Journal of
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Journal of Rising Powers and Global Governance

CONTENTS

Four Vantage Points: Foreign Policy and the News Coverage of the Kashmir Dispute

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Abstract

This paper examines the international coverage of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India. The study proceeds with a theoretical background to explore the foreign policy dynamics surrounding the Kashmir issue since the beginning. Then, the research relies on the framing paradigm and discourse analysis as the key methodological tools to analyse four English language websites from American, Turkish, Pakistani and Indian news outlets about this conflict in 2018. These news media outlets are CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV, respectively. The findings will uncover the role of media in positioning and packaging the Kashmir dispute and will help understand the politics and the shaping of the coverage in this particular case. Ultimately, the paper will explain the framing approach adopted by news media based on momentary national interests as well as past engagement and expectations of cooperation in the future, providing an understanding of how competing media cover the same conflict from a political economy of communication lens.

Keywords

Kashmir Dispute, News Media, Alliance Politics, Media Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, Mediatized Conflict

The Kashmir dispute has been one of the most protracted conflicts in modern history. The origin of this conflict dates from before the births of the two countries that have fought two wars over this territory, namely India and Pakistan. With both India and Pakistan having divergent positions pertaining to a path towards resolution, the decades-old Kashmir conflict has been difficult to resolve[1]. With

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[1] There have been numerous attempts on the part of the United Nations (UN) to mediate between the two nuclear-armed neighbors, starting with the McNaughton Proposals of 1950. One of these is the establishment of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to observe and report violations of the ceasefire following the Karachi Agreement signed by Pakistan and India in 1951. Following the Indo-Pak War of 1971 when the Simla Agreement was signed, however,

violence escalating sharply in Indian Administered Kashmir in 2018 (Yadav, 2018), and as security deteriorated further, the Indian government revoked the special constitutional status[2] of Indian Administered Kashmir that guaranteed it special rights in August 2019. According to Pakistan, India's revocation of Kashmir's special status violates United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and at the time of writing, was going to 'exercise all possible options to counter illegal steps' (Siddiqui, 2019).

With both India and Pakistan having divergent positions pertaining to a path towards resolution, the decades-old Kashmir conflict has been difficult to resolve. Obfuscation of information pertaining to human rights violations, the potential role of the international community and the issue becoming a nuclear flashpoint, has been one of the reasons that have led to a delay and perhaps even a denial of its resolution.

This paper attempts to point towards reasons international media coverage of the Kashmir dispute has been less than effective, and even required. Given the prolonged nature of the dispute, a limited number of previous studies on the topic showed international media coverage tended to reflect national priorities of the countries whose media provided coverage as well as the status of their relations with India and Pakistan. This paper will not only build on past findings with a larger evidence base, but will also provide a rationale for international media coverage by highlighting reasons associated with both airtime and content of media coverage of the Kashmir dispute.

To do this, the paper will introduce the concept of media framing and outline how the Kashmir dispute has previously been covered by Pakistani, Indian and international media. After providing an overview of the bilateral relations between Turkey and India, Turkey and Pakistan, the United States of America (US) and India as well as US and Pakistan, the study will analyse the media coverage of the Kashmir dispute by four international news media outlets, namely CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV – American, Turkish, Pakistani and Indian, respectively. By utilizing qualitative as well as quantitative techniques, framing analyses of digital news content related to the Kashmir dispute by CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV were conducted.

By comparing and contrasting the various media outlets' coverage, the study con-

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Pakistan and India disagreed on the mandate of the UNMOGIP. India argues that it lapsed after the Simla Agreement as it was specifically established only for and after the Karachi Agreement. The ceasefire remains in place until today. However, it is regularly violated (Jaffrelot, 2018).

[2] The 'special status gave Indian Administered Kashmir its own constitution and decision-making rights for all matters except for defense, communications and foreign affairs' (Dawn, 2019). The law 'also forbade non-locals from permanently settling, buying land, holding local government jobs and securing education scholarships' (Dawn, 2019).

cludes that past engagements, current national priorities as well as expectations of cooperation between countries whose media cover the Kashmir dispute and both India as well as Pakistan could explain the symbiosis and dissonance in international media coverage of the Kashmir conflict.

Pakistani and Indian Media Coverage of the Kashmir Conflict

Researchers have defined 'mediatized conflict' as 'how media do things with conflicts' (Cottle, 2006, p.9), specifically actions that work to 'define, frame, narrate, evaluate, contest, promote and perform conflict' (Cottle, 2006 in Vukasovich, 2012). Mediatize conflict is a paradigm that outlines the ways by which the media engages with conflicts (Vukasovich, 2012). The engagement is 'performative, complex and active, and represents a constitutive role within conflicts' (Cottle, 2006; Cottle, 2004 in Vukasovich, 2012). This theory contends that that 'war is produced and immersed in a new ecology of media and diffused through a complex and interconnected web of everyday media' (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010; Cottle, 2006 in Vukasovich, 2012).

This is explained well by Herman & Chomsky (1988) who stated that mainstream news media is influenced by factors including, among others, a reliance on official sources that allows the government to promote its own view, an aversion to flak or negative feedback that discourages controversial media coverage or institutional ideology such as fear of 'Islamic' terrorists. Hoskins & O'Loughlin (2010) based the relationship between media and warfare on altering perceptions using both coercive and aggressive methods. One of the more aggressive methods, according to Knightley (2003), is limiting access based on willingness to be in unison with the government and/or military or embedding correspondents within the military who would not report critically highlights the seemingly symbiotic relationship between mainstream media and the government-military apparatus. The success of the military-government apparatus' narrative in many conflicts, including most recently and clearly during the 2003 Iraq War, can be attributed to the complicity of the mainstream news media (DiMaggio 2010; Robinson & Taylor 2010; Entman et al. 2009 in Culloty, 2014).

David Hoffman observed in 1991 that the 'global communications network has become more important for the conduct of diplomacy than traditional cables and emissaries' (Hoffman, 1991 in Gilboa, 2005). In light of media scholarship underlining the symbiotic relationship between mainstream media and the government-military apparatus, as well as the propensity for governments to utilize the global communications network to conduct both traditional and public diplomacy, news coverage of even the Kashmir dispute is bound to reflect a particular set of priorities and not necessarily realities on the ground. As Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010) argue, media enables constant connectivity that either

amplifies awareness of conflicts, modulating security and insecurity, or contains them by packaging them a certain way. This connectivity is the mechanism by which media is weaponised (Vukasovich, 2012). Essentially, the media becomes the battleground.

Media framing is one of the more coercive manners perceptions can be altered. Media framing involves both inclusion (emphasizing) and exclusion (de-emphasizing) of critical aspects of an event, prioritizing one over another – intentionally or unconsciously – to promote a particular interpretation of that event (Abdullah & Elareshi, 2015). According to Entman (1993):

> *'Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman, 1993, p. 52).*

Successful promotion of salient frames may highlight saliency of key issues in the foreign public agenda resulting in 'improved public opinion perceptions, and potential influence on foreign elites' (Sheafer & Shenhav, 2010)' (Golan, 2014, p. 420).

As expected, since the inception of India and Pakistan, and the resultant Kashmir dispute, Indian and Pakistani media coverage of the Kashmir dispute strongly reflects their respective stances on the conflict (Sreedharan, 2009). Pakistani coverage highlights Islamabad's official stance that the Kashmir dispute must be settled in light of UN resolutions, without which there can be no progress in India-Pakistan relations. On the other hand, Indian coverage echoes New Delhi's standpoint, namely that Kashmir's accession to India is final, meaning there 'is no dispute to settle. The armed violence in Kashmir is a law and order problem' (Sreedharan, 2009, p. 100), purely a conflict between the Indian state and Pakistan-sponsored terrorists (Joseph, 2000 in Sreedharan, 2009). Another study by Ali and Perveen (2015) looked at Pakistani (*Dawn*) and Indian (*The Tribune*) media coverage of the Kashmir dispute and found that *The Tribune* and *Dawn* supported the Indian government's and the Pakistani government's position respectively (Ali & Perveen, 2015).

Historically, both India and Pakistan have relied on the assistance of foreign support for their respective positions on Kashmir (Cohen, 1995). Applying Entman's (2007) cascading network activation model (see Figure 1) to international audiences considering news consumption patterns via digital media (Deloitte, 2017), India and Pakistan could weaponize foreign media coverage in defence of their positions and gain foreign support.

Figure 1: Cascading Network Activation (Source: Entman, 2007)

Administration
White House
State
Defence

Other Elites
Congress Members
& Staffers
Ex-officials
Experts

Media
Journalists
News Organizations

News Frames
Framing Words
Framing Images

Public
Other Indicators
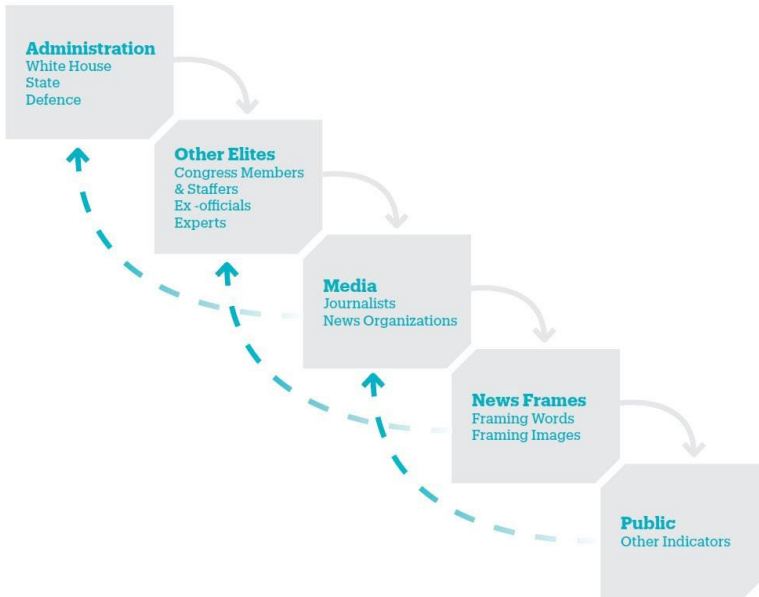
Studies show that governmental attempts to influence foreign media coverage can be best understood in the context of international relations, particularly frame-building during territorial disputes (Maoz, 2006; Rogers & Ben-David, 2010 in Golan, 2014).

International Media Coverage of the Kashmir Dispute

Conversely, foreign media coverage of the Kashmir dispute could be perceived as an opportunity for foreign countries to influence India and Pakistan as well as propagate their own political objectives. According to Gans (1979), journalists select stories based on availability as well as suitability. Particularly with respect to foreign policy, journalists tend to rely on government sources as that may be their only form of access to international news, and thus the way the media frame foreign policy coverage is influenced primarily by how the government frames an issue. As per Fuchs (2005), mass media is not a neutral subsystem of society, without any links to political or economic realities of the state.

Sheafer (2014) revealed that the more aligned the political objectives between Israel and a foreign country, the higher the acceptance of Israel's views in that foreign country's media, and vice versa. The same findings, when applied in the

context of the Kashmir dispute, could explain why certain frames were utilized by foreign countries' media coverage. Generated by past alignments (Wilkins, 2012) as well as shared political values and objectives, the media of states expecting cooperation in the future (Snyder, 1997) may be more aligned than opposed and vice versa. Other relevant influential factors for frame building include trade relations as well as the economic and political power of the country promoting a frame (Wu, 2000; Chang, 1998 in Sheafer, 2014).

A limited number of studies have looked at the international media coverage of the Kashmir dispute. According to Ray (2004) who studied *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*, the US media echoes the Indian media coverage of the Kashmir dispute, particularly after 1999. Dominant frames in the coverage of the Kashmir dispute by US news outlets included 'outside interference', 'violent neighbour', 'foreign fighters' and 'militant extremists' (Ray, 2004). Another study (Zia & Syedah, 2015) found that *The New York Times* provided minimum coverage to the Kashmir dispute in comparison with Pakistani *Dawn* or *The Times of India*. The study also asserted that limited coverage was generally more negative, defined as 'triggering the dispute by giving partial coverage or only publishing the violent aspect of the conflict and distorting the situation… provided unfair support to any party. If the coverage is supporting armed activities and appreciating aggressive acts or ferocity of all stakeholders' (Zia & Syedah, 2015, p. 169). Though the US had assumed the arbitrator's role in the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan, analysing US media coverage of the Kashmir dispute suggested it tended to favour India's viewpoint (Zia & Syedah, 2015, p. 169).

Building on the above studies with a larger multi-country evidence, this study looks at how that influences media coverage of those countries, given that foreign countries have pre-existing values and political proximities with India and Pakistan, as well as expectations of alignment and opposition with both in the future. To explore these parameters potentially influencing media coverage of the Kashmir dispute, as well as the potential effects of cultural and religious proximity (or lack thereof), digital news outlets from US and the Republic of Turkey were included in the study, as both US and Turkey have multi-layered and evolving relations with India and Pakistan.

International Alignments: United States, Turkey, Pakistan and India

As part of alliance politics during the Cold War (Leeds and Mattes, 2007), Pakistan became the 'key point of an anti-Communist bulwark of regional countries' (Schaffer, 2009, p.44). In exchange, the US offered support on the issue of Kashmir and provided military and economic assistance to Pakistan (Afzal, 2018) well into the 1980s. Once the Soviet Union was defeated, the US had more room to focus on economic development and investments in overseas markets (Brain-

ard & Brookings Institution, 2001). This led the US to downgrade its focus on Pakistan, which also meant that Islamabad lost its support regarding the Kashmir conflict. Further deterioration in relations took place when the US banned the sale of military hardware and halted economic aid to Pakistan by 1990, creating a significant trust deficit between the two.

