strategic foreign policy matter such that, until 1978 the Bureau of Travel and Tourism (BTT), which managed travel agencies in the country was directly under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rather than the State Council. Yet, even with the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), the agency in charge of tourism now squarely under the State Council, the government continues to play a leading role in directing China's tourism policy, developing the tourism industry and instituting domestic and foreign policies

that subtly influence travel patterns of Chinese tourists. Wooyeal Paik (2019) concurs that the Chinese government maintained, and still maintains a stringent control over these tourists and the tourism industry.

Prior to China's opening up, people-to-people exchange through tourism had a strong emphasis on fostering relationships with then allied countries, such as the Soviet Union and regions like Eastern Europe. The policy was favoured because of "both its long-run economic prospects and the immediate political goodwill and publicity the new hospitality may garner" (Richter, 1989:5). The trend was however, broken by dramatic domestic ruptures like the Cultural Revolution and the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident leading to a decline in inbound and outbound tourism (Uysal, Wei & Reid, 1986). At that time, outbound tourism was only limited to state-sanctioned tours, state visits and business travels. There was no self-paying ordinary Chinese. Deng Xiaoping's economic reform era was also a turning point because tourism began to be presented as a tool for economic development and source of foreign currency. From then on, tourism assumed a dual economic and politico-diplomatic role leading some scholars to describe it as "tourism with Chinese characteristics" (Zhang, King and Ap, 1999).

Despite the domestic and international implications of the Cultural Revolution and Tiananmen, China did not stop developing its inbound tourism industry through the use of various financial incentives and gradually opening up to outbound tourism. Linking inbound tourism to its diplomatic objectives, Beijing invited foreign dignitaries, students, and elites to visit China. The underlying logic was that these visits would increase foreign guests' acceptance of China, both culturally and politically, fostering mutual understanding and friendship. Despite warnings to the Chinese government by both Western and Chinese scholars that "to know us" does not mean "to love us" (Rawnsley, 2015), the government continues to invite and sponsor foreigners to visit China in an attempt to use tourism as a soft power tool to advance its national interest. Thus, as tourism's role in economic development grows, its political and foreign policy functions are being consolidated, making Chinese outbound tourism a diplomatic tool for Beijing (Tse, 2013; Chen & Duggan, 2016).

One of the elaborate ways that Beijing influences the traveling patterns of Chinese outbound tourists is by imposing tourist bans as a sanctioning tool against countries that happen to offend the PRC. For example, in 2018, China barred its citizens from visiting the Pacific island nation of Palau as a sanction for its diplomatic links with Taiwan. The ban significantly affected Palau's tourism-dependent economy because China is the country's largest tourism market. "Chinese tourists accounted for 47 per cent of international visitors to Palau in 2016,

with Taiwan making up 10 per cent" (South China Morning Post, 2018). In 2017, South Korean government said that "it had learned that Chinese authorities summoned representatives of travel agencies in Beijing […] and instructed them to stop selling South Korean tours" (Mullen, 2017). The 'tourism sanction' was in retaliation to South Korea's decision to host the THAAD missile defense system.

> In the month after the THAAD launch, South Korea saw a sudden 40 percent plunge in Chinese tourists – who, previously, accounted for nearly 50 percent of all arrivals into the country (Coca, 2018).

This imposition of a 'tourism sanction' and the historical development of Chinese outbound tourism aid perceptions of interlink between tourism and China's national objectives as espoused by the Communist Party of China.

Another approach that Beijing has used is to support tourism to certain strategically important countries or areas. Tse's study (2013) gives ample examples such as encouragement of Mainland Chinese to visit the Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of Hong Kong and Macau to help boost their economies as a sign of the motherland's good will towards the two regions. It is also not a coincidence that China heavily encouraged Chinese tourists to Southeast Asian countries after they were devastated by the tsunami in 2004 as a way of adding credibility to China's diplomatic discourse that it is benevolent to its neighboring countries (Tse, 2013).

The tradition of seeing tourism as a key component of people-to-people exchange that has been in existence even before the Cultural Revolution remains, suggesting that tourism continues to be "an important part of the country's diplomatic strategy [and] plays an active part in international relations and cooperation with other countries" (Zhang, 2016: 33-34). As further put by Wooyeal Paik, "the political dimension to Chinese outbound tourism expands and results in more political relations in a host country's local, national, and international contexts" (2019:2). What is missing, however in the discussion of Chinese tourism as a tool for achieving economic, political and foreign policy objectives, is the role of Chinese outbound tourists. To date, there has been no significant inquiry on whether Chinese outbound tourists are indeed acting as unofficial representatives of the PRC in the countries that they travel to. Unless there is a nuanced understanding of the role that Chinese tourists play in advancing 'perceived' Beijing's foreign policy objectives, assertions that China is using tourism as a diplomatic tool and soft power strategy remain abstract and unsubstantiated.

