
Greater China's Foreign Policy: Applying the Theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement

Dr. Otto F. von Feigenblatt

Northwood University (West Palm Beach, Florida)¹

Abstract: *The present paper applies the inductively derived emic theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement to the foreign policy of Greater China (the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China, and the special administrative zones), in order to test the theory's fit. Due to the socio-political changes that the PRC and to a lesser extent the RC have undergone in the last three decades, only the period starting from the late 1970s to the present is included in this analysis. The qualitative interpretive application of the Model to the case of Greater China supports the central components of the theory while also pointing to certain unique nuances in China's foreign policy.*

Keywords: *Greater China, People's Republic of China, Foreign Policy, Peaceful Rise, Harmony.*

1. Introduction

China is one of the core civilizations of Greater East Asia (Lin, 2009). For centuries it suffered a severe decline in terms of economic and political influence leading to the devastating Chinese civil war and then to the upheavals of the early communist revolution (Fenby, 2008). Thus, China

¹ Dr. Otto F. von Feigenblatt is an Adjunct Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at Northwood University (West Palm Beach, Florida). More than seventy of his articles have appeared in prestigious peer-reviewed academic journals and he is the author of five books dealing with International Relations, International Development, and Popular Culture. Dr. von Feigenblatt holds a B.S. in Social Science from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (Beppu, Japan), an M.A. in International Development Studies from Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand), and a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from Nova Southeastern University (Fort Lauderdale, Florida).

is a civilization with a legacy full of great expectations for the future and the heavy burden of a glorious past. Modern international relations concepts are problematic when discussing the place of China in Greater East Asia as well as in a broader global context (Lin, 2009). Notions of nation, state, and country are useful heuristics when attempting to make sense of a complex global environment but they tend to obfuscate the process of understanding when forced on ancient civilizations such as China.

The first question that comes to mind when dealing with China as a civilization deals with its nature or essence. Was China an empire in the classical sense or rather a monarchical absolutist nation-state in the Westphalian model (Lin, 2009)? Another important question deals with the political development of the entity we today call Greater China. If today the People's Republic of China is a nation-state then when did this transition take place? Is the transition over or is it still a work in progress. Those are just some of the important questions that come to mind when dealing with the second largest economy in the world and the most populous civilization.

Before delving into the intricacies of the vast array of answers available to the aforementioned queries it is important to return to the present and assess China's importance to the region and to the world at large. With the second largest GDP, the People's Republic of China is an economic powerhouse affecting global prices through a voracious demand for raw materials and energy as well as feeding the world's demand for cheap manufactured products (Ge, 2013; Sutter, 2012). The Republic of China (Taiwan) is a high tech hub, producing advanced computer components and electronics (Fenby, 2008). Hong Kong and Macau are important tourism, trade, and financial centers linking Greater China to the global financial system. Greater China is also important as a transnational entity due to the powerful *guanxi* networks of the Chinese Diaspora (Feigenblatt, 2009a). Thus, China plays an increasingly important role in our globalized world. With this enlarged role, Chinese practices in business, politics, and the arts are

becoming increasingly ubiquitous and influential (Callahan, 2008).

Due to the interconnected and interdependent nature of the current period of modern history, late or high modernity, norms and systems are becoming increasingly important in order to maximize global welfare (Ish-Shalom, 2008). This means that the actions of a social entity are important for the functioning of the entire global system. Opting out of the system is becoming difficult or nearly impossible due to exponential degree of integration in all sectors of society. This is true not only at the micro level but also at the macro level of countries and economic regions. Therefore, it is not only desirable to include China in this global system but rather a necessity.

Nevertheless, there are several challenges to the integration of certain social entities into this global system of late modernity. One of the most important challenges is the nature itself of the system. Systems tend to ossify into fixed structures reflecting the needs and perceptions of those who designed them in the first place. Thus, there is a time lag or delay between the design and the actual implementation of a system (Kollman, 2008). This is particularly true at the international level due to the cumbersome nature of intergovernmental negotiations and the lack of a global facilitator. Therefore, the pivotal challenge in the early 21st century is the design or redesign of a global system that can integrate supranational, national, transnational, and non-state entities.