Nevertheless, following the September 11 attacks, the US once again sought Pakistan's help in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda and in its broader so-called 'War on Terror' (Afzal, 2018). Essentially, Pakistan had to choose between joining the US-led war and not joining and facing 'America's wrath' (Tellis, 2008, p. 13). As a spill-over effect from the war in Afghanistan, Pakistan struggled with a Taliban insurgency on its soil from the mid-2000s onwards that has cost the country more than 75,000 civilian lives and suffered the loss of $123 billion (Iqbal, 2018). However, the US contended that Pakistan provides a safe haven to terrorists (Trump, 2018), leading to a considerable deterioration in relations (Afzal, 2018).

Despite President Donald Trump announcing a new Afghan War strategy in 2017, reiterating US accusations concerning Pakistan and urging India to help with economic development in Afghanistan, Pakistan is considered important for US strategy for Afghanistan due to its perceived influence over the Taliban (Felbab-Brown, 2018). Pakistan is also at the very centre of China's Belt and Road initiative with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Economist, 2017) that would help consolidate China's influence in the region, which is not ideal for the US. The US supported India in its stance that CPEC passes through the disputed territory of Kashmir (Iqbal, 2017).

The US considers India strategically important in the larger Indo-Pacific region (Pant, 2015). According to a report commissioned by the Pentagon, 'there is a broad consensus within Washington and Delhi that each depends on the other to sustain a favourable strategic equilibrium as Chinese power rises' (Quadrennial Defence Review, 2010, p. 65). Additionally, India and the US have a bilateral trade relationship worth more than $115 billion (Meltzer & Singh, 2017). In a policy paper published by the Brookings Institute, Dhruva Jaishankar captured the mood when he stated that 'Washington now tilts in India's favour' (Jaishankar, 2017). Experts suggest that the inclusion of India in the Afghanistan strategy may be the US employing a carrot and stick approach with Pakistan, conditioning its support on critical issues such as Kashmir in exchange for help in Afghanistan (Felbab-Brown, 2018).

Turkey has also offered to mediate between India and Pakistan to help resolve the Kashmir dispute. Turkey and Pakistan enjoy historical ties, dating back to when the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent supported the Ottoman Empire (Pay,

2015) leading up to present day support from Pakistan on multiple fronts including against FETO, considered a terrorist organisation by the Turkish government following the attempted coup of July 15, 2016 (Akan, 2017). Much to India's irritation, in a 2017 visit to New Delhi, Turkish President Erdogan called for efforts to reduce the suffering of Kashmiris (Krishnan, 2017). International humanitarian and development assistance has become a central part of Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, 'humanitarian diplomacy' has been highly visible given the fact that the country hosting almost 4 million Syrian refugees in 2018 (Hasimi, 2014). President Erdogan calling for a multilateral dialogue to resolve the conflict that has cost thousands of Kashmiris' lives dovetails with Turkey's foreign policy objectives (Kalin, 2012)[3].

Turkey has recently sought to widen its web of relations with international powers when it comes to trade and investment. An example of this is Turkey's engagement with China as part of both the Middle Corridor Initiative and China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative (Talbot, 2018), both of which Pakistan is a significant contributor to. With reference to trade and investment, the Turkish defence industry secured its most substantial arms deal with Pakistan in 2018 (Bekdil, 2018). However, Turkey and India also have growing trade relations. Given Turkey's interest in joining BRICS (Korybko, 2018), Turkey and India may seek greater cooperation in the future. With that, as previously noted, come expectations of support on critical issues. In the past though, support was not forthcoming. For example, India maintains friendly relations with Cyprus (High Commission of India Nicosia Cyprus, 2018). New Delhi was not particularly supportive in the fight against the FETO organization (Asian News International, 2017). Turkey for its part did not oppose India's entry to the elite Non-Suppliers Group (NSG) but also supported Pakistan's entry.

Thus, US-Pakistan, US-India, Turkey-Pakistan, and Turkey-India relations have been multi-layered and complex, attuned to the ever-shifting global dynamics that have led to the Kashmir dispute being both a barometer and instrument of influence by India and Pakistan. Additionally, considering the Kashmir dispute primarily affects Kashmiri Muslims, and has been viewed as a Muslim cause, the inclusion of US and Turkish media will allow for the study of relevant media from the lens of religious and cultural proximity to the Kashmir dispute (or lack thereof) as well.

Research Methodology

Cable News Network (CNN), TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV were selected as respectively American, Turkish, Pakistani and Indian news sources for the study. CNN and TRT World are well-known sources of American and Turk-

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[3] İbrahim Kalin is the Turkish Presidential Press Secretary.

ish English-language news outlets internationally. CNN was the first to revolutionize television news and expanded their broadcasting internationally in the early 1980s (Lule, 2016), and became a significant actor in international relations during the 1991 Gulf War. CNN is also associated with the 'CNN effect', that assumes that the news media influences or determines what governments do (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010; Cottle, 2006; Robinson, 1999), making this the channel most likely to be utilized by the US administration in public diplomacy efforts. Also an international broadcaster, TRT World is a Turkish English-language 24-hour English language news channel. Launched in 2015, TRT World is part of the country's public broadcaster, the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT). According to Turkish officials at TRT World's test launch, Turkey would conduct public diplomacy by engaging all its institutions in order to protect its national interests (TRT Haber, 2015). TRT World is an international broadcaster with its own news agenda. However, there is a strong likelihood that the network's views will not be contradicting the Turkish government's foreign policy. With that said, the channel reports with minimally loaded language and utilizes credible sources (Media Bias/Fact Check, 2018-a).

For Pakistani and Indian news sources, GEO News and New Delhi Television Limited (NDTV) were selected. GEO News was Pakistan's first 24-hour news channel, launched in 2002. It is the most watched network in the country (Al Jazeera, 2018). Importantly, PTV World, the 24 hour English news channel owned by the Pakistani state, at the time of writing, did not have an English-language online news outlet. NDTV was also India's first 24 hours private news channel, launched in 1988 and headquartered in New Delhi, India. Though the study could have included Doordarshan, the state network that had an online news outlet, it may not have led to reliable comparisons with the Pakistani private channel included in the study. In any case, NDTV republishes stories from the Press Trust of India for national news and presents world affairs from an Indian perspective (Media Bias/Fact Check, 2018-b).

Digital news outlets of CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV were selected as incoming traffic to media organizations' own news websites is one of the most important sources for online news consumption (Deloitte, 2017). Online content is reflective of the broadcast content that is produced by these channels (Graber & Dunaway, 2017). Considering that the study is a discourse analysis, relying on framing analysis and comparative keyword analysis, which is 'a method for the conjoint qualitative and quantitative analysis of large amounts of text, adapted for social research purposes' (Charteris-Block, 2012, p. 142), using online written content is preferable.

Framing analysis, as a discourse analysis technique, allows us to 'select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text,

in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation' (Entman, 1993). According to Ray (2004):

> '*The salience of a frame in a media text is a product of the interaction of the frames embedded in the text and the mental schemas of the reader. Although the presence of frames in a text, as detected by researchers, does not guarantee that audience frames will be identical to the frames in the text (Entman, 1989), media frames, by emphasizing some aspects of a problem over others, activate certain kinds of knowledge within people, and this, in turn, affects their trains of thought and recommended behaviour' (Ray, 2004, p.17).*

The Lexis Nexis search engine located all news articles using terms including 'Kashmir dispute', 'Kashmir conflict' or 'Kashmir war' from January to August 2018. Even though Indian Administered Kashmir had experienced increased violence since 2014 onwards with 2018 being the decade's deadliest year (Zia, 2019), this date range was selected to highlight media coverage that was not coloured by a particular 'media event' such as major terrorist attack such as the Pulwama attack in February 2019 and resulting military confrontations. Media events are 'interruptions of routine' (Dayan and Katz, 1992: 9-14), and the date range is reflective of a period of routine media coverage provided to the Kashmir dispute on all the channels included in the study. This is important as it can be assumed that the effects of past alignments, shared political values and objectives, and expectations of cooperation in the future may be less contaminated by a media event such as an overt war, when perhaps current priorities can take precedence.

In terms of operationalization of the framing analysis, the first phase of the study concurrently applied both inductive and deductive reasoning to qualitatively explore and select themes, or frames. Inductive reasoning 'is aimed at detecting generalizations, rules, or regularities' (Klauer & Phye, 2008, p. 86). It is based on 'grounded theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967 in Vukasowich, 2012), the aim of which is to discover theory that is implicit in qualitative data (Vukasowich, 2012). It 'involves the search for patterns from observation and the development of explanations – theories – for those patterns through [a] series of hypotheses' (Bernard, 2011). Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, bases the conclusion on multiple premises that are believed to be true (Ratolo & Sator, 2018). Thus, some frames were pre-selected based on historical positions and political tensions between India and Pakistan vis-à-vis the Kashmir dispute as well as their relations with the US and Turkey, while others were selected as they were detected in the media coverage. The CNN and TRT World frames were grouped together based on what were considered alignments with the Pakistani and Indian stances.

Following a sequential multimethod approach (Dreissneck, Sousa & Mendes,

2007), the second phase used quantitative analysis to compare these selected frames and offer more rigor 'in terms of mapping results of a qualitative analysis' (Vukasowich, 2012). In order to be able to provide evidence for international media coverage reflecting not just current national priorities but also past engagements and expectations of cooperation between countries whose media cover the Kashmir dispute and both India as well as Pakistan as well, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: CNN is **more** likely to cover the Kashmir dispute in terms of security framing than TRT World.

H2: TRT World is **more** likely to cover the Kashmir dispute using humanitarian frames than CNN.

H3: There will be **more** differences than similarities between CNN and GEO News frames as well as keywords in covering the Kashmir dispute than compared with TRT World and GEO News.

H4: There will be **more** differences than similarities between TRT World and NDTV frames and keywords in covering the Kashmir dispute than compared with CNN and NDTV.

Hypotheses 1-2 reflect current national priorities of US and Turkey, while hypotheses 3-4 capture the status of their relations with India and Pakistan respectively, reasonably assumed influenced by past engagements and expectations of future cooperation between them and India as well as Pakistan.

Findings

CNN coverage of the Kashmir dispute consisted of 10 articles during the period of study, two of which were linked with non-conflict related sexual violence, and so were not included in the study sample. TRT World had 35 news articles on the Kashmir dispute during the same period, and all were linked directly to the Kashmir dispute. This led to the use of Fisher's exact test analysis for most tests concerning CNN in this study. A Fisher's exact test analysis affords a more robust analysis when conditions for a chi-square test analysis cannot be met[4].

With respect to the first hypothesis, though a Fisher's exact test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the likelihood of CNN utilizing the security framework compared with TRT World (p= 0.40, FET), CNN was almost twice as likely (38 percent versus 23 percent) than TRT World to include the security frame in their coverage of the Kashmir dispute. The following

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[4] A Fisher's exact test analysis can be used when more than 20% of cells (in a chi-square analysis) have expected frequencies of less than five, because applying approximation method is inadequate.

sub-frames were included in the security frame: Indian violent behaviour in self-defence, attacks on Indian soldiers or security personnel, descriptions of 'militant' organizations as well as India and Pakistan being nuclear powers[5]. In corroboration, keyword analysis also revealed that CNN uses the label 'terrorists' while TRT World used the term 'rebels' and 'protestors'. Additionally, CNN included references to India and Pakistan having nuclear arms in 20 percent of their coverage while it was referred to in only 5 percent of TRT World coverage. Though the Fisher's test did not confirm whether CNN employs the security frame statistically significantly more than TRT World, potentially due to the small number of CNN articles, triangulation of data shows that findings point in that direction.

Confirming the second hypothesis, a Fisher's exact test analysis revealed that TRT World employed the humanitarian frame significantly more than CNN (p<0.01, FET). In fact, TRT World was almost three times as likely (54 percent versus 20 percent). This frame included the following sub-frames: use of pellet guns to blind protestors in Indian-administered Kashmir, unfairness of legal systems in Indian-administered Kashmir, trauma experienced by civilians, civilians experiencing human rights abuses as well as journalists being in danger.

Confirming the third hypothesis, a Fisher's exact test first revealed that GEO News was statistically significantly more likely to use the 'Pakistan stance' than CNN (p<0.01, FET), while a chi-square analysis revealed that there were no significant differences between GEO News and TRT World in utilizing the 'Pakistan stance' frame (x2=1.41, df=1, p=0.23). Additionally, keyword analysis revealed that CNN uses the terms 'terrorists' or 'militants' which is less aligned with GEO News, whereas TRT World uses the terms 'rebels', 'fighters' or 'youth' which is more aligned with the language employed by GEO News. This analysis includes sub-frames clearly reflecting Pakistan's stance including 'Kashmir does not want to be a part of India', 'Kashmiris are resentful', 'Kashmiris are carrying out anti-India protests', 'Pakistan denies role in terrorism in Kashmir' and that there are 'renewed or indigenous protests in Kashmir'.

With respect to the fourth hypothesis, though a Fisher's exact test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the likelihood of CNN employing the 'Indian stance' frame compared with TRT World (p= 0.42, FET), a chi-square analyses revealed that NDTV coverage was more similar to CNN (x2=22.05, df=1, p<0.001) than TRT World (x2=31.33, df=1, p<0.001) coverage. The 'Indian stance' frame included the following sub-frames clearly reflecting the Indian stance: 'Pakistan supports terrorism', 'Pakistani terrorist', 'globally recognized Kashmiri terrorist' and terrorists 'killing' or 'attacking'. Additionally, CNN

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[5] Terrorist as a term was not included as TRT World coverage does not utilize it in a single news article in this study sample and that may have biased the outcome. However, such an omission did not appear to make the result significant in any case.

uses the terms 'terrorists' or 'militants' which is aligned with NDTV news coverage, along with referring to Kashmir as 'Jammu and Kashmir', while TRT World refers to Kashmir as 'Indian Administrated Kashmir'. Though the Fisher's test did not confirm the fourth hypothesis, potentially due to a small number of CNN articles, the chi-square analysis showed greater alignment between NDTV and CNN compared to NDTV and TRT World.