Demand for tourists to advance China's national objectives

Socio-economic transformations in China increased the financial capacity of previously disadvantaged Chinese to travel abroad. McKinsey reported in 2018 that from 2010 to 2015,

the number of outbound trips from China more than doubled, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15 percent (Dichter et al., 2018:4). In addition, the growth was necessitated by alteration of visa restrictions for Chinese tourists by approximately 66 countries. As more of them travel to Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas, their general interest in exotic parts of the world, and taste for experiencing the outside world has grown. In light of these developments, to the Chinese government, outbound tourism demonstrates the prosperity of Chinese nationals and the economic power of China to the world (Arlt, 2016). Beijing has even designated tourism a strategic area of national interest, and therefore an enabler and expression of the China Dream and national rejuvenation. Accordingly, China's "new tourism-related regulations and policies and strategic interests' are geared towards 'building its 'soft power' through outbound tourism" (Li, 2016: xxvii). But while there seem to be consensus among Chinese academics and government officials that outbound tourism can be of service to China's national interests and foreign policy objectives (Tang, 2014; Hu, 2009), there is disagreement over the actual role that outbound Chinese tourists should and are playing.

Chinese scholars often discuss the role of Chinese tourists in Beijing's foreign policy. Their approach is usually more normative and ideological, urging China to advance its soft power via outbound tourism. As China's tourism industry grows from domestic tourism to inbound tourism and then outbound tourism, more and more PRC foreign policy scholars are beginning to elaborate on their expectation for Chinese outbound tourism to serve the country's political interests (Hollinshead & Hou, 2012; Tse, 2013; Chen & Duggan, 2016). However, they tend to take an economic rather than international politics perspective. That means, articles on this topic are usually published in business-oriented and general social science journals. On the other hand, articles published in Western journals (even when published by Chinese authors) tend to eschew normative discussions. Instead, there is a tendency to describe Chinese outbound tourism as being 'tourism with Chinese characteristics' with suggestions that its service to politics has historical roots and continues to be directed by the Chinese state.

Nonetheless, in China's tourism legislation and policies, there is no clear mention of Chinese tourists being 'unofficial ambassadors' or representatives of China. Liu Haifang, a professor at Peking University argues that the "Chinese government has not embraced tourists as citizen ambassadors yet. It may take some time before the Chinese government might get this perspective. My reason is, I don't see any of this type of efforts to prepare tourists".[4] To Liu Haifang, unless the Chinese government recognises outbound tourists as citizen

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[4]. Email response from Liu Haifang on 22 September 2017.

ambassadors and prepares them to act as ambassadors, even in the cultural sense, they will not be such. This is understandable, because considering the nature of the Chinese state, and its penchant to regulate and control global perceptions about its image, the Chinese government may not be keen on officially designating Chinese outbound tourists as citizen ambassadors without a clear plan on how the messaging will be standardised and regulated. This however, does not mean that if they are not de jure citizen ambassadors they cannot be de facto citizen ambassadors.

Chinese outbound tourists are, in fact, de facto representatives of China, its culture, ideals and interests abroad. References to Chinese tourists as representatives of China can be inferred from speeches by senior government officials. Speaking to members of the Western Returned Scholars Association in October 2013, Xi Jinping urged Chinese citizens abroad to

> Act as unofficial ambassadors to promote people-to-people friendship, and explain China's culture, history and points of view in such a way that people from other countries can understand and identify with China, and be ready to give it greater appreciation and support (Xi, 2017:66)

Although the speech was not directed to outbound Chinese tourists, generic references to Chinese abroad can be interpreted as inclusive of the tourists. A renowned scholar at CASS argued that although Chinese tourists are not regarded by the government as its representatives, they have a duty to promote a positive image of China abroad.[5] This is however at odds with a statement issued by China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism calling on Chinese tourists to behave properly because "when abroad, every tourist represents their home country" (Xinhua, 2019). Vice Premier Wang Yang also noted at National Tourism Law conference that "some tourists don't obey public rules while traveling and are hampering our national image" (Chang, 2013). By linking Chinese tourists' behaviour abroad with the national image and regarding them as representing the country, Chinese officials are imputing obligations and duties on Chinese tourists to act as its representatives. The implication is that outbound Chinese tourists are regarded as *de facto* representatives of China and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not tarnish the image of China.

Related to the above is the imposition of fines and other forms of punishment by the Chinese government on Chinese tourists that behave badly when abroad. In 2013, China's National Tourism Administration published a 'Guide to Civilized Tourism and Travel'. The

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[5]. Interview in Beijing, 13 September 2017. Interviews for this article in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe were conducted by Yu-Wen Chen and Obert Hodzi. Interviews in Beijing were conducted by Obert Hodzi. To preserve anonymity of interviewees, we do not identify them with their names except in cases where they expressly agreed to be identified.

fines and punishments accompanying the guide are aimed at compelling Chinese tourists to act in a manner that does not bring the reputation of China into disrepute. This is because the 'bad behaviour' of Chinese outbound tourists is regarded by Chinese officials as tarnishing the image of China, thus imputing representation responsibilities on Chinese outbound tourists (Waldmeir, 2015). Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui succinctly put it:

> The uncivilised behaviour of some Chinese tourists abroad, including talking loudly in public places and carving characters on cultural relics, has seriously harmed the country's image while annoying local residents (Zheng, 2013).