The present system is mostly based on the Westphalian system originally developed in 16th century Europe (Roberts, 1997). This is a system centered on the sovereign nation-state. Due to the system's emphasis on the sovereign nation-state several assumptions are taken for granted. The first assumption is sovereign equality regardless of size and resources. A second important assumption is non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states. Thirdly, the legal primacy of the state as the representative of the nation over other competing entities such as civil society organizations and the individual citizens/subjects is emphasized. Other assumptions that were later added to this

original version of the Westphalian system include the norm of self-determination based on ethnonationalities (Brunnee & Toope, 2006).

Some important secondary assumptions can be derived from the previously identified core assumptions of the Westphalian model. The first is the importance of clearly defined territorial borders. A second is the nature of diplomatic intercourse as restricted to representatives of the state apparatus. And third is the importance of the definition of national identity for the security and legitimacy of the state.

Added to the previously described core factors of the Westphalian system, there is a complex plethora of intergovernmental organizations and agreements based on the assumption of the inviolability of contracts as well as the voluntary nature of the parties when entering into them. In addition to that there are newer norms such as the ban on the use of war as a foreign policy tool as well as the importance of human rights as expressed by the two United Nations declarations (Brunnee & Toope, 2006; Feigenblatt, 2009b; Katanyuu, 2006).

Needless to say the present behavior of nation-states as well as of other transnational actors does not conform to the previously described international architecture. Nevertheless, it remains as the ideal espoused by the sole remaining super power, the United States of America, as well as by most other regional powers. The challenge is that while remaining an ideal for the majority of core powers it has little explanatory power for their actual behavior and even less for the behavior of the majority states functioning in the periphery (MacFarlane & Khong, 2006). Further exacerbating the problem, there has been gradual shift of power over certain aspects of governance away from the state and towards civil society and the private sector. Transnational Corporations control more resources than most small nation-states and their operations include the populations of several countries as well as their infrastructures. This makes regulation more challenging as well as transforming governance into a regional or global issue rather than merely a national one (Thakur & Weiss, 2009).

China is at the core of the Greater East Asian region as is a key player in the broader East Asian region. As such, its integration into the complex yet relatively archaic global system is an important concern not only for academics but for practitioners, governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals (Callahan, 2008). The purpose of this study is to explain China's foreign policy through the lens of an innovative and flexible *emic* model of regional governance.

2. Scope

As briefly mentioned in the introduction, the present study deals with Greater China's foreign policy, starting from the death of Mao Zedong to the present. The reason for this is that Chinese foreign policy became more consensual and nuanced after the death of the "Great Leader" and thus represents a normalization in China's foreign policy approach (Sutter, 2012). This study attempts to explain China's foreign policy through the model of Harmony through Holistic Engagement which was inductively derived from foreign policy primary sources in the post-Mao period (Feigenblatt, 2013). Therefore the ideologically driven foreign policy of the Mao years will not be discussed in this study.

In term of the unit of analysis, the state, both the PRC and the RC are central players in the policy making process. Nevertheless other actors are also important including but not limited to Chinese corporations, intellectuals, Think Tanks, the Chinese Diaspora, and to a more limited extend civil society. Therefore the present paper attempts to explain the foreign policy derived through a complex negotiation process between the previously mentioned groups through the theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement.

3. The Theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement

The theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement was originally developed by the author as a mid level substantive theory of regional integration for the Greater East Asian region. As a theory developed through the grounded theory approach, it is inductive in nature and represents an *emic* model of regional governance for the members of the Greater East Asian region. The original study defined the Greater East Asian region as the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Korea, Japan, and China. Thus, the original study included China as one of the core members of the Greater East Asian Region (Feigenblatt, 2013).

The Theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement was developed through detailed coding of more than three hundred primary sources from Greater East Asian member countries chosen through theoretical sampling (Feigenblatt, 2013). A model was then mapped based on the categories, properties, and codes found in the texts. The resulting model was then compared to other models found in the secondary literature as well as to the application of an *etic* hypothetico-deductive approach, namely structural dynamics, to the same cache of primary documents. Important differences were found between the two approaches, as well as the secondary literature. The most important finding is that most *etic* models lack the flexibility and iterative nature of international engagement found in the primary documents produced by regional governments (Feigenblatt, 2013). Thus, traditional models and theories of international relations fail to capture the phenomenon as perceived and understood by the policymakers themselves. This important weakness is not present in the model that was developed through grounded theory and ultimately named the Theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement.

As presented in the original doctoral dissertation, the theory of Harmony through Holistic Engagement is centered on the core category of “engagement” as the continued interaction between regional members. This core concept is

the central process involved in regional governance in the Greater East Asian region. The core goal was found to be “harmony”. Needless to say the two core categories are broad and need further definition. Harmony as a goal was found to include three components or properties, namely: peace, stability and prosperity. The three properties of harmony were considered to be equally important by regional members, thus contradicting most theories giving primacy to one or the other. Returning to the core mechanism of regional governance and integration, “engagement”, this process was found to be holistic in that it includes both cooperation and competition as part of holistic interactions. The model posits that cooperation and competition lead to “community”, or rather that being in a state of community involves both cooperation and competition. In addition to that, competition and cooperation can take place to an iterative process of dialogue, discussion, and negotiation. Interactions are explained as cyclical and continuous and “engagement” is not only a means but an ends in and of itself. Thus community is something that you do rather than a finished state or achievement. According to this model this constant holistic engagement eventually leads to harmony as defined by peace, prosperity, and stability.

The model recognizes the importance of the international politico-economic environment and includes it as a limiting factor influencing the possible alternatives derived from the process of holistic engagement. As intimated in the introduction to this study, China, and Greater East Asia in general is a highly dynamic and important region in terms of global governance. Due to this there are myriad extra-regional actors involved in the region. This includes extra-regional powers such as the United States, Russia, and the European Union, as well as powerful non-state actors such as Multinational Corporations, Civil Society organizations, and intellectuals. While the international environment limits some of the policy actions available to regional members, it does not eliminate their agency.

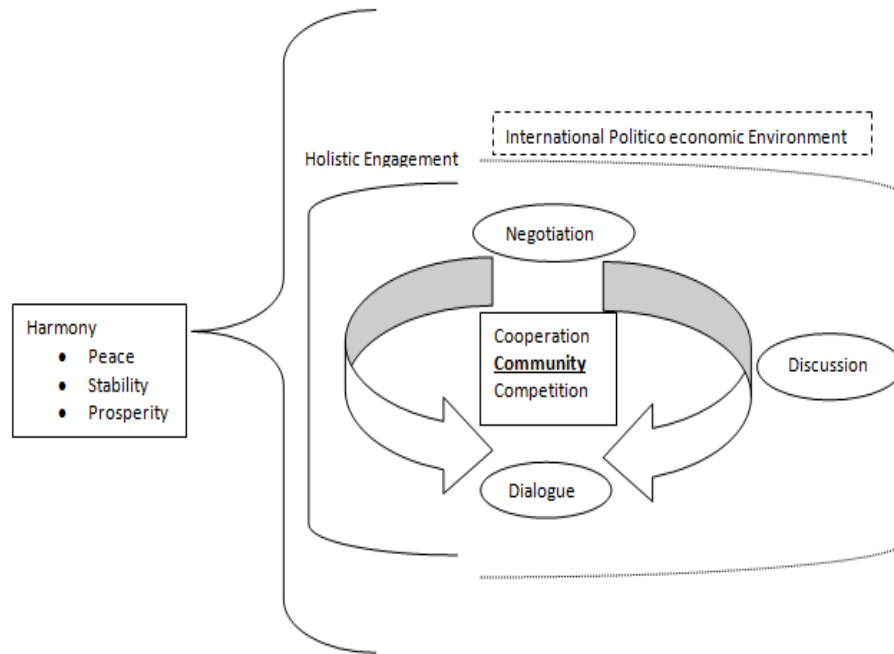


Figure 1. Harmony through Holistic Engagement: A Grounded Substantive Theory of Greater East Asian Regionalism