Inter-rater reliability was calculated using two coders who coded and compared the first 10 percent of CNN, TRT World, GEO News and NDTV content with each other in terms of frames utilized by each news outlet. Cohen's Kappa was=0.762, which is, as proposed by different investigators, 'substantial' (Landis & Koch, 1977), 'good' (Altman, 1991) and 'excellent' (Fleiss, 1971).

Discussion

Aligned with findings from a study by Zia & Syedah (2015), who also found that US media provided sparse coverage to the Kashmir dispute, this study also had significantly less CNN articles on the topic when compared with TRT World. Bahador (2011) showed that US media including CNN was less likely to cover an issue that did not directly involve Westerners or their military forces. Because the US, any other Western country or their militaries are not directly involved with the Kashmir dispute, this may be partially explanatory. According to Halton (2001), if a foreign story does not involve bombs, natural disasters or financial calamity, it has little chance of entering the American consciousness. This is aligned with the news domestication theory (Cassara, 1993 in Taradai, 2014) which highlighted the 'domestication' of international news. The term was first coined by Gurevitch et al. (1991), 'as a process of presenting distant events as relevant to a domestic audience and constructing them as compatible with the culture and dominant ideology of the country of broadcast' (Gurevitch et al., 1991 in Taradai, 2014, p. 68). Ray (2004) found a significant jump in the coverage of the Kashmir dispute during the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in 1998-1999 in the US media confirms this.

Though there was no statistically significant difference between TRT World and CNN when it comes to utilizing security oriented frames and keywords in their media coverage of the Kashmir dispute, trends detected by analysing CNN coverage versus TRT World coverage utilising security oriented frames as well as keyword analysis point towards CNN being more security oriented. This result could signal that the 'CNN effect', or 'the ability of real-time communications technology, via the news media, to provoke major responses from domestic audiences and political elites to both global and national events' (Robinson, 2002, p.2), is overshadowed by priorities related to national security. As per Livingston (1997):

> *'The CNN effect is a loss of policy control on the part of policy makers because of the power of the media. It includes…the media's power to force officials to take quicker decisions in response to foreign events involving (or not) U.S. interests' (Livingston, 1997 in Palloshi, 2015, p.49).*

The CNN effect was a result of US foreign policy becoming 'media-specified crisis management' (Livingston, 1997, p.1). While many media researchers argue that the CNN effect does have an impact, nevertheless, according to Bahador (2011), the CNN effect never really existed as US media framing never fully operated independently of the ones in power. Thus, CNN is inclined to convey the 'official' language of the US government and its security-oriented foreign policy. Lance Bennett argued that 'mass media news is indexed…to the dynamics of governmental debate' (Bennett, 1990, p. 108). This is particularly after the 9/11 terror attacks when US media largely reflected the US government's positions (Lahlali, 2011). Other authors (Malek, 1997; Herman & Chomsky, 1988) have questioned the US press' ability to exercise judgment that is independent of officialdom in Washington, and that appears to be especially evident when examining US media coverage of the Kashmir dispute.

From the perspective of the US, it appears that CNN coverage is more aligned with NDTV coverage than GEO News is not just given US-India economic relations, but also due to strategic and political considerations. As noted above, the US considers India strategically important in the larger Indo-Pacific region (Pant, 2015), and according to a Pentagon report, 'there is a broad consensus within Washington and Delhi that each depends on the other to sustain a favourable strategic equilibrium as Chinese power rises' (Quadrennial Defence Review, 2010, p. 65). Secondly, many US officials have been unsupportive of Pakistan's role in the US war in Afghanistan, accusing the country of facilitating terrorists (Mangaldas, 2018). The American government-military apparatus' frustration with Pakistan is detectable in the analysis. In fact, the same terms are being used to describe Pakistan's role in Kashmir as its role in Afghanistan, in an apparent attempt to develop a 'case' for American efforts being thwarted by Pakistan, even if they are two entirely different conflicts. Some authors went to the extent of stating that the US is scapegoating Pakistan for its failures in Afghanistan (Gul, 2018). Relatedly, when it comes to reporting on Muslims, and consequently Muslim causes or conflicts primarily affecting Muslims such as the Kashmir dispute, research studies have confirmed that Islam and Muslims receive negative reporting from Western media outlets (Hassan & Omar, 2017; Alghamdi, 2015). This is aligned with Van Dijk's (1988) cognitive-structural model framework describing the relationship between the 'structures of news, the process of news production, and the processes of news comprehension on one hand, and the social practices within which these three elements are embedded' (Bell & Garrett, 1998 in Al-

ghamdi, 2015, p. 199). Reflecting on the discourse on security and terrorism, researchers found that 'the association of Islam with terrorism and violence has come to be accepted, to the extent that terms such as "Muslim" and "terrorist" have become almost synonymous' (Eid & Karim, 2014, p.105 in Alghamdi, 2015, p. 203). In corroboration, as previously noted, keyword analysis also revealed that CNN uses the label 'terrorists' to describe the same actors TRT World describes as 'protestors'.

However, CNN is not significantly different from TRT World when it comes to reflecting NDTV coverage, and while that could be attributed to Turkey's focus on economic growth as part of foreign policy foci (Kalin, 2012), it could also be due to the US foreign policy establishment being mindful of potential future co-operation with Pakistan vis-à-vis the War in Afghanistan[6]. This was evident when President Trump offered to mediate between India and Pakistan with respect to the Kashmir dispute during Pakistani Prime Minister's official visit to the US in July 2019, when the dialogue was expected to centre on the Afghan Peace Process and Pakistan's role in facilitating US-Taliban talks (Kocis, 2019). CNN coverage of the Kashmir dispute with its propensity to focus on security issues, lack of promotion of either Pakistani or Indian stance over the other yet using the same keywords as NDTV reflects current national priorities as well as past engagements and expectations of cooperation between US and both India as well as Pakistan.

TRT World was significantly more likely to employ humanitarian frames and keywords than CNN. According to Kalin (2012), the Turkish leadership has emphasized that 'the current global order has to be based on principles of justice and equality as a precondition to finding sustainable long-term solutions to current conflicts' (Kalin, 2012, p.14). Post 2015, Turkey's foreign policy has been characterized by 'moral realism' (Fuat, 2016), which combines hard power-based military assertiveness with humanitarian norms in order to achieve three goals simultaneously: to remain proactive in terms of foreign policy, to exhibit moral responsibility to protect human lives and to respond effectively via hard power if need be to address security challenges (Keyman, 2016). In the last decade, Turkey has expanded its foreign policy tools and humanitarian organizations are central to them (Ozcan, 2017). Turkey has focused on 'humanitarian diplomacy' (Hasimi, 2014), expanding both development assistance and humanitarian aid with respect to geographic location as well as the scope of activity[7]. This humanitarian focus does not appear entirely aligned with religion alone. As per Tabak (2017):

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[6] Indeed, Pakistan facilitated direct talks between the US and Taliban, which eventually culminated in a US-Taliban agreement on February 29th 2020 that has the potential to end the decades-long war in Afghanistan (Hashim, 2020).
[7] By 2013, Turkey had 'implemented development projects in 110 countries from all continents (Hasimi, 2014, p.134). In regards to aid-related foreign policy, examples include an 'open door policy' for Syrian refugees (Hasimi, 2014).

> *Previously, Muslim communities were almost the sole beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance, but, in the JDP era, deprived communities of all beliefs (Muslims and non-Muslims) in zones of conflict, war, and poverty have been extended a helping hand, yet with a confident Muslim identity (Tabak, 2017, p. 90)*

Although TRT World has its own news agenda and priorities, it is part of the country's public broadcaster, and is likely to use humanitarian lens when it comes to news reporting (TRT World, n.d.). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect TRT World to highlight human rights abuses in Kashmir more than CNN.

Considering Pakistan and Turkey's significant past alignments, it is not surprising that TRT World coverage is significantly more likely to echo GEO News coverage, and consequently Pakistan's stance, than CNN. However, even though analysis showed NDTV coverage to be more similar to CNN than TRT World, the fact that there was no statistically significant difference between CNN and TRT World aligning with NDTV coverage, that reflects pro-Indian stance frames and keywords, requires investigation. Though it could be explained by the small size of CNN articles, a review of Turkish foreign policy principles may help. According to Kalin (2012), Turkey has 'moved from modernization to globalization where there are multiple centres and new spaces for opportunities' (Kalin, 2012, p. 20). The Turkish foreign policy objective of economic development through trade and investment (Kalin, 2012) as well as expectations of more engagement with both India and Pakistan, in either political or economic terms, may be reflected in TRT World's balanced usage of terms such as 'Indian or Pakistani Administered Kashmir'. These are the terms used by the United Nations itself rather than 'Jammu and Kashmir' (used by CNN and NDTV) or 'Azad or Indian Occupied Kashmir' (used by GEO News). Furthermore, Kalin (2012) states that 'Turkey has put economic considerations at the centre of its foreign policy and has advocated closer cooperation with other rising powers' (Kalin, 2012, p. 10). Turkish foreign policy emphasizes 'trade and economic development as a tool of strengthening bilateral relations' (Kalin, 2012, p. 14). Both Pakistan and India represent economic opportunity.

However, considering Turkey's population is predominantly Muslim, TRT World uses terms such as 'rebels' or 'fighters' rather than 'terrorists' or 'militants' as used by NDTV and CNN (as previously noted, Muslims receive negative reporting from Western media outlets) and 'youth' or 'martyrs', used by GEO News. Turkey confidently and constitutively deploys religious causes and discourses in foreign policy, and the Kashmir dispute is no different. This is aligned with Turkey's 'Turkish Islamic exceptionalism' (Mardin, 2005 in Tabak, 2017, p. 98), and that the 'role Ottomans and the preceding 'Turkish' states played in the building and sustaining of Islamic civilization endows Turkey with a responsibility towards fellow Muslims worldwide' (Tabak, 2017, p. 98). Thus, current national economic

and foreign policy priorities as well as past engagements and expectations of co-operation between Turkey and both India as well as Pakistan, also a Muslim-majority country, are influencing TRT World's coverage of the Kashmir dispute with its focus on human rights abuses and promotion of the Pakistani stance on the matter, yet, using neutral keywords.

Conclusion

Findings from this paper provide evidence for current national priorities as well as past engagements and expectations of cooperation between countries whose media cover the Kashmir dispute and both India as well as Pakistan could explain the manner in which the Kashmir dispute is provided international media coverage. Highlighting the dynamics associated with reporting on the Kashmir issue this study provides a nuanced view of how national and regional priorities affect foreign media coverage and offers explanations in light of factors including competing political objectives and alignments with Pakistan, India as well as other international powers. Given the apparent impasse between India and Pakistan, political motivations of foreign countries, seemingly irrelevant but ultimately connected, will continue to colour international media coverage.

Media coverage is never without political context, and coverage of the Kashmir dispute is no exception. In fact, comparing findings of this study with media coverage of the Kashmir dispute after the revocation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution in August 2019[8] may prove that: TRT World had almost 50 percent more coverage in terms of articles on the topic than CNN from August 2019 till March 2020. With that said, the role of the media in coverage of international conflicts, and in particular the longest international conflict to date namely the Kashmir dispute, is critical for it can outline and even activate the agency of the international community when bilateral dialogue has clearly failed. However, if international media coverage aligns itself with the agenda of any country, it can obfuscate the reality on the ground and potentially perpetuate conflict and consequently human suffering. Clearly, airtime of international media coverage by any media outlet, or lack thereof, of the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019 of the special constitutional status of Indian-Administered Kashmir, which was the covenant of its special rights, may prove to be an unfortunate testament to that.

Bio

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[8] Article 370 allowed the only Muslim-majority Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir its own constitution, a separate flag and freedom to make laws relating to permanent residency, ownership of property and fundamental rights. It also barred non-Kashmiri Indians who live outside the state from purchasing property or settling there to protect against demographic changes (BBC News, 2019).

interests include the political economy of media, strategic communications, public diplomacy, political effects of entertainment media and media literacy.

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Reconstructing the Silk Road: Norm Contestation in Sino-European Relations in Times of the Belt and Road Initiative

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Abstract

This paper analyses EU and member-state responses to the Belt and Road Initiative and addresses norm contestation in Sino-European discourse regarding the primary institutions of Sovereignty, International Law, and Market Economy. The paper combines the toolset of the English School with norm contestation theory in its discourse analysis. The findings show evidence for contestation and increasing tension in Sino-European discourse and relations since the beginning of Xi's presidency. Moreover, that the BRI, while at first a projection screen for substantive disagreements and contestation, eventually became subject to contestation itself. Based on these findings, the paper advances three arguments. First, that the BRI increasingly presented a challenge to EU cohesion and unity, especially in member states' foreign policy vis-à-vis China. Second, that substantive disagreements between China and the EU, Germany, and Italy were based in a clash of pluralist and liberal-solidarist interpretations of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy. Third, that in contesting liberal-solidarist interpretations of PIs, China is resisting European solidarisation and arguably proposing a pluralist alternative to a liberal-solidarist order.