The fact that tourists' misbehaviour attracts high-level government attention and action shows that the Chinese government realises that Chinese tourists are, in a way, China's ambassadors. Accordingly, the official line seems to be that "the way Chinese tourists behave while overseas will affect the international image of China being a country of courteous and good manner" (Tse & Hobson, 2008:150). In addition to government sanction, there is increased citizen-led shaming of tourists that tarnish the image of China by behaving badly abroad. The naming and shamings mostly done by ordinary Chinese citizens on Weibo and other social networking sites, because there is a growing awareness, driven by nationalism and patriotism, that Chinese people represent China abroad, even as tourists. Jiang Chang, a professor in the School of Journalism and Communication at Tsinghua University noted in an interview that "Chinese nationals oversee the behaviour of Chinese tourists by criticising and shaming tourists that tarnish the image of China by behaving badly abroad."[6]

The sentiments of Chinese nationals on social networking sites are similar to those of the Chinese tourists that we interviewed in Cape Town. A Chinese tour operator based in Cape Town, whose company has organised several high-level Chinese tours to South Africa confirmed that although Chinese tourists are not official representatives of the Chinese government with a specific mandate to advance Beijing's foreign policy objectives, they do so out of their own volition. He asserted that "Chinese tourists are very patriotic and have a great sense of nationalism […] so they will not act against Chinese interests."[7]

The factors raised above, more-so, attempts by the Chinese government to control the behaviour of Chinese tourists mean that there is no optimal distance between itself and the Chinese outbound tourists. The implication is that it has created the impression in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa that Chinese tourists are representatives of China. Similarly, in China, over the past five years, there has also been a growing realisation among government

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[6].Interview in Beijing, China, 6 September 2017.
[7].Interview in Cape Town, South Africa, 23 June 2017.

officials that Chinese tourists should be regarded as representatives of the Chinese people in countries they visit. Notably, this is because of the 'bad behaviour' of some Chinese tourists is directly imputed on all Chinese people. For instance, an official at the Hospitality Association of Namibia suggested that hotels and lodges in Namibia were not keen on taking in Chinese tourists because they left restaurants and hotel rooms messy.[8] An official in the Namibia Tourism Board suggested that "even though Chinese tourists in Namibia may not be regarded as official representatives of China, Namibians will come to know China and form perceptions of the Chinese and the PRC based on the behaviour of the Chinese tourists."[9]

Perceptions of the representativeness of Chinese tourists are also fueled by media reports in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. Suggesting, as in the case of poaching, that Chinese tourists are mostly involved in illicit ivory and rhino horn trading as well as poaching. In 2016, the Namibian Chamber of Environment, on behalf of 40 Namibian environmental organisations delivered an open letter to the Chinese embassy in Windhoek, which was also published in the newspaper, *The Namibian* complaining about

> ongoing commercial wildlife and ecological crimes committed by Chinese national in Namibia [and] the apparent lack of action being taken by the Chinese embassy in Namibia and the Chinese state to put to a stop the unlawful actions of their nationals (Brown, 2017)

Of importance to our discussion is the link that the Namibian Chamber of Environment made between the alleged Chinese nationals and the Chinese state. They stated in the letter that:

> We do not claim to fully understand the relationship between Chinese nationals and the Chinese state. It appears that Chinese nationals are not at liberty to obtain passports and travel independently around the world, bringing their personal capital and starting businesses in their own names in whatever country would have them, independent of the Chinese state. As such Chinese nationals in Namibia appear to be part of state-supported system (Brown, 2017)

According to an official at the Namibia Tourism Board, Xin Shunkang, the Chinese Ambassador to Namibia was forced to convene meetings with the press and residents to dispel perceptions that all Chinese were poachers working with Beijing's tacit approval. However, even though the Chinese government does not consider Chinese tourists as its official representatives, there seem to be a realization outside and within China that they 'unofficially' represent China and the Chinese people.

Instrumentalisation of tourism

The Chinese government frames outbound tourism to developing countries as a public good; a

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[8] .Interview in Windhoek, Namibia, 19 June 2017.
[9] .Interview in Windhoek, Namibia, 20 June 2017.

form of Beijing's contribution to their economic development, showing that both outbound and inbound tourism are soft power advancement tools (Kwek, Wang & Weave, 2014; Guo, Li & Wang, 2014; Stumpf & Swanger, 2015; Weaver, 2015). Such framings are aimed at fostering the identity of China as a benevolent global power, whose economic growth is not a threat but an opportunity for all countries. Yet, to fully benefit from Chinese outbound tourism, countries must be granted the ADS, which is based on their bilateral relations with China. The combined effect of the ADS as an inclusionary-exclusionary tool and framing of Chinese tourists as an integral part of Beijing's development assistance strategy supposes a subtle instrumentalisation of outbound tourism by China. The effect is that the ADS is a geoeconomic instrument that China uses to expand its influence abroad under the guise of promoting people-to-people exchange (Hollinshead & Hou, 2012; Tse, 2013; Chen & Duggan, 2016). Furthermore, other studies have shown how the Chinese government uses ADS to influence the international policies "by co-opting nations into activities pertaining to their agenda" (Xu, Wang & Song 2018: 7).