4. Greater China's Recent History and Foreign Policy: A Brief Overview

China's modern foreign policy can be divided into two broad historical periods namely, the Maoist period and the post-Mao era (Zhu, 2011). Foreign policy during the early Maoist period was centered on a strong alliance with the Soviet Union and the Communist International (Fenby, 2008). The People's Republic of China was initially focused on consolidating its gains in the mainland and avoiding foreign conflicts. This early focus on internal problems soon gave way to a rift with Moscow and the subsequent attempt by Mao to export China's version of communism to the rest of the world. In practice this meant the support of revolutionary movements abroad but due to limited resources and more pressing internal concerns, mostly consisted of rhetorical support for third world revolutionary movements and grandiloquent statements against American

imperialism. Therefore, the PRC's foreign policy during this early period was ideologically driven yet tempered by internal challenges and limited resources.

Due to the PRC's painful and long road to power, the governing elite, and in particular Mao himself, suffered from a siege mentality (Zhu, 2011). A perception further compounded by America's intervention in the Korean conflict and General McArthur's open hatred for communism. This American incursion into Korea was perceived by the PRC leadership to be an existential threat and resulted in the PRC's direct involvement in the conflict. Early support for the North Korean regime still influences the PRC's continued support for the hermit regime as a buffer state between South Korea and the mainland (Hahm, 2006; Weitz, 2011). The Korean War resulted in millions of casualties for the PRC and the Koreans and ended in an armistice and not in a peace agreement. It is important to keep in mind that the diplomatic isolation of the PRC at the time and the role of the United Nations and the United States in the war, influenced the foreign policy views of an entire generation of PRC leaders (Sutter, 2012; Zhu, 2011).

Further exacerbating Beijing's siege mentality, was Washington's continued support for the Nationalist government in Taiwan both militarily and diplomatically, as attested by the Republic of China's continued occupation of a seat in the United Nations Security Council after the end of the Chinese civil war (Cordoba, 2005; Fenby, 2008). Moreover, a serious crisis in the Taiwan straits took place in 1955 with the Republic of China occupying several islands and with the PRC threatening an invasion. The crisis resulted in the United States threatening a nuclear attack on the mainland, thus increasing the perception of existential threat for the PRC. Partly as a response to the nuclear threat from the United States as well as from its diplomatic isolation, the PRC decided to develop its own nuclear capability as a deterrent and as a way to assure regime survival (Fenby, 2008).

Internal and border challenges were the focus of the PRC during the 1950s and early 1960s. Unrest in Tibet was put down by the PRC. Tibetan rebels were armed and supported

by the CIA and also diplomatically in international fora. Thus, the PRC suffered internationally due to its response to unrest in Tibet. The continued antagonism of the United States further strengthens the position of foreign policy hawks in the PRC and culminates in the first nuclear test in 1963 (Fenby, 2008). With the Vietnam War in progress, the PRC mobilizes troops near the Vietnam border as a preemptive measure to defend the regime. Nevertheless, it should be noted that by this time, relations between the Soviet Union and the PRC had deteriorated and thus the PRC's main concern was not the survival of North Vietnam but rather regional stability and the maintenance of a buffer between the United States and itself.

Continued tension across the Taiwan straits resulted in continued American support for Taiwan and thus to the PRC's perception that reunification was hampered by American interference. The arming of Taiwan as well as the island's economic growth due to American aid as well as procurement of supplies for the Vietnam War, further exacerbated relations between the United States and the PRC. Continued border skirmishes with India as well as with the Soviet Union added to the plethora of challenges faced by the PRC leadership during this period (Fenby, 2008).