Keywords

Belt and Road Initiative, Sino-European Relations, Discourse Analysis, Norm Contestation, English School, Regional International Society

Introduction[1]

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has become a household name for interaction with China in many different spheres since its inception in 2013. In short, it is part of China's contemporary foreign policy framework under Xi Jinping for further developing the transport and trade connections along the ancient Silk Road, and beyond, through bilateral agreements and investments in infrastructure. Scholarly dealing with it has been focused on both realist and liberal approaches to analyse a variety of global and regional settings and investigate questions of geopolitical, economic and financial impact (Mayer 2017; Erslev Andersen et al. 2017; Yu Cheng, Lilei Song & Lihe Huang 2018). Some scholars have criticised this emphasis on realist and liberal theory and have adopted a constructivist perspective in their research (Callahan 2016; Fierke & Antonio-Alfonso 2018). Their critique of the state-of-the-art provides grounds for investigating, paraphrasing Fierke and Antonio-Alfonso, how China is possibly reconfiguring the normative fabric of global politics through the BRI. Within IR, the English School (ES), with its central concepts of international society as "a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values" (Bull 1977, p.13) and primary institutions (PIs) as these "patterned practices, ideas and norms/rules" (Schouenborg 2012, p.45), offers a framework focused very much on this normative fabric (Buzan 2014; Buzan & Schouenborg 2018; Knudsen & Navari 2019).

This paper aims to contribute to the diversification of theoretical approaches to the study of the BRI and its global impact, and within the ES to the study of further regions and regional international societies (RISs) in the context of the BRI. In that sense, the paper contributes to the regional turn of the ES (Hurrell 2007; Schouenborg 2012; Karmazin et al. 2014; Stivachtis 2015) when addressing Sino-European relations in times of the BRI. It analyses (norm) contestation regarding differing interpretations and practices of certain PIs between statespersons representing the respective governments of Germany, Italy, China, and the European Union (EU) as a global actor. In doing so, this paper highlights promising synergies between constructivist norm research and the ES. Further, it contributes to the emerging field of BRI studies in asking for the initiative's role in Sino-European relations. The selection of Germany and Italy is reasoned for with their particular relevance for the BRI – Germany marks the nodal point for the Silk Road Economic Belt, and Italy as the occidental end of the historic Silk Road marks the nodal point for the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Moreover, they represent different places on an economic spectrum in terms of, e.g. current account balance, pubic debt, and unemployment rate among EU member states and thus allow for an EU north-south perspective in the enquiry regarding the BRI. The chosen actors are also from distinct regions for which RIS has been

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[1] This paper expands on, and reproduces parts of, the author's Master's thesis defended in May 2019 when at Roskilde University. An earlier version of this paper was part of EISAPEC19.

addressed within recent ES studies. The EU, Germany, and Italy represent a European RIS (ERIS) (Diez, Manners & Whitman 2011; Ahrens & Diez 2015; Ahrens 2019), while China is located in East Asia and an arguably prominent, possibly dominant, member within an East Asia RIS (EARIS) (Buzan & Zhang 2014; Costa Buranelli 2015; Zhang 2015). The PIs under investigation are Sovereignty and International Law as the pillars of international society (Jackson 2003; Holsti 2004; Costa Buranelli 2015), and the Market Economy as an institution bearing high relevance to the BRI itself and being the one that China in recent decades has arguably embraced above all. This allows addressing the puzzle of what happens to the normative fabric of global politics when (actors from different) RISs meet. To that end, the paper poses the below research questions:

> *Which contesting or rivalling interpretations of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy are statespersons representing China and the EU, Germany, and Italy promoting, and what role does the BRI have for Sino-European relations and contestation?*

The theoretical framework draws on the notion of polysemous PIs, i.e. that the interpretations and practices of PIs are regional-context dependent (Kacowicz 2005; Costa Buranelli 2015), and that interpretations and related practices of PIs differ from other regions' and from liberal interpretations to various degrees (Buzan & Zhang 2014; Karmazin et al. 2014; Costa Buranelli 2014). The understanding of norm contestation in the context of PIs between actors from different RIS is aligned with the Theory of Contestation, i.e. as a social practice with normative, or norm-generative, dimensions (Wiener 2014, pp.1–7). The analysis focuses on norm contestation in the sense of the actors promoting differing interpretations of PIs or opposing the respectively other's interpretations or related practices (Buzan & Zhang 2014, p.7; Wiener 2018, p.217). The paper deploys a variation of discourse tracing (DT)[2] to capture the chronologic unfolding of Sino-European discourse, identify defining themes of contestation and substantive disagreements, and analyse the role of the BRI in relation to contestation.

The findings indicate that Sino-European relations can be divided into four phases between 2013-2019, each characterised by different defining themes and changing receptions of the BRI. Contestation is identified in differing forms and around different themes in all phases. This paper argues that, firstly, the BRI increasingly presented a challenge to EU cohesion and unity, especially in member state foreign policy vis-à-vis China – the relations between China and the EU, and Germany became increasingly contested throughout the phases, while Sino-Italian relations developed amicably. Secondly, that substantive disagreements between China and the EU, Germany, and Italy were based in a clash of plural-

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[2] See LeGreco and Tracy (2009) and Spandler (2019) for further considerations.

ist and liberal-solidarist interpretations of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy, and differing related practices. Thirdly, that in contesting liberal-solidarist interpretations of PIs, China is resisting solidarising tendencies of members of ERIS and arguably proposing an alternative, pluralist order to a (European) liberal-solidarist one.

The paper is structured into six sections. The following one outlines the theoretical framework for this work and introduces core concepts. The third section clarifies the methodologic pathway and research design. Section four and five present the findings regarding the BRI in Sino-European discourse and respective contestations of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy between 2013 and 2019. The last section provides a conclusion and discusses implications for both IR as a discipline and international relations in practice.

The English School and Contestation of Norms

The contestation of norms in the context of this paper means contestation of interpretations and related practices of the ES's PIs.[3] This becomes clearer when recalling that PIs are "patterned practices, ideas and norms/rules" (Schouenborg 2012, p.45) which represent "the institutionalisation of mutual interest and identity among states" (Buzan 2014, p.12). The original set of PIs includes Balance of Power, International Law, Diplomacy, War and Great Power Management (Bull 1977). It has since then been extended in an extensive ongoing debate – summarised in-depth by Buzan (2014) – to also include the notions Sovereignty, Nationalism, Human Equality and the Market (Wight 1978; James 1986, 1999; Mayall 1990, 2000; Holsti 2002, 2004; Jackson 2003; Buzan 2004; Schouenborg 2011). Not all ES scholars are in agreement regarding what counts as an institution, Terradas (2018), for example, traces the arguable anthropological roots of Hedley Bull's work and argues for adherence to the classical five institutions, while making a case for Trade as a sixth PI of international society.[4] Environmental Stewardship (Falkner & Buzan 2019) and International Sanctions (Wilson & Yao 2019) as the latest propositions illustrate that the debate on PIs is still evolving. It is these institutions that are considered a cornerstone of the ES by both the classical writers and following generations of scholars (Knudsen 2019). Within this paper, the emphasis is on Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy. The former two are, as pillars of international society (Jackson 2003; Holsti 2004; Costa Buranelli 2015), considered crucial to analysing what happens when actors from different RIS meet, while Market Economy is seen as

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[3] All three types of norms distinguished by Wiener (2014, 36-37) – "fundamental norms", "organising principles", and "standardised procedures" – are referred to and considered included in the concept of PIs.

[4] See Wilson (2012) and Schouenborg (2011, 2017) for two different perspectives on the proliferation of institutions within the ES.

especially relevant in the context of the BRI and Sino-European relations. Considering them "deep and relatively durable social practices" (Buzan 2014, p.16) aids in understanding what is then understood by 'contestation of PIs': substantial disagreement regarding the meaning of an institution and its (wilful) reinterpretation in discourse. This can take shape as, e.g. promoting differing interpretations or opposition to a specific interpretation or related practice. The presented framing of contestation is closely aligned with what Wiener (2014, 2018) defines as contestation of norms – namely, an "interactive social practice [which] may be performed either explicitly … or implicitly" (2014, p.2). In a way, this paper poses a variation of the question "Whose Practices Count" (Wiener 2018, p.1) – a variation as it addresses (regional) international society and its actors, and not civil society with respectively different actors. Drawing on Wittgenstein (1958), Costa Buranelli (2015) explicates the relevance of polysemy for the study of PIs in regional contexts. Namely, that PIs are different and contested in their meaning both within a region and inter-regionally, they are under "constant renegotiation, redefinition and reformulation" (p.500).

The differentiation between solidarist and pluralist interpretations of PIs is utilised as a further analytical tool in the study of Sino-European contestation in discourse (Ahrens 2019; Knudsen 2019). There is a long-standing debate within the ES between solidarist and pluralist shadings of international society (Bull 1966; Buzan 2014; Bain 2014; Knudsen 2019). The salient difference is, concisely put, that "[a] pluralist international society builds on a rather thin and weak basis of shared norms and values" (Ahrens 2019, p.266) and that "a thicker basis of shared norms and values underpins a solidarist international society, in which the universalisation of ideas beyond national borders becomes possible and desirable" (ibid.). In a pluralist international society, the norms of non-intervention and respect for national (internal/domestic) Sovereignty are paramount, bearers of rights and duties are states alone, and humanitarian intervention and universal human rights consequently regarded problematic (Knudsen 2019, p.177). In contradistinction to that, a liberal-solidarist conception of international society ascribes rights and duties related to International Law also to individuals, and Sovereignty is more relational to, e.g. global governance in the sense of the UN (ibid.). This differentiation impacts not only the perception and practice of PIs by states and in RISs. It also plays into interstate relations when actors promote contesting interpretations of PIs: "solidarisation implies a reinterpretation of national sovereignty in terms of a distinct and more far-reaching definition of responsibilities and duties of states towards each other and vis-à-vis individuals inside and outside their own territories" (Ahrens 2019, p.266). The notion of solidarisation of international society, and its limitations, in the sense of promoting the aforementioned interpretation of Sovereignty and related practices, is skilfully captured by Ahrens and Diez (2015) on the example of the EU.

The differences between solidarist and pluralist framings aid also in analysing different interpretations of PIs: Sovereignty as the "defining quality of states"(Buzan 2004, p.178) refers to the notion that states do not accept a higher authority in conducting their affairs, it also represents a fundamental attribute to determine membership in (regional) international society (Costa Buranelli 2015). Moreover, Human Rights (HR) and individuals as holders of rights and duties are a focal point of liberal-solidarist conceptions of Sovereignty, and the promotion of global, universal HR – solidarisation – is a central practice related to liberal-solidarist interpretations of Sovereignty (Ahrens 2019; Ahrens & Diez 2015). In contrast, a pluralist conception of Sovereignty emphasises the adherence to practices of non-intervention, territorial integrity and self-determination (Knudsen 2019).

International Law is "the bedrock institution on which the idea of international society stands or falls" (Mayall 2000, p.94). It is the 'Volume of Sacred Law' of the international society in the sense that within International Law, the agreed-upon norms and rules are codified so that they can serve as the reference for determining legitimate state behaviour and legitimacy in international relations for all members. The UN Charter and the UNSC are central to this codification of common institutions on a global level (Schmidt 2019). There exist further treaties and secondary organisations related to International Law such as in the (solidarist) European legal system and the ECJ on a sub-global level (Lasmar, Zahreddine & Gribel Lage 2015).

The Market Economy is the economic part of an operating system of contemporary international society which, with the help of international organisations like the WTO and the IMF, governs hegemonic stability and the liberalisation of international trade and finance globally (Buzan 2004, 2014). Historically, it is considered a PI of the Western core, but in times of modernity and globalisation, it has also been adopted in regions formerly governed by mercantilist or state socialist approaches to economy and trade (Buzan & Lawson 2014; Buzan 2014).

In short, the theoretical framework combines ES theory with the Theory of Contestation to study contestation regarding polysemous PIs in discourse between actors from different RISs. The following section outlines the methodological pathway in more depth.

Norm Contestation and Primary Institutions in Discourse

This paper deploys a variation of DT outlined by LeGreco and Tracy (2009). The method has also been used in an ES context by Spandler (2019), who fittingly summarised DT as "[an] approach [emphasising] the chronological sequence of discursive interventions" (p.41). Similarly to Spandler's use of DT, the investigation at hand focuses on the chronological unfolding of discourse. To that end, DT

suggests a stepwise approach for selecting relevant primary sources and collecting data from them (LeGreco & Tracy 2009, p.1523). In the following, first source selection and then data collection, i.e. 'reading PIs', is described.

Selection of Sources

In a first step, data sources were collected from macro- and meso-levels of discourse, and then ordered chronologically providing a general timeline of discourse between China, and the EU, Germany and Italy. One conscious delimitation to make the scope of the analysis realisable in the available time and considering the difficulty of access is made regarding the degree of depth on a micro-level of discourse.[5] The macro-level is understood in the sense of Fairhurst and Putnam (2004) as "broader social narratives and systems of enduring thought" (as cited in LeGreco & Tracy 2009, p.1519), and the meso level of discourse is understood as the sphere "between local experiences and larger structures" (p.1520, sic). For this work, the main sources for empirical evidence are official documents and speeches in a variety of forms that capture the discourse between China, the EU, Germany, and Italy in times of the BRI – from 2013 to 2019. These sources range from core strategic papers, reports and speeches issued unilaterally – e.g. China's policy on the EU and vice-versa (FMPRC 2014a; EC & Mogherini 2016; EC 2019) – to joint communications or declarations, issued bi- or multilaterally – e.g. proceedings of consultations between China and Italy, Germany and the EU (FMITA & FMPRC 2013; GER & PRC 2014; EC & PRC 2015).

Regarding the EU specifically, preference was given to sources originating from the EU's executive branch and its foreign policy framework – i.e. the EC, the HR/VP, and the EEAS – since these arguably represent the EU's position as a global actor. As opposed to, e.g. the European Foreign Affairs Council or the European Council (EUCO), which are staffed with ranking statespersons of the EU27 arguably bringing in elements of their member-state interest. This EU-internal contestation is not part of the research; hence the argued for delimitation in sources. Statements made by the (office of the) President of the EUCO are taken into account, considering them not holding a national office in the EU27 and being the general representative of the European Union.[6] This first step of DT allowed for simmering down a collection of approximately 1,500 different sources to 350 deemed relevant for the enquiry at hand. Of these 350 sources, 103 sources were selected as the relevant empirical basis for analysing both the BRI and contestation of PIs in Sino-European discourse.