The instrumentalisation of outbound tourism for national interest and foreign policy ends is reflected by the eligibility criteria that countries must meet before they are granted ADS. The eligibility requirement was raised by China when it urged more eligible African countries to apply for the ADS to increase their inflows of Chinese tourists. In making the decision whether to grant ADS, the Chinese government, through the CNTA considers, among other factors, a country's diplomatic relations with China and the country's adherence to the One-China Principle.[10] As diplomatic ties with China are a pre-requisite to being designated an ADS, Taiwan's last diplomatic partner in Africa, the Kingdom of Eswatini, may never have the ADS because "China has not hesitated to use ADS awards as 'soft power' tactics to gain political advantage in international affairs. No country that politically recognises Taiwan has received ADS, even though China granted ADS to Taiwan itself in 2008" (Bonham & Mak, 2014). The implication is that Taiwan's diplomatic partners in Africa and elsewhere are excluded from state-driven 'tourism for development' initiatives such as China's "plans to send 150 million travellers to countries along the One Belt, One Road in the next five years" (Dasgupta, 2016) that Li Jinzao, head of the CNTA announced in 2016. Thus, although not explicit, tourism and the ADS are aimed at enhancing China's national interests abroad.

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[10] .Other criteria include hosting countries' tourism amenities, safety, easy access to transportation, and guarantee for reciprocity, meaning that visitors from African countries to China should also increase when the number of Chinese tourists to African countries increases (Kim, Guo, & Argusa, 2005).

In China's relations with Africa, tourism is among areas given priority in promoting mutually beneficial cooperation. In that respect, it has two major objectives. First, to promote bilateral relations through people-to-people exchange, and secondly to enhance economic growth in African countries as part of China's economic development programs for Africa. These two objectives were first set at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Ministerial Conference held in Beijing from 10 to 12 October 2000. Ministers from China and Africa declared that "tourism is an important economic activity which has potential for generating financial resources that will help Africa's accelerated economic growth, the creation of employment and the alleviation of poverty" (FOCAC, 2015a). The declaration was further emphasised at the 2015 Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation where both African countries and China agreed to use tourism to deepen "understanding and friendship between the peoples of China and Africa" (FOCAC, 2015a). They then pledged to "continue to facilitate travels by their nationals between China and Africa and promote activities in each other's countries and regions" (FOCAC, 2015b).

A few months after the FOCAC summit in Johannesburg, China hosted the first World Conference on 'Tourism for Development' held on 16 May 2016 in Beijing. In that conference, Premier Li Keqiang described tourism as "the new driver of economic growth in China" in addition to being "the most direct and natural way of people-to-people exchange" that "holds the key to state-to-state relations" (The State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2016). The result is that in the past two decades, a narrative of tourism as a tool for enhancing bilateral relations and enabling Africa's economic development has taken root, making Chinese outbound tourism to Africa a state-driven rather than a people-driven matter. An official in the Department of Tourism in South Africa argued that because tourism is part of China's bilateral engagements with South Africa, their focus on Chinese tourists is aimed at strengthening diplomatic ties with Beijing and open doors for other forms of bilateral engagement. It therefore seems that how many Chinese tourists visit a country has become a measure of the bilateral relations between that country and China.

Similarly, an official at the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority argued that in focusing on the Chinese tourists, the government of Zimbabwe sought to strengthen its bilateral relations with Beijing, while sending a message to the West, which has designated Zimbabwe a pariah state, that it has political legitimacy. Chinese tourists were therefore accorded special treatment that was not given to tourists from other countries. Along the same lines, an official at the Namibia Tourism Board asserted that besides using Chinese tourists to bolster bilateral relations with China, Namibia sought to assert its independence from South Africa, which regarded itself the

leaders of tourism in the region. Accordingly, Chinese tourists represented not just revenue, but state-to-state relations, compelling governments in the three African countries to regard them as 'unofficial' representatives of the Chinese government.

Perceived preferential treatment of Chinese tourists

In Zimbabwe and South Africa perceptions that Chinese tourists are representatives of the Chinese government are not just based on their individual or collective behaviour but on the preferential treatment they allegedly get from the Zimbabwean and South African government. Although none of our interviewees in both countries could specify the forms that the preferential treatment took, they were adamant that the police and immigration officers treated the Chinese better although China is not even their biggest market at all.[11] Part of the reason as put by an official at the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority is that there was an impression that Chinese tourists had to be treated better because the Zimbabwean government did not want anything to happen to them that could jeopardise its bilateral relations with China.[12] In South Africa and Namibia, government officials made the same assertions, arguing that their focus on the Chinese tourism market was state-driven rather than market-driven. The effect is that Chinese tourists were regarded as representing the broader interests of both China and each of the three Southern African countries hence they were 'representatives' of the PRC.

In addition, the intervention by government officials in criminal matters involving Chinese tourists contributed to perceptions that the tourists represented China. In all three countries, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, some Chinese on tourist visas were arrested for attempting to smuggle ivory or rhino horns. The cases were reported in local media in a manner that suggested the accused Chinese persons were representative of all the Chinese nationals. While in Namibia the Chinese ambassador issued a statement arguing that the arrested Chinese were not representative of the Chinese government or the Chinese people. In Zimbabwe, some government officials attempted to assist the arrested Chinese to evade justice. This fueled notions that the arrested Chinese were officials or representatives of the Chinese government. Accordingly, based on their association with government officials in Zimbabwe,

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[11]In 2016, 117 144 Chinese tourists visited South Africa making the 6th largest source of tourists. The highest number of tourists to South Africa came from the United Kingdom (447 840), the United States (345 013), Germany (311 832), France (154 226) and the Netherlands (147 973). In comparison, only 9 164 Chinese tourists visited Zimbabwe, making them Zimbabwe's tenth largest source of tourists, way behind other countries from Asia, such as Japan (22 566) and South Korea (12 956). In Namibia, Chinese tourists (9 722) were not even in the country's top ten tourists market.
[12]Interview in Harare, Zimbabwe, 30 June 2017.

some Chinese on tourist visas are regarded by locals as representatives of China. In sum, there is a strong perception even among officials in government that the Chinese tourists were representative of the Chinese government in that any harm on them would result in a break-up of diplomatic relations with China hence, in their view, they ought to be treated well to avoid complicating their countries' diplomatic relations with China.