The 1960s and 1970s were also years of great internal turmoil in the PRC due to the Cultural Revolution and the purges that ensued. Emphasis on ideological purity and continuous revolution hampered the regime's ability to pursue a coherent foreign policy and reduced China's international relations to a rigid and one-dimensional ideological struggle. At this point China became an important exporter of ideology to third world revolutionary movements as well as a member of the non-aligned movement. Thus the PRC's foreign policy was to export revolution as well as to oppose both the United States and the Soviet Union in favor of absolute sovereignty and respect for self-determination (Fenby, 2008).

The aforementioned rift with the Soviet Union resulted in the necessary conditions for a rapprochement between the United States and the PRC. Ping-pong was the first point of contact between the two great nations. The United States

was invited to send their team to China to play ping-pong as a way to start soft diplomacy leading to more important contacts such as the famous secret trip to China by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1971. This rapprochement was pivotal for the PRC because it resulted in the United States normalizing relations with the PRC and handing over China's United Nations seat in the Security Council to the PRC. The PRC achieved an important victory over the RC by becoming not only the de facto government of mainland China but most importantly by being recognized as the de jure ruler of the nation.

The PRC's diplomatic victory over the RC in the United Nations was a battle in a long struggle over international recognition. Many small countries and conservative regimes continued to recognize the Republic of China even after the UN seat was handed over to the PRC, increasing the pressure on the PRC to pursue both hard and soft diplomacy in order to win over the RC's remaining allies (Cordoba, 2005). Due to this, the PRC started a foreign aid program aimed at offering carrots to states willing to switch recognition to Beijing. It should be noted that this foreign aid component of the PRC's diplomacy was mostly aimed at dealing with an important security issue, the RC, however it was perceived by developing countries as a sign of constructive engagement and support from one developing country to another without the traditional "strings" attached to aid by Western Powers. This greatly increased the PRC's prestige and standing in the developing world, thus positioning the PRC as one of the leaders of the developing world.

Jimmy Carter was the President who finally approved the "one-china" policy and who gave the PRC full diplomatic recognition. Nevertheless this was closely followed by the Taiwan Relations Act in Congress mandating continued aid to Taiwan. Contacts between the United States and the PRC as well as between the PRC and American allies continued to increase in frequency during this period, resulting in increased trade as well as in cultural links.

The 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre marked a turning point in PRC's history. Peaceful protests by pro-democracy

students and workers were met with extreme violence by the ruling PRC in an attempt to control dissent before it got out of control (Fenby, 2008). The People's Liberation Army was sent to the scene and tanks rolled over the tents of the students while infantry troops shot at unarmed students. This event defined the limits of reform in terms of governance while at the same time clearly indicating the PRC's resolve to stay in power. Thus regime survival became the overarching goal of the PRC (Sutter, 2012).

The international response to the incident was harsh and the PRC's international reputation suffered greatly. With the Soviet Union in the final process of opening and democratization and with the United States becoming the sole remaining superpower, the PRC suffered from widespread economic sanctions as well as international condemnation of the incident. This was a low point of PRC diplomacy which was exacerbated by the successful democratization process in ROC (Cordoba, 2005).

Democratization in the ROC raised an important threat for the PRC. Both the Kuomintang and the People's Communist Party support the "one-China" policy and believe that China should be reunited with Taiwan. On the other hand opposition parties in Taiwan support independence and claim a separate cultural heritage. This raised the possibility of Taiwan declaring independence. This scenario became even more likely with the election of the pro-independence Chen Chu Bian as President of the Republic of China. The PRC's threat of invading the ROC in case of a unilateral declaration of independence was put to the test. As a result of Chen Chu Bian's election, the PRC mobilized troops and put them in high alert, as a result the United States sent an aircraft carrier to the straits to defend Taiwan in the case of an invasion.