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[5] The general approach to the investigation would, however, benefit from such a micro-level analysis, as it allowed gaining insight into the subjective views of individual statespersons; a 'look behind the scenes' as Brasch-Kristensen (2016) and Costa Buranelli (2015) demonstrate.

[6] See Article 15 of the Lisbon Treaty (EU 2007).

Data Collection

The second step consisted of an initial exploratory reading of the selected primary source in the established chronological order, followed by a close reading of the same (LeGreco & Tracy 2009, p.1529). This was done to (1) identify key events or turning points in discourse and relations, (2) uncover defining themes and changes in language, and (3) shed light on the role of and responses to the BRI. It is the search for turning points which provided the basis for finding phases in Sino-European relations and set up the further, and deeper, analysis of primary sources. Both the explorative and the close readings were supported by qualitative coding in NVivo, which allowed to trace and store relevant themes and quotes consistently. In its study of PIs within the sources – i.e. in 'reading PIs' – the analysis recognises "the importance of empirical research as opposed to grand theorizing" (Navari 2014, p.213) and followed the methodological emphasis of the ES. Namely, that researchers immerse themselves in "diplomatic records, memoirs and newspapers" (p.213) and analyse of statements and actions by civil servants or statespersons, to uncover "the self-conceptions of the actors who are participating in the processes that constitute international life" (p.213). These actors are the representatives of states, which are here referred to as 'statespersons' (Jackson 2003; Navari 2014). In other words, the data sources were analysed for empirical data points in the form of, e.g. phrases, formulations, or entire passages that evince differing interpretations, or respective contestation, of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy, and their related differing practices. And further, regarding the role and implications of the BRI in Sino-European relations in that period. This procedure allows "to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge" (Bowen 2009, p.27) regarding question at hand. Spandler (2019), for example, draws on the statement of an Indonesian political leader to evince that they "promoted a pluralist understanding of international society" (p.69):

> When I say internationalism, I do not mean cosmopolitanism, which does not want the existence of nationalism […]. Internationalism cannot flourish if it is not rooted in the soil of nationalism. (as cited in Spandler 2019, p. 69)

In alignment with Spandler's usage of DT, this work thus combines insights on the PIs under investigation from the theoretical framework with empirical findings generated by the research itself in step one and two, which Spandler (2019) refers to as "functional heuristics" (p.39). It is here where the interpretivist approach of this work comes into play as the elicitation of meaning regarding PIs "inevitably involves a degree of subjective judgement" (p.39).

European Responses to the BRI

In this section, the findings regarding the BRI in Sino-European discourse are briefly presented and put in context to recent bilateral developments between EU27 member states and China. The chronological analysis of empirical material yielded three distinct phases of Sino-European relations between 2013-2019, with fourth one commencing in late-2019. These phases are termed: *Anno BRI: Xi Era Begins* (2013-2015), Chinese and European Strategic Currents (2015-2016), Facing Variegated European Winds (2016-2019), and *A Japanese-European BRI Alternative* (from late 2019). They are characterised by a differing role of the BRI in Sino-European discourse and increasingly diverging responses from EU27 member-states. The findings point to the BRI presenting a challenge to cohesion in EU foreign policy and adherence to guiding principles set forth by the EC for EU27 member-states to consider in their national foreign policy strategies.

During *Anno BRI: Xi Era Begins*, the BRI arguably arrived in Sino-European discourse at the occasion of Xi's visit to Europe in 2014 when he met with EUCO President Van Rompuy and EC President Barroso:

> *In view of the great potential to improve their transport relations, both sides decided to develop synergies between China's "Silk Road Economic Belt" initiative and EU policies and jointly to explore common initiatives along these lines.(Xi, Van Rompuy & Barroso 2014)*

This first mention of the BRI in (Sino-)EU discourse came at a timely point as the BRI physically reached the EU with the opening of the YuXinOu freight train connection from China to Germany in this time. In this first phase, the dominant theme in Sino-European discourse was the beginning of negotiations for an investment agreement between China and the EU, i.e. economic cooperation, and the BRI was not part of contestation regarding interpretations of PIs. In 2015, China provided a clear outline of its conception and perception of the BRI and its role in contemporary Chinese foreign policy (NDRC, FMPRC & MCPRC 2015). It arguably marked the beginning of a second phase, *Chinese and European Strategic Currents*, in Sino-European relations:

> *The Initiative is harmonious and inclusive. It advocates tolerance among civilizations, respects the paths and modes of development chosen by different countries, and supports dialogues among different civilizations on the principles of seeking common ground while shelving differences and drawing on each other's strengths, so that all countries can coexist in peace for common prosperity.(ibid. 2015)*

It is important to read this statement with the distinction between solidarist and pluralist frames in mind. That is to say, the relevant message here is arguably the emphasis on respect for sovereign choices of countries in their domestic matters.

Moreover, the reference to the inclusiveness of the BRI is not unconditional as China also put forward 'terms of affiliation':

> They [countries along the Belt and Road] should promote policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds as their five major goals […].(ibid.)

Despite the BRI being described as "open to all countries, and international and regional organisations"(ibid.) with the overall aim of "[promoting] the connectivity of Asian, European and African continents and their adjacent seas"(ibid.), the five mentioned pillars have to be understood not through a Western-liberal or liberal-solidarist frame, but from a Chinese pluralist one. The BRI arguably became a projection screen for the disagreements over, e.g. reciprocity in FDI regulations and foreign companies' access to the Chinese market within the EC's strategy paper on China towards the end of *Chinese and European Strategic Currents*:

> Co-operation with China on its 'One Belt, One Road' initiative should be dependent on China fulfilling its declared aim of making it an open platform which adheres to market rules and international norms in order to deliver benefits for all.(EC & Mogherini 2016, p.10)

An open letter in February 2017, signed by Germany, Italy, and France, calling for an FDI screening mechanism for the EU is considered as the second turning point in Sino-European relations at the time and as the beginning of *Facing Variegated European Winds* (Zypries, Sapin & Calenda 2017). The respective responses to the BRI changed yet again in this third phase, with the EC reiterating the conditions for cooperation and detailing the meaning of 'adhering to international norms' as "EU and international requirements, and [complementing] EU policies and projects" (EC & EEAS 2017). Xi Jinping hosted the first Belt and Road Forum in May 2017. At the occasion, no EU representative co-signed the Leaders' Roundtable joint communique as the EU's requirements and concerns were addressed in the document (Xi et al. 2017). German Economy Minister Zypries reportedly commented in a press briefing at the summit that "so far the demands of the EU countries in areas such as free trade, setting a level playing field and equal conditions have not been met" (as cited in Mistreanu & Petring 2017) and that "therefore we say at the moment, if that does not happen, then we cannot sign"(ibid.). The Italian Premier Gentiloni, who in contrast to Zypries did sign the joint communication, boiled the Italian response to the BRI down to its essence:

> I would say that the fact that the Chinese President has confirmed their intention to include Italian ports among the ports on which to invest in this gigantic investment program as Silk Road terminals is important.

> *In particular, we are talking about the expansion of the ports of Trieste and Ge-*
> *noa, connected as they are to the railway and highway system that reaches the rich*
> *heart of Europe.(Gentiloni 2017)*

These developments arguably demonstrated two things. Firstly, that the BRI had become subject to contestation itself – that is from the EU and Germany. Secondly, that Sino-Italian relations and were developing juxtaposed to relations between the EU and Germany, and China. This argument is underlined by Italy's responses to the BRI in discourse throughout the three phases and formally affiliating with the BRI framework in March 2019 (ITA & PRC 2019a).

The implications of a European founding member going against the majority within the EUCO and the EC's proposed foreign policy guidelines for EU member states are manifold. The German foreign minister (FM) Heiko Maas commented that "a single country must not have the opportunity always to block all others"(Welt am Sonntag 2019) which arguably gave expression to the challenge that the Italian position and presumably voting in the EUCO regarding a joint EU position and policy on the BRI, presented to the bloc. FM Maas found frank words concerning EU unity vis-à-vis China:

> *In a world with giants like China, Russia, or our partner the US, we can only*
> *persist when, as EU, we are unified. And if some countries believe one can do*
> *clever business with the Chinese people, they will be surprised and eventually*
> *wake up in dependencies. Short-term lucrative offers get a bitter aftertaste faster*
> *than expected. China is not a liberal democracy.(Welt am Sonntag 2019)*

Looking beyond Brussels, Berlin, and Rome, it becomes apparent that the Italian response to the BRI is not a singular occurrence. Until YE2019, 16 of the 27 EU member states had signed agreements with Beijing for cooperation under the BRI framework.(Cosentino et al. 2018; Lu et al. 2018; PRC 2018a; FMPRC 2019; PT & PRC 2018) The resulting division among EU member states regarding the BRI is striking and further underlines the challenge which China has, arguably successfully, laid out for the bloc's cohesion in its external relations.

Figure 1: EU27-China cooperation under the BRI framework (YE2019)[7]
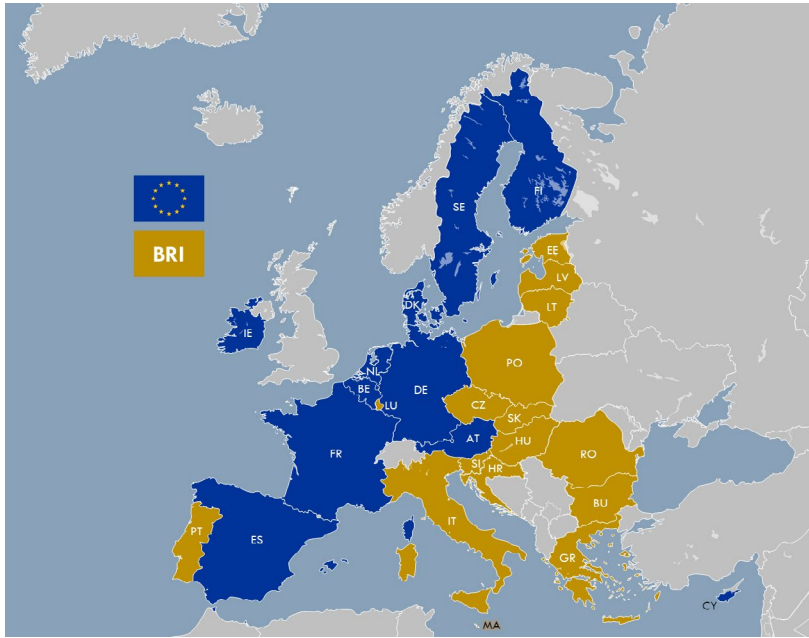
Bearing in mind the rules of unanimity within both the EUCO and the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC), it becomes clear that a unified response from the bloc to the BRI seems unlikely at this point. However, the EC as an organisational actor has far-reaching competencies within EU foreign policy and in negotiating foreign relations and agreements. An exemplary case in response to the BRI is the 2018 'Economic Partnership Agreement' and the 2019 'Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure' between the EU and Japan (EUCO 2018; Juncker, Abe & EC 2019) The language used by both Juncker and Abe, and within the agreement itself bears a striking resemblance to that of China and the BRI but with a liberal-solidarist framing of PIs. The BRI framework speaks of respect for different chosen development paths, civilisational differences, and of "seeking common ground while shelving differences"(NDRC, FMPRC & MCPRC 2015). The EU-Japan framework copies the BRI's five pillars and adds that cooperation also with other countries will "fully [take] into account partners' needs and demands and paying the utmost attention to their fiscal capacity and debt-sustainability"(Juncker, Abe & EC 2019). This is arguably a reiteration of the bloc's critique of dependency and exploitation regarding the BRI. In the agreement, the EU and Japan also expressed their desire to "to promote openness, transparency, inclusiveness and a level playing field for those concerned, including investors and businesses in connectivity"(ibid.) and in doing so reiterate the aforementioned points of critique regarding the BRI. Moreover, the reference to

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[7] Own illustration. Map adapted from (maix 2007)/CC BY-SA.

"free, open, rules-based, fair, non-discriminatory […] trade and investment, transparent procurement practices, the ensuring of debt sustainability and the high standards of […] environmental sustainability"(ibid.) gives expression to liberal-solidarist interpretations of PIs. In a press conference, Japanese PM Abe refers to "common values and principles"(Shinzo Abe 2019) between the EU and Japan that underpin their relation and subsequently names 'democracy', 'the rule of law', 'human rights', and 'freedoms' as these common values. While neither China nor the BRI was directly invoked, EC president Juncker made clear that the EU and Japan were pitching to the world an alternative to the BRI framework and possible future dependency on China:

> Connectivity must also be financially sustainable. It is about handing down to future generations a more interconnected world, a cleaner environment and not mountains of debt. It is also about creating more interconnections between all countries around the world, not more dependence on one country.(Juncker 2019, emphasis added)

The changing role of the BRI in Sino-European discourse is considered emblematic of Sino-European relations becoming more confrontative between 2013 and 2019. The BRI had become subject to contestation itself due to fundamental disagreements regarding values and principles – PIs – between the EU, certain member states, and China. At the same time, the responses by EU member states towards the BRI increasingly diverged. By the end of 2019, as many as 16 of the EU27 had affiliated with China's framework while, e.g. Germany and France, and the EC had openly opposed the initiative proposing an alternative in line with European-liberal values and principles. Moreover, this paper argues that the BRI illuminates the caveats of partial integration of the bloc and increasingly presented, and presents, a challenge to EU cohesion and unity especially regarding member state foreign policy vis-à-vis China.