Conclusion

As states scramble for a share of China's outbound tourism, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia are leveraging on their diplomatic, economic and political relations with Beijing. In the process, they are imputing representative responsibilities on Chinese tourists. What is also emerging from our research is that Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa are also using Chinese outbound tourism to achieve their foreign policy objectives, particularly enhancing their bilateral relations with China. The distinctive importance of Chinese outbound tourism to bilateral relations between China and Africa was confirmed by interviewees at the NTB, ZTA and the South African Department of Tourism. The officials at the three institutions suggested that the push to attract more Chinese tourists was an executive decision taken by the respective countries' political leadership. Both the Chinese government and governments of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe are pushing for Chinese tourists as a tool for enhancing bilateral relations, making Chinese tourists a function of international relations and politics. As part of the people-to-people exchange, Chinese tourism to the three countries complements traditional and formal diplomacy. It has significant impact on relations between nations.

Accordingly, the Chinese government and Chinese outbound tourists in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia have an implied principal-agent relationship. The Chinese government recognise the implications of badly behaved outbound tourists on its international image, hence it expects Chinese outbound tourists to represent China well. On the other hand, through a combination of patriotism, government sanction on bad behaviour, naming and shaming by fellow Chinese citizens, and perceptions of their representativeness in host countries, Chinese tourists in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia assume the role of de facto representatives of China. Beyond the conduct of Chinese outbound tourists, the use of tourism by the Chinese government to expand bilateral and diplomatic ties with African countries and the exclusion of other countries from the ADS scheme create impressions that Chinese outbound tourists are China's soft power agents. Furthermore, the narrative of tourism as an instrument for achieving economic development and enhancing state-to-state relations add to the impression that Chinese tourism to Africa is more state-driven and aimed at achieving

foreign policy objectives than would tourism by, for instance, British tourists to African countries.

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Book Review

*Silvia Tieri**

LIM Tai Wei, Henry CHAN Hing Lee, Katherine TSENG Hui-Yi, LIM Wen Xin. 2016.
China's One Belt One Road Initiative. Imperial College Press, xiv-340 pages, ISBN: 978-1-78326-931-0.

China's One Belt One Road Initiative is a collection of essays focusing on the homonymous initiative promoted by the Xi government, also known by the acronyms OBOR (One Belt One Road Initiative) and BRI (Belt and Road Initiative). The book is edited by a team of four Singapore-based scholars and comprises 19 chapters written by researchers from Singapore, China and Malaysia.

The BRI is a development strategy which aims at creating a network of overland and maritime infrastructure spreading from Asia – specifically China – to Europe, in order to boost connectivity and economic cooperation across the two continents. Since its first announcement by President Xi in 2013, the project has been received with extremely diverse reactions, and a burning debate about its possible geopolitical and economic effects has developed.

This edited volume provides an explanation of the Chinese initiative in terms of its historical background, the development of its maritime and overland routes, and its potential impact on different regions involved in the connectivity network it plans to develop.

Leaving the Introduction and the Conclusion aside, the remaining 17 chapters are divided into four main sections. The first section, titled "The History of Zheng He (Cheng Ho) and the Maritime Silk Road," contains five chapters which look at the so-called ancient Silk Road − a network of trading routes linking China and Europe across Eurasia from 130 BCE to 1453 CE − and the travels of the Ming dynasty admiral Zheng He (1371-1433 CE).

Obviously, the BRI is a project deeply rooted in the economic and political reality of contemporary China and its global context. How then is ancient history relevant to its understanding? The reason is that both the ancient Silk Road and the explorations carried out by the legendary eunuch-admiral are regarded as some of Chinese history's most glorious chapters. They are often evoked by the Chinese government as historical precedents of the ongoing connectivity project, a sort of ideational foundation of the same. Such parallelism

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between past and present supports the ambitions of the BRI, proving that China can pride itself on a long tradition of developing transnational trade, building bridges among nations and exercising influence on them through pacific means.

Hence, this part of (not only) Chinese ancient history remains very relevant today, and its discussion is pertinent to a study of the BRI. However, the way history is addressed by the book benumbs its pertinence. Themes which are most critical to understand the BRI − e.g. the historical narrative used by the Chinese government in its propaganda, or a comparison between "ancient" and "new" Silk Roads, to mention just a few − are overlooked. Old trade routes and Zheng He are delineated as histories per se, disconnected from the real focus of the book. Consequently, the section is long and repetitive, and scarcely interesting to readers concerned with today's BRI.