Table 1: Four Phases of Sino-European Discourse & Relations (2013-2019)

Phases and Turning Points	Defining Themes	Role of BRI
Anno BRI: Xi Era Begins (2013-2015)	China's extensive reform plans, civilisation-difference argument and HR, Sino-European cooperation	**BRI as opportunity** BRI plays a minor role in Sino-European discourse and contestation
EU-China joint strategy & BRI whitepaper		
Chinese and European Strategic Currents (2015-2016)	Strategic partners for long run, steel overcapacity, state subsidies, reciprocity regarding FDI	**BRI as projection screen of contestation** China publishes BRI 'terms of affiliation', EU & Germany point to substantial disagreements, Italy open to cooperation
KUKA takeover & EU triumvirate letter		

Phases and Turning Points	Defining Themes	Role of BRI
Facing Variegated European Winds **(2017-2019)**	FDI screening mechanism, protection of critical infrastructure, Sharp language "systemic rivalry	**BRI as subject of contestation** China reiterates pluralist nature of BRI framework. EU & Germany openly contest BRI, while Italy signs MoU
EU-Japan Connectivity Agreement		
A Japanese-European BRI Alternative **(from late 2019)**	Counter initiative complying with liberal-solidarist interpretations of Sovereignty, International Law, and Market Economy	**BRI as competitor** EU and Japan agree on alternative Eurasian connectivity initiative that emphasises liberal values

Recalling the question of whether China might be reconfiguring the normative fabric of global politics, a look beyond the BRI as a framework for cooperation and infrastructure development is in order. Thus, if it is values and principles that are at the core of fundamental disagreements between China and the EU, its member states, and also Japan, then the differences of values and principles require special attention. The following section investigates the differing frames, ideas, and values that underpin the self-conceptions of statespersons on both the Chinese and European side and analyses how these differences are woven into Sino-European discourse.

Contestation in Sino-European Discourse

An analysis of Sino-European discourse from 2013–2019 showed that there is substantial disagreement regarding the PIs of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy and that statespersons were contesting the respectively other's interpretation in their discourse. The following three sub-sections provide relevant examples of this interpretation-based contestation and capture the defining themes that contestation manifested around. Moreover, the differences in (European) liberal-solidarist and (Chinese) pluralist interpretations and frames of PIs are highlighted.

Sovereignty

At the beginning of his presidency, Xi Jinping outlined China's interpretation of Sovereignty as absolute both in internal and foreign affairs at the G20 summit:

> *We respect the development paths and domestic and foreign policies chosen independently by the people of every country. We will in no circumstances interfere in the internal affairs of Central Asian countries. We do not seek to dominate regional affairs or establish any sphere of influence. (Xi 2013)*

The emphasis on self-determination in relation to also the choice of development path and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs is considered

as pluralist interpretation and practice of Sovereignty (Costa Buranelli 2015; Zhang 2015). The contrast in interpretation and practice of Sovereignty arguably becomes clear from EUCO President Van Rompuy's statement at the 2013 EU-China Summit:

> *The protection of human rights and fundamental freedom is at the core of the existence of the EU itself and constitutes an important part of our exchange with all our partners. There is no doubt that through lifting millions of people from poverty China has made key contributions in this field. […] We discussed today questions related to the protection of minorities and freedom of expression especially on defenders of human rights and I expressed our concerns. (Van Rompuy 2013)*

This expression of the EU's self-conception as a protector of fundamental, or universal, HR and the voiced criticism towards China, demonstrates substantive disagreement with Chinese practice. In the context of styling the EU as a 'protector of HR', such open contestation of China's domestic HR situation can, with reference to Ahrens and Diez (2015), arguably be seen as an example of solidarising tendencies in the EU's approach to China. Furthermore, further, while Xi consistently reiterated that it "will never seek hegemony or expansion" (Xi 2014a), he made it clear that "[at] the same time, China will firmly uphold its sovereignty, security, and development interests. No country should expect China to swallow the bitter fruit that undermines its sovereignty, security and development interests" (ibid.). This positioning arguably strengthens the argument that non-interference is of paramount importance within EARIS (Buzan & Zhang 2014; Costa Buranelli 2015). Moreover, it provides further proof that "the practice [of Sovereignty] in ASEAN seems to go beyond international standards" (Tay (2008) as cited in Costa Buranelli 2015, p.506) in the sense that "[commenting] on on what another state does within what the latter considers to be domestic jurisdiction" (ibid.) is seen as illegitimate.

Speaking at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, Xi provided insights to the reasoning behind China's perception of Sovereignty – namely that "civilizations have come in different colors" (Xi 2014b), that "all human civilizations are equal in terms of value" (ibid.), and thus "no one civilization can be judged superior to another" (ibid.). The final point he made is their inclusiveness in the sense that "copying other civilizations mechanically or blindly is like cutting one's toes just to fit his shoes, which is not only impossible but also highly detrimental" (ibid.). This paper terms this discursive practice as the *civilisation-difference argument*. It is shown to be a recurring way of contesting or resisting solidarising tendencies on the part of China.

The understanding and practice of Sovereignty within ERIS differ from the Chinese reading: Internally, member states are pooling their respective State Sover-

45

eignty (Diez, Manners & Whitman 2011; Ahrens 2019). The EU's policy on China adopted in 2016 arguably demonstrated this (internal) reading of Sovereignty in making it clear that "the EU must project a strong, clear and unified voice in its approach to China" (EC and Mogherini 2016b, 4), and that "Member States should reinforce agreed EU positions in their bilateral relations with China, while the Commission and the EEAS should ensure that Member States are made aware when EU interests need to be safeguarded" (ibid., 17).[8] The call for with the call for "EU coherence and cohesiveness is vital on the big policy choices and on the maintenance of the rules-based international order" (ibid., 17) vis-à-vis China further illustrated the practice of pooled Sovereignty also in a foreign policy context. The discourse surrounding the condition of HR in Xinjiang province, specifically the internment of Uyghurs in re-education camps, provides an example for substantive disagreements related to the interpretation of Sovereignty. Following a debate in the German Bundestag on the matter, the Chinese embassy issued a serious demarche, i.e. strong formal diplomatic protest, insisting that "[the] Bundestag's arbitrary allegations, […] constitute a blatant intrusion into domestic affairs and a gross violation of China's sovereignty" (PRC 2018b). China's invocation of the civilisational-difference argument – "Germany and China have a very different history and culture, and the understanding of Human Rights is not the same" (ibid.) – in the context of "[defending] itself against the politicisation and instrumentalisation of Human Rights […]" (ibid.) arguably provides an example for resistance to or contestation of solidarising efforts on part of Germany, and the EU. Substantive disagreements regarding the interpretation and practice of Sovereignty could not be identified in Sino-Italian discourse. Given the different approach Italy has shown vis-à-vis the BRI and China under Xi Jinping, this is not surprising and considered in line with the practice of Sovereignty common within EARIS. The absence of outspoken disagreement regarding practices and interpretation of Sovereignty arguably shows a further departure from EU cohesion in foreign relations with China on the part of Italy.

International Law

The friction between Chinese and European conceptions of International Law found expression in China's position paper for the 69th Session of the UNGA:

> It is the goal of all countries to achieve the rule of law at the national and international levels. At the national level, countries are entitled to independently choose the models of rule of law that suit their national conditions. Countries with different models of rule of law should learn from each other and seek common development in a spirit of mutual respect and inclusiveness. (FMPRC 2014b)

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[8] The EC released the 'Elements for a new EU strategy on China' in June (EC & Mogherini 2016), which was adopted as the policy framework for the EU on China in July (Council 2016).

Recalling the third point of the *civilisation-difference argument*, i.e. inclusiveness, reveals that the same was deployed here when China stated that there were different models of the rule of law in different countries. This is in line with a pluralist interpretation of International Law and strongly relates to the previously explicated Chinese practice of Sovereignty on the national level. Looking at the international level, China stated, similar to the definition found in the joint declaration between President Xi and Chancellor Merkel (GER & PRC 2014), that "it is necessary to uphold the authority of the UN Charter, and strictly abide by universally recognized principles of international law such as sovereign equality and non-interference in others' affairs" (FMPRC 2014b). To understand the meaning of this repeated reference to the UN Charter, it is necessary to look at the respectively differing interpretations – for the reference to the UN Charter itself is subject to the same notion of polysemy as, following Costa Buranelli (2015), PIs in regional contexts:

> *In international legislation, it is important to reflect countries' concerns in a balanced manner and to resist the attempt to make the rules of certain countries as 'international rules', and their standards 'international standards'. (Wang 2014)*

This arguably relates to earlier indicated resistance to, or contestation of, solidarising tendencies in Sino-European relations. And further, the EU and its member states' persistence regarding the promotion of universal HR as well as a specific criticism of the (domestic) Market regime in China at the time. In that regard, the respective statements at the UNSC 7389th session on the rule of law highlighted the core of contestation between China, the EU, and member states in relation to International Law. Foreign Minister (FM) Wang Yi opened the debate by putting forward China's reading of the content and role of the UN Charter, and how it defined the UN:

> *The UN Charter affirms the strong determination of the international community **to prevent war and maintain lasting peace**. At the outset, the Charter defines **the purposes of the United Nations as maintaining international peace and security**, which embodies the world's deep reflection over the two world wars and the great yearning of all countries to be free of war, fear and want. (Wang 2015, emphasis added)*

The EU representative's response made clear that the EU had a different reading of the preamble and the UN Charter:

> *But preventing future wars was not the only undertaking of the signatories of the Charter 70 years ago. The very same preambular passage of the Charter also stresses their determination **to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights**, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and wom-*

> *en and of nations large and small; […] . In its very first paragraphs,* **the Charter thus defined the three pillars of this Organization: peace and security, human rights, and development**. *(Mayr-Harting 2015, emphasis added)*

This represented an open contestation vis-à-vis China's reading of the UN Charter and the one-dimensional role of the UNSC, as "the European Union also believes that the Security Council has its own specific responsibilities with regard to the other two pillars" (Mayr-Harting 2015), i.e. HR and development. The German Envoy backed the EU position and made a case for universal HR when stating that "[t]here is also a growing understanding that human rights should know no borders and that those responsible for the most egregious violations must be held accountable" (Braun 2015). In contrast, the Italian Envoy, while, like the German one, stating that "Italy aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union" (Lambertini 2015), also made use of the points of the *civilisation-difference argument* highlighted earlier:

> *In the same spirit, Italy promotes respect for human rights – a key priority of our foreign policy –* **with an inclusive and balanced approach, taking into account all of the different positions.** *(Lambertini 2015, emphasis added)*

The Italian response can arguably be viewed as a deviation from a cohesive line in European foreign policy vis-à-vis China. This cohesive line found expression in the EU's strategy on China in 2016, with the purpose of the strategy expressed as, among other factors, to "promote respect for the rule of law and human rights within China and internationally" (EC & Mogherini 2016, p.3). It also defined the EU's understanding of a "rules-based international order [being] based on respect for international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law,[…]" (ibid., 15). Furthermore, that "the EU should work with China to promote universal advancement of human rights, in particular compliance with international human rights standards at home and abroad" (ibid.). With reference to the theoretical framework, the literal reference to promoting universal HR is considered further evidence for solidarising efforts on the EU's and Germany's part regarding interpretations of both Sovereignty and International Law (Ahrens & Diez 2015; Ahrens 2019). The differing Italian response highlights the absence of European unity or cohesion in discursive interaction with China and gives expression to the status quo of only limited European integration within the spheres of foreign policy and external relations. Moreover, statements provide insights on the contested and polysemous phrase of "rules-based international order"(EC & Mogherini 2016, p.15). Within ERIS, such an order includes "international humanitarian and human rights law"(ibid.). Recalling FM Wang's statement – i.e. "to resist the attempt to make the rules of certain countries as 'international rules'"(Wang 2014) – demonstrates that the Chinese interpretation of international order is strictly pluralist, and thus arguably contests the European

reading.

Market Economy

China's domestic interpretation of the Market can be perceived from Xi's statement outlining internal reforms at the 2013 G20 summit:

> *China will **strengthen the market system construction**, advance the structural reform on macroeconomic regulation and control, taxation, finance, investment, administrative system and other fields, and **give full play to the basic role of the market in resource allocation**. (FMPRC 2013, emphasis added)*

At the 2013 World Economic Forum, Premier Li Keqiang, made further remarks regarding the reform of China's economic system, stating that China had "endeavoured to develop a mixed economy, relaxed market access […], encouraged more investment of the non-public sector, and provided greater space for business of various ownerships"(Li 2013). The joint communique following the EU-China Summit explicated that the parties agreed to foster "their trade and investment relationship towards 2020 in a spirit of mutual benefit, by promoting open, transparent markets and a level-playing field" (EC & PRC 2013, p.5). However, even though it is a joint communique, that does not mean there was agreement in the interpretation or practice of terms such as "open, transparent markets and a level-playing field"(EC & PRC 2013, p.5).

On the contrary, as the findings show, there is disagreement on them: China, on the one hand, had pointed out it had chosen what it termed "socialism with Chinese characteristics" (Xi 2014c) – or "a mixed economy" (Li 2013) – as its (economic) development path. While this included "[giving] full play to the basic role of the market in resource allocation"(FMPRC 2013, emphasis added), it also included "the visible hand" (Xi 2014a, 128), i.e. governmental involvement in the economy. On the other hand, as Barroso (2013) put it: "in Europe we are reforming our social market economy". Or differently, a liberal market economy with less involvement of the state in the economy and different Market-related practices regarding private operators. Thus, a 'level playing field' needs to be seen before a backdrop of fundamentally different economic systems.