The rest of the volume looks at more contemporary issues. The second section deals with "The Maritime Silk Road." However, Chapter 7 is again centred on Zheng He, this time on his various representations and cults which developed in the countries that his legendary explorations had reached. Chapter 8 focuses on the different ways in which the BRI has been received and interpreted. On one hand, the author exposes the various goals of the Belt and Road from a Sino-centric perspective: to accelerate the development of China's Western regions (p. 115), to increase China's "blue water naval capability" (p. 116), to support the country's "economic restructuring" (p. 117) and to strengthen President Xi's control over the same. On the other hand, the problematic aspects of the initiative are mentioned. These are, for example, geopolitical instability affecting specific regions; lack of details on the implementation and funding of the project; the presence of regional hegemons reluctant to open their "backyards" to China; and unsettled disputes involving China itself. Chapter 9 deals with the major of these territorial disputes: the South China Sea (SCS) dispute. The chapter maintains that the creation of a China-led Maritime Silk Road (MSR) has the potential for resolving the impasse, but how this could happen remains unclear.

The third section turns to the "The Overland Silk Road." Chapter 10 focuses on "The One Belt One Road Narratives" (p. 151), replicating the questions of Chapter 8. The issue of how the connectivity project will be funded is finally addressed in Chapter 11 and contextualized within the broader picture of China's domestic financial landscape. Chapter 12 and 13 look at BRI-related opportunities for transnational cooperation in the railway sector, and the exports of Chinese High Speed rails.

The last section, as the title suggests, is a "Region Specific Section – Country Case Studies." Chapter 14's point is that "Europe is vital in China's OBOR strategic plan" (p. 247), an interesting but unconvincing thesis. The following chapters focus on specific areas: Central and South Asia (15), Pakistan (16), Malaysia (17), and Japan (18). These "case studies" offer an overview of the set of interests and risks which are intrinsic to potential partnerships developing between China and the above-mentioned stakeholders under the BRI.

The book succeeds in providing an introduction to the complex reality of the BRI. However, a more critical problematization, in particular of its most controversial aspects, would have been a valuable contribution. The overall impression is that the book takes a positive stance on "China's One Belt One Road Initiative": nowhere is the BRI's legitimacy or its potential impact questioned, and while some essays support the enterprise rather implicitly, in other papers the authors seem to empathize with Chinese leadership more clearly. At the same time, much of the underlying reasons are taken for granted. Especially in light of Beijing's debated growing hegemony and a possible future of indebtedness for BRI beneficiaries, it is not clearly explained why China's One Belt One Road Initiative should be considered –as maintained in the book– a good deal also for partner countries other than China.

Book Review

*Xiao Alvin Yang**

Qin, Yaqing. 2018. *A Relational Theory of World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-1316634257

A Relational Theory of World Politics by Qin Yaqing offers a significant and alternative theoretical perspective as well as timely and novel insights on international relations in a rapidly changing world. It makes an important contribution to IR theorizing by providing a new ontological foundation in which relationality plays a central role. Based on an ontology of relationality, world politics is thus conceptualized, seen and understood differently from Western IR theories. A both/and logic is proposed to overcome the existing either/or (binary) logic that is deeply embedded in Western mainstream IR theories. Moreover, many traditional Chinese concepts, such as relationality and *zhongrong* or the middle way, are systematically formulated and applied to re-conceptualize and explain the changing world. For example, the concept of relational power and the concept of relational governance are constructed to analyse contemporary world politics. In addition, this book not only expounds a relational theory, but also provides a *tour d'horizon* of mainstream Western IR theories. The book compares and contrasts a relational theory with mainstream IR theories and demonstrates how a relational theory can complement mainstream IR theories rather than overthrow them.

The structure of the book is divided into three parts, which are subsequently divided into ten chapters. Four chapters in the first part deal with the important role that culture plays in IR theorizing. The central argument in chapter one is that culture shapes theory and theory development, which is often neglected by mainstream American positivist IR theories. Moreover, Qin argues that the departing point of the Chinese worldview is human, in contrast to the Western worldview that starts with matter. Drawing from Imre Lakatos' concept of theoretical hardcore that defines a research program, Qin posits that the theoretical hardcore of Chinese IR is shaped by a different background knowledge and practice. In chapter three, Qin explores how theoretical innovation can happen by emphasizing cultural resources, particularly the metaphysical components. He subsequently in chapter four argues that the ontology and

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epistemology of mainstream western IR theories are grounded on individualism and rationalism respectively.

In part two, Qin systematically expounds his concepts of relation and relationality in three chapters. In chapter five, he posits that the world in which we live in is a world of human relations rather than a world of rational individuals. He then introduces the meta-relationship, *ying* and *yang* and the *zhongrong* dialectics that is used to understand and interpret the *ying and yang* relationship in chapter six. Subsequently, chapter seven presents the logic of relationality as opposed to various logics in Western IR theories, such as the logic of consequence, the logic of appropriateness, the logic of arguing, as well as the logic of practice and the logic of habit. It is important to note that Qin emphasizes the complementary aspect of relational logic to Western mainstream logics rather than to challenge them.

Three chapters in part three deal with applications and implications of Qin's relational theory on real-world issues, namely, power, cooperation and governance. In chapter eight, Qin puts forward the concept of relational power in addition to the mainstream concepts of agential and structural power. These three types of power are differentiated based on two indicators which are the location of power and the accessibility of power. According to Qin, relational power is sharable and exchangeable, which is based on a co-empowering process. The underlying mechanism that holds relational power together as an exchange relationship, is the reciprocal *renqing* or human sentiment practice. In contrast to mainstream Western IR explanations of cooperation, in chapter nine, Qin contends that the relatedness between and among actors can better explain whether one chooses to cooperate or not. Moreover, after pointing out problems that are embedded in the current global governance in chapter ten, Qin proposes that the current international rule-based governance should combine with a relational governance that is based on negotiation, reciprocity, trust and morality.

While Qin's effort to construct a Chinese IR theory is laudable, there are three main issues, which I would like to highlight. First, the author unfortunately falls into the trap of over-essentializing Chineseness in his theory. By over-emphasizing the uniqueness of Chinese culture, Qin is stuck with the binary logic that he aims to overcome. Furthermore, he overlooks the diversity and plurality within China and in Chinese civilizations. For example, Chinese civilizations do not consist only of Confucian' teaching, but also other teachings, such as Daoist, Mohist, legalist, and *Zong Heng Jia* or the school of vertical and horizontal alliances. By the same token, Qin also over-essentializes Western ontology and epistemology and overlooks the diversity in Western civilizations. In addition, the modern Chinese experiences are also rich cultural resources from which a developing Chinese IR theory could draw. This could

potentially lead to a new theory that is different from the one that draws primarily from the Confucian teaching.

Moreover, Qin takes human relationships and hierarchies for granted. He does not explain how relationships and hierarchies between and among different actors originate, form and maintain. Therefore, the underlying socio-economic foundation of various human relationships and hierarchies are overlooked. Furthermore, the following questions remain unanswered. What will happen when a relational actor encounters a rational actor? Who has the advantage or disadvantage when they interact with each other in world politics? Can an actor be both rational and relational at the same time?

Finally, Qin's view on culture seems non-evolutionary. Culture changes and evolves! What was true in the past, may not be true nowadays. For instance, traditional Chinese culture might focus on humans and centers around relationality, but contemporary Chinese culture has perhaps evolved into a more individualistic and self-centered culture. A theory that derives from ancient Chinese resources may or may not be relevant and suitable to the current rapidly changing world. Theoretical innovation need not always come from cultural sources. As the world has become globalized, a modern Chinese IR theory can consist of both Chinese and Western elements as well as other elements from around the world. This may contribute to the construction of a global China IR theory that is not only applicable to China but also to other countries.

A Relational Theory of World Politics is worth reading for both IR theorists and social theorists as well as people who are trying to find alternative ways of thinking and reasoning beyond the West. It helps us to re-evaluate ontological and epistemological assumptions of mainstream Western theories as well as to think differently about world politics and to a larger extent, the social world by using different concepts.

Qin's relational theory is the beginning of a new theory rather than the end of it. Future research should be conducted to test the theory centering around two questions. Can Qin's relational theory explain China's behavior and actions in the current world and/or in history? Can it also explain other non-Chinese actors' behavior and actions in the current world politics and/or in world history?

Book Review:

Saleh Shahriar[1]

Li Xing, ed. 2019. *Mapping China's One Belt One Road Initiative*, London: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-3-319-92200-3.

The emergence of China is a global phenomenon. Understanding China through the lens of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) would make us informed and focused. The book, entitled, *Mapping China's One Belt One Road Initiative*, edited by Li Xing, who is the Director of the Research Centre on Development and International Relations at the Department of Politics and Society, Aalborg University, Denmark, is an innovative, timely and significant contribution to the growing literature on the BRI. The book has been published as a part of Palgrave Macmillan's *International Political Economy Series* which aims to track the development of the international political economy in both analysis and structure over the last three decades. Notably, Timothy M. Shaw, Emeritus Professor at the University of London has been working as editor of the series.

The aim of the book is to "join on the global discussions on China's One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR) focusing on the implications and impact of this initiative on China, its neighbors, the extended regions and the world at large" (p.17). This aim has been met through the book's theoretical discussions and analytic contributions. On the basis of the facts now available, it is clear that the goal of China through the BRI is to promote connectivity in five key areas: policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, financial cooperation and people-topeople contacts (Shahriar, Kea & Qian, 2019). The book provides an authentic account of the diverse implications of the BRI and its probable, multiple impacts on the neighboring countries located in the South-Eastern, Southern, and Central Asian, African and Middle Eastern regions. Ang (2019) observes that the BRI is an 'ambitious vision to expand Beijing's investment and trade ties with some 65 other countries that collectively cover two-thirds of the world's population'. The global influence of China through the BRI is, no doubt, increasing day by day, since the BRI is regarded as a 'China's new global strategy' (Zhao, 2019).