The news of a bid by China's Midea for the German KUKA corporation, technology leader in robotics, made landfall in mid-2016. Midea eventually acquired a 94.5% stake. The outspokenness by German Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel, arguably an intervention, stood in stark contrast to the Italian response regarding ChemChina's acquisition of Pirelli in spring 2015. At the time of bidding, the Italian Economy Minister Federica Guidi made a statement in which she welcomed the investment:

The entry into the share capital of Pirelli by China Chemical is an operation that concerns a private company and, therefore, the Government is not entitled to intervene. That said, any transaction that aims to consolidate and render even more national industrial competitive excellence is absolutely acceptable, just as is the case with Pirelli. (MISE 2015)

When questioned about KUKA at a press conference in May 2016, Gabriel responded by clarifying that it was important not to make the debate about nationality, i.e. China, but about unequal practices regarding know-how transfer, and added:

And of course, I would find it appropriate if there was at least an alternative offer from Germany, or Europe. So that it can then be decided by the owners which of the offers is – for the companies that have the intent of disposition, but also for the future of the German industrial base – the ultimately better one. (BMWi 2016a)

Acknowledging that there was some concern on the part of the German government regarding targeted bids for leading German companies, and substantive disagreements with China over the manner of know-how transfers, he stated that "[one] cannot declare a state-led economy [Staatswirtschaft] to be a market economy. Those are the areas of conflict we have (ibid.). In June 2016, Gabriel voiced the question of how Europe as, in his words, one of the most open market economies was competing with state-subsidised companies from non-open market economies and that "the game is not protectionist versus market, but rather the game is open market versus state-capitalist intervention" (BMWi 2016b). He concluded that the debate was about "the contradiction between and open market economy [offene Volkswirtschaft] and a state-capitalist intervention economy [Interventionswirtschaft]" (ibid.). During a meeting with German Chancellor Merkel, Premier Li made China's position regarding its status as (non-) market economy and obligations under WTO agreements clear when he stated that "China has fully implemented its commitment upon the entry of the WTO, and the EU and relevant parties should also fulfil their commitments" (FMPRC 2016). The presented evidence highlights the striking differences in Italian and German discourse on Chinese investment and contestation of Market-related practices.

A further example of contestation regarding the issue of reciprocity of foreign investment opportunities and the change in language – i.e. the introduction of terms like 'security', 'defending strategic interests', 'critical technologies and infrastructure' – can arguably be perceived from Juncker's State of the Union speech in September 2017:

Let me say once and for all: we are not naïve free traders. Europe must always

defend its strategic interests.

This is why today we are proposing a new EU framework for investment screening. If a foreign, state-owned, company wants to purchase a European harbour, part of our energy infrastructure or a defence technology firm, this should only happen in transparency, with scrutiny and debate. It is a political responsibility to know what is going on in our own backyard so that we can protect our collective security if needed. (Juncker 2017)

And also, from the EC's report accompanying the policy proposal for an FDI screening mechanism:[9]

In this context, there is a risk that in individual cases foreign investors may seek to acquire control of or influence in European undertakings whose activities have repercussions on critical technologies, infrastructure, inputs, or sensitive information. This risk arises especially but not only when foreign investors are state owned or controlled, including through financing or other means of direction. Such acquisitions may allow the States in question to use these assets to the detriment not only of the EU's technological edge but also its security and public order. (EC 2017)

On 12 March 2019, the EC provided a review of EU-China relations in preparation for the EUCO meeting later the same month. In it, the EC postulated that "China can no longer be regarded as a developing country"(EC 2019), and, while systemic differences had been acknowledged by both the EU and China before, the classification of China as "systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance" (ibid.) marked a sharp turn in EU discourse and language:

*China is, …, **a cooperation partner** with whom the EU has closely aligned objectives, **a negotiating partner** with whom the EU needs to find a balance of interests, **an economic competitor** in the pursuit of technological leadership, and **a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance**. (ibid., emphasis added)*

The EUCO meeting in the same month provided no immediate insights on the Italy-BRI matter. On March 23, Italy and China signed the MoU formalising Sino-Italian cooperation regarding the BRI – Italy's 'affiliation' with the BRI framework (ITA & PRC 2019a, 2019b). The following day, German FM Maas offered a German perspective on the matter. In the earlier-mentioned interview titled *Europe: We must move away from unanimity in foreign policy* he stated that "a single country must not have the opportunity always to block all others" (Welt am Sonntag 2019) which arguably pointed to a progression of (internal) solidari-

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9   The Regulation 2019/452 was ratified on 19 March 2019 (EP & Council 2019).

sation against its limits pointed out by Ahrens and Diez (2015). That is to say, continued integration concerning member-states' foreign policies, i.e. strengthening of the EC's competencies in representing the EU as a global actor in light of the BRI and China.

Conclusion and Implications

With respect to the previously discussed findings regarding the changing role of the BRI in Sino-European relations and norm contestation regarding Sovereignty, International Law, and Market Economy, this paper advances three arguments.

First, that the BRI framework, as the arguable cornerstone of contemporary Chinese bilateral cooperation, perceivably presents a challenge to EU unity and cohesion especially in member states' foreign policy vis-à-vis China and their respective positioning towards the BRI. The findings further demonstrate how the BRI framework became both the projection screen and direct subject to contestation. Moreover, this highlights the challenges of only partial EU-integration and required unanimity in EUCO decisions despite the ECs efforts to create an alternative to the BRI in line with European/liberal values. The relations between China and the EU, and Germany were characterised by an increasing degree of substantive disagreements regarding all three PIs. Examples are the mentioned demarche on the part of China, and the labelling of China as "a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance" (EC 2019) part of the EU. Sino-Italian relations and discourse were shown to be less confrontative and Italy more open to both the BRI and Chinese inbound investment.

Second, that norm contestation of Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market in Sino-European discourse primarily stems from differing interpretations and related practices of these PIs. That is to say, the EU, Germany, and Italy – as members of ERIS – a solidarist understanding and practice of these three institutions, while China – as member of a narrow EARIS – interprets the institutions from a pluralist perspective. These fundamental differences are visible in discourse as solidarist and pluralist frames for Sovereignty, International Law, and the Market Economy. Thematically, the contestation could be summarised as universal HR vs non-interference, and 'social market economy' vs 'state-capitalist economy'.

Table 2: Solidarist and Pluralist Frames for Primary Institutions

	European liberal-solidarist frames	Chinese pluralist frames
Sovereignty	relational sovereignty: universal HR and humanitarian rights, adherence to liberal principles and values	Absolute sovereignty: non-interference, self-determination, civilisational-difference argument

	European liberal-solidarist frames	Chinese pluralist frames
International Law	Reference for national legislation - solidarisation UN Charter with three pillars: "peace and security, human rights, and development"(Mayr-Harting 2015)	Not to become national legislation – contestation of solidarisation. UN Charta emphasis on one pillar: "prevent war and maintain lasting peace"(Wang 2015)
Market Economy	Open market economy, reciprocity in FDI regulation, comparatively reduced role of state and government	Visible and invisible hand, i.e. active role of state and government

And third, this paper argues that the findings do indeed point to China contesting solidarist interpretations of PIs, i.e. resisting solidarisation, in its exchanges with the EU, Germany, and Italy respectively – and vice versa. As to whether China is actually reconfiguring the normative fabric of global politics, and in doing so would challenge a Western-liberal order – an answer depends on the respective understanding of 'hegemony'. This concept appears to be polysemous, similar to PIs, which becomes apparent when looking at China's insistence on non-interference, HR as a domestic matter, and also the different choice of an economic system. In that regard, one could argue that in contesting these practices, i.e. rejecting solidarisation, and the underlying liberal-solidarist framing, which ultimately stands for a Western-liberal order, China is proposing an alternative, pluralist order. Whether this alternative order will succeed to reconfigure the normative fabric global politics – provided such is the purpose – remains to be seen.

Reflecting on the implications of both findings and arguments, several points can be made: The ES with its concept of RIS and polysemous PIs evidently adds to the understanding of the normative impact and implications of contemporary Chinese foreign policy generally, and the BRI in particular. Moreover, with China steadily expanding the geographic scope of the BRI over the past years, the emerging field of BRI studies proves promising for furthering the regional agenda of the ES and addressing the puzzle of what happens when actors from different RIS meet – especially when comparing Western regional orders with non-Western ones.

Further, by drawing on the Theory of Contestation (Wiener 2014, 2018), this paper shows how permeable and receptive of this scholarship the ES is – a connection which has been surprisingly neglected so far. Thus, exploring evident synergies between constructivist norm research and the ES appears promising for furthering the regional, and discursive, turn of the ES. Also, deploying a variation of DT as the methodologic pathway for this investigation in conjunction with the ES as a theoretical framework showed to be a robust research design for identifying contestation of PIs in discourse. Moreover, the identified *civilisation-difference argument* might open up to further research on how non-Western statespersons'

perspectives inform their state behaviour and practice of PIs in relation to the debate on the standard of civilisation, culture, and international society (Gong 1984; Reus-Smit 2017, 2018; Phillips & Reus-Smit 2020).

Concerning policy relevance, the findings and arguments demonstrate the importance and benefit of going beyond realist or liberal theory when analysing contemporary Chinese foreign policy and the implications of the BRI for global and regional orders. This paper shows that the fundamental disagreements and friction between the EU, its member states, and China, are rooted in fundamentally differing values and principles. Thus, to fully grasp the ramifications of the BRI, experts working in security and foreign affairs need to utilise analytical tools that allow for a focus on precisely these differences of values, norms, and principles. The international society approach – ES theory – with its concept of polysemous PIs and the distinction between solidarist and pluralist frames can demonstrably deliver such. It can educate experts and practitioners in the field of international relations in their understanding of fundamental, value-based disagreements between states, governments, and statespersons. And lastly, considering the discovery of different solidarist and pluralist frames in Sino-European discourse, cognitive linguistics – i.e. metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999; Lakoff 1996) and political framing (Lakoff & Wehling 2016; Wehling 2016, 2017) – might provide a useful further analytical and explanatory tool to be added to the toolset of the ES.

Acknowledgements

Bio

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Renegotiating the World Order: Institutional Change in International Relations

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The system of international cooperation built after World War II institutionalised in many international organisations is facing unprecedented challenges, particularly the rapid growth of developing countries such as China, India, Indonesia or Brazil. Their rise will continue to shift underlying power away from states advantaged by the status quo in major international institutions established long time ago. Indeed, the most prominent example is China that recently significantly changed the landscape of international financial governance. China felt that its interests were underrepresented with regard to its economic power and a position in the world. As its efforts for greater voting rights in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank had failed due to the United States' refusal, China pursued alternative way in creating new institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and New Development Bank (NDB). This case illustrates challenges surrounding the renegotiation of major international organisations in connection to accommodating mounting ambitions of rising powers.

Professor Phillip Y. Lipscy, Director of the Centre for the Study of Global Japan, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy from the University of Toronto decided to engage in contemporary debates over the renegotiation of institutions such as the UN Security Council and IMF with the book under review *Renegotiating the World Order: Institutional Change in International Relations*. Lipscy proposes in his book a novel theory of institutional change in international relations, analysing a slow pace of change in some of the most prominent international organizations. To this purpose, he synthesizes concepts from the rational and historical institutionalist schools of international relations, and in addition incorporating a theory of network effects – a key concept from the economic literature of path dependence. Base on this theory, an openness to change depends on policy areas – where institutions may face competition, they must be flexible in order to attract states, where it is costly to pursue outside alternatives, resistance

and inflexibility occur more frequently.

The volume covers institutional change across a wide range of policy issues, such as international finance, collective security, and internet governance. For this goal, beyond introduction, theoretical part and conclusion, each empirical chapter represents a specific case study. Chapter 3 deals with the IMF and the World Bank (the Bretton Woods Institutions) and their common features. More focused analysis follows in Chapter 4 which examines Japan's behaviour in the both institutions since the 1980s in order to secure greater influence on their functioning. Chapter 5 explores a development institutions and regional integration projects with a particular emphasis on the distribution of development aid and competition among regional integration projects in economic cooperation. In Chapter 6 Lipscy investigates the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (Intelsat) in the context of over-time variation due to technological change in the area of satellite telecommunications. Chapter 7 focuses on the less known Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), an organization that oversees the assignment of internet domain names. This organisation is in many aspects similar to the Intelsat, however the outcome of change is limited due to several factors presented by Lipscy. Interesting comparative study is provided in chapter 8 where the theoretical framework of the book is applied to the League of Nations and the UN Security Council. The book tries to find an answer why the Council of the League of Nations was reformed at the rate of once every 3.2 years, compared to just one, rather modest, reform during the UN Security Council's seventy years of existence. China's rise and its policy toward international organizations also draw Lipscy's attention as Chapter 9 explores China–Taiwan competition over their membership in international organizations as a zero-sum game because of Chinese insistence on the expulsion of Taiwan from international fora.

Unquestionably, international organisations are more than ever a defining feature of contemporary world politics. However, many countries were never present at the negotiating table during their establishment and setting rules. Their membership does not sufficiently reflect their rising power and position in international relations in terms of influence in the functioning, agenda-setting, decision-making or composition of personnel of an organisation.[1] As a result, they may often grow dissatisfied with their representation or influence over such arrangements. Such inflexibility can ultimately lead to the "death of international organisations"[2] as their survivability frequently correlates with an emerging geopolitical conflict. The book under review thus offers a valuable insight in these developments, pro-

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[1] On the evolving policies of rising powers see also Steven Ward. *Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers.* 2017. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[2] Eistrup-Sangiovanni, Mette. 2018. Death of international organizations. The organizational ecology of intergovernmental organizations, 1815-2015. *Review of International Organizations*.

viding the reader a number of variations in institutional change buttressed by a strong theoretical framework.

What Lipscy describes as the World War II effect in the context of his examinations, the tendency for contemporary institutions to reflect the outcome of a war fought over seventy years ago (and dominated by the United States), is the starting point for the basic dynamic that lies at the heart of this book. However, beyond this core topic of his volume, the institutional change is not just a result of emerging powers. Growing dissatisfaction of founding or core members of international organisations could be considered as well. Recently, we observe a significant shift in this policy development regarding Brexit, the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and United States' unilateral steps, gradually directed against international cooperation under an umbrella of well-established institutions, for instance the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO),[3] the World Trade Organisation (WTO)[4] or the Universal Postal Union (UPU).[5] It could be therefore interesting to complement Lipscy's theory and findings by a study concentrating more on "traditional powers" defending the status quo in international institutions, or their growing frustration from diminishing influence in face of changing circumstances.

In times of contested multilateralism, international organisations currently face many challenges to their legitimacy and even existence. International organizations are increasingly evaluated not only on their accomplishments, but also on how they react to their membership, adapt to external developments, manage themselves, or coordinate with other actors in the field.[6] Lipscy's book offers relatively narrow perspective on how international organisations strive for maintaining their relevance in the eyes of their members. Nevertheless, it provides an important account of institutional change as well as stability. In broader context, such adaptability may prove essential as rapidly growing states may express their frustration by other means if they are not satisfied by gaining greater authority within existing institutions. As such, it has ramifications for the evolution of international cooperation and how the international system accommodates rising powers.

Taking into account that detailed examinations of institutional change have been

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[3] The US administration cut recently its contribution to NATO's collective budget and president Donald Trump repeatedly questions the Alliance's commitment.

[4] The US *de facto* dismantled the WTO's compulsory and binding dispute settlement by blocking appointments of Members of the Appellate Body since 2016.

[5] The US threated in 2019 to withdraw the UPU unless fee rates were changed so that importing countries did not lose money from distributing mail and packages from countries including China exploiting electronic orders.

[6] Dingwerth, Klaus, Witt, Antonia, Lehmann, Ina, Reichel, Ellen and Weise, Tobias (eds.). 2019. *International Organizations under Pressure: Legitimating Global Governance in Challenging Times*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

relatively limited so far, the book represents an original and persuasive contribution in attempts to understand why some international organisations successfully resist change for decades, with dissatisfied members pursuing exit, while other organisations adapt rather smoothly.

Bio

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New Perspectives on the International Order: No Longer Alone in This World

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The "West and the Rest" relationship – intended as the interplay between Western and non-Western countries – has always attracted a great deal of attention from academic and political observers. If one is completely new to this debate however, at first glance, broad concepts such as "civilization" or "empire", which are equally well known in Western and non-Western cultures, may seem to be the mainstream subjects of such research. Bertrand Badie, in "*New Perspective on the International order: no longer alone in this world*", does not focus on transcultural notions but specifically refers to the concept of International System, which mainly embodies Western historical experiences, and, meanwhile, is the cornerstone of the International Relations (IR) discipline. The author investigates on how Western countries as a group reached their global hegemony and why the West is indeed declining from within by losing its grip on the very same environment which was set up by the West for the West.

Bertrand Badie is Emeritus Professor of the Centre de Recherches Internationales (CERI) at SciencesPo Paris, France. His research interests range from the Sociology of the International Relations, to Multilateralism and Human Rights. Thanks to his knowledge of Persian and Arab languages and cultures, he has been able to integrate throughout his career the Western perception of IR with non-Western perspectives, which clearly stands up in this book.

In their seminal work "*Contracting states: Sovereign Transfers in International Relations*", Cooley and Spruyt sustain that countries' international status is the product of constant bargaining among states with the aim of redistributing political power among themselves. Badie starts from this point and argues that Western countries ruled the world as an "oligarchs' club" (p.1) continuously reshaping the international order when needed, under the golden rule "sharing when you must, excluding when you think you can" (p.15). Western predominance, therefore, did

not result from one political entity's will to be a hegemon such as for the British, German or Russian empires, but arose from the interconnectedness between several actors who mutually recognized each other as part of the same international community. Evidently, Badie sharply integrates Kenneth Waltz's Neorealism and Hedley Bull's English School and puts them into historical perspective. Through this approach, Post-Cold War international instability is due to the awakening of the Non-Western powers who have been excluded from the Western-centric international community for centuries and who are nowadays refusing to be labeled as "second rank" (p.10) powers.

The book is divided into three sections. The first, chapters 1 to 3, sets up the theoretical background for the following analysis and aims to historicize the concept of the International System. The central chapters, 4 and 5, have the aim of "exploring the new world" (p.53) that has emerged from the illusion of US hegemony, and consider rising international powers and recently independent countries in detail. Finally, chapters 6 and 7 analyze the US and France's reactions to the "newcomers" (p.68).

The first section consists of a well-articulated effort to address historically fundamental IR paradigms, such as Order, Hegemony, and the Balance of Power, through which the current common perception of the world passes. Badie argues that "Global Order" is indeed ideologically grounded on historical exceptions rather than on "regular" historical events. The Westphalia treaty, even though it aimed to marginalize Imperialism, allowed "the temptation of empire" (p.3) to endure and to spread globally through Colonialism. The Cold War, too, was "an accident of history" (p.19), as never before had there been a worldwide diarchic polarization in which the rest of the states forcibly aligned with two superpowers. Badie creates a *fil rouge* between the G20 and the 1815 Concert of Europe along which an aristocracy clearly stood out as the undisputed holders of political power. Directly opposed to this elite, a "dissenting discourse" (p.29) vastly spread around the globe evolving from embryonic groups such as the mid-'20s Pan-Asian or Pan-Islamic fronts to the more articulated Cold War-style "non-aligned movements". Considering a long period of time, the author depicts historical events with the intent of showing how two alternative narratives, the dominant and the excluded, have always been face-to-face.

Since the aftermath of the Cold War, such dialectic interplay seems to have put more and more pressure on the Western oligarchy. Globalization has reduced the importance of statehood while reinforcing the power of individuals by giving them a "truly international status" (p.42). According to the author, Western oligarchy nowadays is no longer besieged by states but by people who, as emerged in the 2011 Arab Spring as well as in the 1999 Seattle demonstration at the WTO summit, can exploit "a public forum"(p.46) to blame the West for any global in-

justice. Contemporary "Westernophobia" (p.46) is very different from previous non-Western political claims since it is occurring in an inter-social rather than inter-state scenario. Very interestingly, the first section of the book argues that the understanding of International Relations nowadays requires the use of new terms, notions, concepts and analytical categories in which a "Sociology of International Relations" should integrate old schools of thought such as Liberalism or Realism. Even more relevantly, however, Badie suggests a reversed vision of international disorder to the reader. Opposed to the mainstream description of instability as resulting from an anarchic International System, the author instead looks at the overabundance of political actors as the main source of disorder. Instability does not result from the lack of one unquestioned power, but from the presence of "7 billion potential" (p.38) leaders. Rather than anarchic, the post-Cold War international scenario resembles more closely to, in the Greek historian Polibius' words, an ochlocracy, or in modern terms, *mobocracy*, where anyone could rule.

In the central chapters of the book, the author tries to understand how, as US supremacy turned out to be a mere illusion, non-Western powers showed a strong desire to be self-ruled and transformed what should have been a unipolar world into a multipolar one. Badie mainly focuses on non-Western global contenders: Russia, China, the BRICS and the EU are all addressed with a brief paragraph each. He argues that although these powers followed autonomous patterns of development, they all wished to play a more active role in international politics. The most prominent arguments, however, are concentrated in the fifth chapter, dedicated to the most war-torn and unstable areas. The author predominantly focuses on the Middle East, which is used as a good example of broader trends that manifested throughout the world. As they are victims of neocolonialism, client-oriented policies and decolonization failures, these weak states demonstrate how "no one knew how to open the door to the newcomers in a suitable way". (p.76) This is almost certainly the strongest point of the entire work. Badie, through an acute historical analysis, *de facto* reverses Tilly's theories by sustaining that nowadays conflicts are not the result of competing powers anymore, but "proceed entirely from weakness" and are essentially "matters of society" and not of governments. (p.84) Post-1989 wars predominately took place in a "world where power has become powerless". (p.85) In a final theoretical twist, however, the author is able to show how these "outsiders" are extremely strong in shaping the contemporary world order. Through their endemic weakness, non-Western states are indeed able to destabilize the strongest countries' agendas as proved by the almost-two-decade-long US engagement in Afghanistan or Iraq. The "power of the weak" (p.85) is the force of relegating the more powerful to be reactive, or more simply, is making "first rank" powers no longer capable of autonomously holding the reins of the International Politics.

The final section of the book considers in detail US and French reactions to the non-Western states who rose up after the Cold War. Focusing on G.W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump administration, Badie reflects on how the US passed from the willingness to rule the world by forcing the newcomers to join Western values via hard power tools, to the Trump-style protectionism for protesting against globalization as harmful to national interest. Although predominantly descriptive, chapter 6 is extremely coherent with the book structure since it updates the theoretical background that was introduced in the initial chapters by analyzing US behavior. Chapter 7 sheds light on French foreign policy from the end of the Second World War in a fresh way. Recalling Gaullisme's ideological fundaments, the analysis predominantly focuses on how the international arena has affected French international behavior since the aftermath of the Second World War. To face its downgrading from being an imperial power to being dependent on US aid, France has tried to distance itself from Washington and Moscow by asserting itself as the leader of non-aligned countries. Badie argues, however, that the openness to the South of the World and notably to Africa was an effort to regain momentum within the international arena rather than to welcome the newly-born states to the control room of international politics. France, in a very old-fashioned realpolitik, wished to be recognized as the front-runner of a third block to regain its status within the *ivy league* of states. Therefore, the "French grandeur" (p.106) did not pursue the redistribution of international power as it might have seemed at first glance, but instead sought to concentrate power within the "Western family" again by framing a "French-style Neoconservatism" (p.118).

The major weakness of Badie's book is that it sometimes underestimates the complexity of some concepts and might result repetitive in some points. In chapter 3, although it has the pivotal role in explaining some of the book's crucial arguments, the notion of "*glocalization*" is just mentioned briefly without further explanation, thus making the argumentation generally hard to understand. One may expect more attention to be paid to the local-global nexus, which is not intuitive even for an expert. Furthermore, the initial pages of chapter 4, dedicated to US foreign policy, seem redundant and could have been more explanatory if merged with the contents expressed in chapter 6, which looks closely at the very same notions in a sharp and detailed style. Finally, in the second part of chapter 4, the analysis of the rising contenders to Western oligarchy considers EU, Russia, China and the BRICS. By providing detailed examinations of Beijing and Moscow, *de facto* the author breaks up the notion of BRICS, originally including these very same countries. To some extent, this is an understandable choice, but, similarly, the reader might expect a few words about India too or, alternatively, an explanation of why this nation did not deserve an ad-hoc paragraph, as China and Russia did, despite its leading role in Asian Politics. There are many references to New Delhi

diplomatic initiatives, but this is insufficient.

Overall, this book is a remarkably powerful effort to tread carefully on concepts that had already been researched in detail such as Globalization and Power, Sovereignty and Imperialism, without ever ending in trivial or banal conclusions. Coherently, the research is principally grounded on secondary literature and is limited to a pure qualitative methodology. In fact, the main strength of the work is its ability to propose fresh arguments by exploiting a strong interdisciplinary approach. A wise mix of IR and History, combined with scrupulous references to even seemingly insignificant historical events, gives the reader a brilliant and innovative portrait of how international instability has changed throughout the decades. Moreover, Bertrand Badie, moving on from classic IR disciplines such as Neorealism, Liberalism or the English School, touches on the crucial notions of the most recent IR schools of thought such as the Global South or Global Justice theory, sowing the seeds for further research. IR and History scholars, in particular those interested in the convergence between IR and History or International historians, would benefit from reading this book. Students with a strong background knowledge of IR would find this work very useful too. It might provide as well a good read for diplomatic staff due to the detailed analysis of the role of society within the modern international scenario and of the so-called Track II diplomacy.

Bio

Michele Benazzo is currently Security Analyst Intern at Amaplast-Confindustria, Milan. He holds a BA in Political Science, History and International Relations from the University of Pavia, Italy and a MA in International Relations and Diplomacy from the University of Padova, Italy. After the studies in Italy, He moved to UK and recently graduated in an MIitt programme on Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. His research focuses on the History of Terrorism, International Security and Global Order and Grand Strategy in the post-Second World War period.

Journal of Rising Powers and Global Governance is a peer-reviewed non-profit free-access journal dedicated to the study of the growing role of rising powers in global governance. It aims to explore the political, economic and social processes through which the states regarded as "rising powers" in world politics interact with other states as well as international and transnational organizations. This journal also aims to fill the academic lacunae in the literature on rising powers and global governance related themes since there is a growing need for a journal specialized on rising powers in parallel to their increasing importance in world politics.

Published two times a year, *Journal of Rising Powers and Global Governance* is particularly interested in original scientific contributions that analyze the operations and policies of regional & international organizations, international groupings such as the BRICS, IBSA, MIKTA and G-20, as well as their member states around the main themes of international political economy, global governance, North-South relations, developing world, changing international order, development, rising/emerging/middle/regional powers, development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, peace, peacekeeping, security, democracy and international terrorism. Country-specific case studies with regard to their interrelation at the global level are also of particular concern of *Journal of Rising Powers and Global Governance*. One of the main objectives of the journal is to provide a new forum for scholarly discussion on these topics as well as other issues related with world politics and global governance.

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All articles in the journal undergo rigorous peer review which includes an initial assessment by the editors and anonymized refereeing process. The journal also publishes special issues on a broad range of topics related with the study of rising powers in world politics. Special issue proposals can be sent to the editors at any time and should include full details of the authors as well as the abstracts of the articles.

Journal of Rising Powers and Global Governance is published by Global Studies Platform, Istanbul, Turkey.

journal@kureselcalismalar.com

global studies

kureselcalismalar.com

Journal of Rising Powers and Global Governance

Volume 1, Issue 1
Apr 2020