At present, the BRI involves about 100 countries spanning Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania, Central and Eastern Europe, West Asia, and North Africa, over 900

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projects, and close to US$1 trillion as of mid-2018 (Yuan, 2019). Moreover, China's economic growth slowed down in the last few decades. The average annual GDP growth rate was an impressive 9.9 percent from 1979 through 2010. But China's economic growth slowed from 10.6 percent in Year 2010 to 6.6 percent in 2018 (Chen, Chen & Dondeti, 2019). As a result, the Chinese leadership is looking for new sources to sustain economic growth for an attempted transition from age-old export-oriented growth to a new Chinese model based on consumption and foreign investment (p. 29). In this context, the book comprises of eleven chapters. There are two opening chapters contributed by the editor, Li Xiang. These chapters provide the research background, questions and outline of the book and then examines the realists, idealist, world systems, dependency and New Gramscian theories with a view to focusing on the global debate between different schools of international relations and political economy. The chapters mention some pertinent questions often raised in the minds of the Western leaders: "What are China's strategic objectives for the OBOR?", "Are there any hidden Chinese agendas?", "How will China benefit from the OBOR?" "Will the OBOR be another repetition of a historical colonial pattern in the twenty-first century?" "Will Chinese cheap loans be payment for submitting to China's leadership and hegemon?" (p.7). Outlining the emergence of a new world order with the multi-dimensional nature of the BRI, it is strongly argued that driven by the policy of pragmatism, China has transformed itself from a rule-follower to a rule-make or rule-setter.

Chapter three applies the theory of diffusion to the analysis of the BRI. It argues that the BRI is an interactive and fascinating process influenced by the norms, ideas, principles and ground realities of the Chinese internal policy makers, public intellectuals as well as the external actors. The BRI is, in fact, a way to advance economic globalization through the state-led cooperation.

Chapters four and five offer sharp insights about the design of China's 'multilayered institutionalism', a notion describing a combination of China's bilateral partnership networks and multilateral relationships. The BRI is often seen as an attempt to build a set of new institutional arrangements such as the Silk Road Economic Belt, maritime Silk Road, Silk Road Fund, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, BRICS Bank, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, free trade zones, and special economic zones. China has preferential trade agreement with both ASEAN and Asian Pacific counties. The most important development is the transboundary projects under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. In this way, China is regionally and internationally integrated by means of a new institutional settings and multi-scaler governance of

international trade. These institutional set-ups would eventually help China achieve its "economic, political, military and cultural objectives in this new century" (p143). The geopolitical and strategic narratives with regard to the securitization of the land and maritime routes along the BRI are detailed in Chapter six; whereas the economic and non-economic motivations constitute the subject of Chapter seven. It is shown that connectivity with neighbors and the rest of the world stands out as the main motivation behind the BRI. The next Chapter demonstrates how China is making efforts to get connected and integration with Africa and Middle East by the Chinese system of accumulation. State-led enterprises are the core vehicles for China's network capitalism. Chapter nine presents a case study of the Chinese connectivity by high-speed railway diplomacy in Thailand. The relationships between China and Central and Eastern Europe have been investigated in Chapter ten with special reference to 16+1 framework in the context of the BRI. The chapter shows that engagement between China and Eastern European is rapidly deepening in the areas of trade and economic fields; but lacks soft power capabilities in the region.

The closing chapter titled, Conclusion: The One Belt One Road in the Politics of Fear and Hope, summarizes the main theme of the book. It demonstrates as to why China's global rise would be inevitable, despite the existence of 'jealousy, admiration, anxiety, worry, and even resentment.'(p.11). The two authors, Li Xing and Paulo Duarte, in this chapter, come to the conclusion that China is likely to emerge again, analogous to the Middle Kingdom, becoming the *global mega hub* due to China's historical consistency, peaceful development gesturing, innovation, pragmatism and cooperative relationships with other countries. They successfully have uncovered the limitations of the Western bifocal perceptions, such as the China Opportunity vs China Threat paradigm. The authors highlight the problems and issues regarding the implementation of BRI. The conclusion offers an optimistic view, in the following words, "China's emergence as an alternative aid donor, investor, and economic partner seems to be one of the major power sources of attraction for other developing states" (p.282). There is an index (pp.291-298) included at the end of the volume.

The book makes a number of notable contributions to the existing literature. First, it clearly maps out the economic, social, cultural and geopolitical environments and implications regarding the BRI countries and regions. Secondly, it evaluates, objectively and systematically, the opportunities, issues and constraints relating to the BRI. Third, it explores the currents myths, illusions, and over-simplified ideas circulated by the anti-Chinese propaganda groups and vested

interests. The key arguments put forwarded are substantiated by facts and figures. Also, the contributors in the various chapters have made a sound linkage between theoretical propositions and empirical analyses of the cases. The volume has, however, a weakness that is- the absence of the South Asian perspective on the BRI. Note that China has a long economic and historic ties with the South Asian neighbors; such as, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Afghanistan. Importantly, India opposes the BRI as it goes through the disputed territory of Kashmir between India and Pakistan. For instance, Blah (2018) argues that the expanding role of Beijing ; especially in South Asia, has made India apprehensive. Moreover, India and Pakistan are nuclear armed neighbors, being antagonistic to each other. India has been geo-strategically allied with the United States of America. Furthermore, there is an apprehension that the rise of China might erode the US hegemony (Zhao 2017). China is building deep sea-ports in Pakistan's Gwadar. The port in Gwadar is of enormous economic and strategic significance to China (Ali 2018). China has agreement to invest a sum of US$62 billion in Pakistan's various sectors under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Despite the above-mentioned quibble, the book is, however, well-researched, thoughtful, and a good read. Each chapter is impressively written, convincingly argued and shrewdly insightful. Students of political science, economics, international relations, and communications and development studies would find the volume, useful and a good reference work.

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