The crisis was resolved when Chen Chu Bian deferred the issue of independence to a later date and thus upheld the "one-China" policy at least temporarily. Thus the question of reunification was delayed once again in favor of the status quo. In its place the PRC started to become more assertive regarding other territorial claims in the South China seas. With the major flashpoint being the Senkaku Islands

controlled by Japan but claimed by the PRC. Other disputes involved Vietnam and the other ASEAN members (Narine, 1997).

The 1997-1998 economic recession provided an important incentive for Taiwan to seek stronger economic ties with Hong Kong and with the mainland. Gradually trade and foreign direct investment increased between the ROC and the PRC. Increased economic interdependence served as a way to diffuse tension across the Taiwan Strait as well as a way for the PRC to increase its influence in the island. On the other hand, Taiwan continued to ask for international recognition and in particular for the right to participate in the United Nations and related organs.

As a sign of improving relations between the RC and the PRC after the election of Ma Ying-jeou and the return of the Kuomintang to power in 2008, the PRC allowed Taiwan to participate as an observer in the World Health Organization and a tacit agreement was reached not to struggle for each other's allies for the time being (Fenby, 2008). This resulted in an improvement in relations due to the Kuomintang's continued agreement with the Communist party over the reunification of China as a common goal. Moreover, due to the long recession in the Taiwanese economy, Ma Ying-jeou reduced spending in defense thus lowering the possible threat of a unilateral declaration of independence.

China's relationship with Japan during the late 1990s and in particular the early 21st century was not very cordial. Japan recognized China's increasing military and economic clout in the region as a direct challenge to its interests (Evans, 2011; Feigenblatt, 2007; Hook, Gilson, Hughes, & Dobson, 2005; Kingston, 2011; Morton & Olenik, 2005). Further exacerbating the situation, China became more assertive regarding its territorial claims over the Senkaku Islands, currently controlled by Japan. China's increased military spending was viewed with suspicion in Japan and the end of the Soviet threat further increased the prominence of the perceived Chinese threat for Japan.

Japan's long economic recession further increased domestic pressure to cut foreign aid to China and to

restructure existing aid in order to further the interests of Japanese companies. This reduction in Japanese aid was interpreted as an unfriendly gesture by China. Prime Minister's Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni shrine further strained the relationship (Morton & Olenik, 2005; Peng-Er, 2006). Several Class A World War II criminals are interned in the shrine and thus the visits by the Prime Minister were interpreted as a rejection of guilt for the many atrocities committed by the Japanese army in China during World War II (Lind, 2009).

China also used the previously mentioned apparent rejection of guilt over World War II war crimes on the part of Japan as a way to strengthen its relationship with South Korea while at the same time increasing its influence over North Korea (Weitz, 2011). Another related issue of saliency to the Chinese is the government's approval of history textbooks which gloss over Japan's military crimes during World War II. Due to domestic pressure in China, the PRC was forced to take a strong stand on this issue with Japan even to the detriment of trade and security relations.

5. Analysis of China's Foreign Policy: Applying the Model

There are myriad interpretations of China's Foreign Policy nevertheless, there are few providing an interpretation based on an *emic* model. The present study provides an interpretation of China's foreign policy in the last fifteen years based on the Model of Harmony through Holistic Engagement. China's recent foreign policy displays a complex array of apparently paradoxical behaviors combining strong rhetoric over Taiwan with a strong commitment to cooperation on economic and development issues. Rather than elite competition, a lack of a cohesive foreign policy, or oscillation the present study provides a compelling explanation as to how the apparent contradictions in China's foreign policy are actually part of a cohesive strategy based on a regional model of international relations.

The core goal of Chinese foreign policy has traditionally been the achievement of harmony (Lin, 2009). It is important to note that foreign policy during the Qing and earlier dynasties was based on a similar concept of harmony, defined as a combination between stability and prosperity. Stability, in particular in China's periphery was considered to be an important goal in order for Chinese civilization to prosper. This emphasis on stability was interrupted by the initial emphasis of Leninism and later on Maoism on fostering international revolution and constant renewal. Nevertheless, the previously mentioned emphasis on change can be viewed as a foreign idea which is ultimately incompatible with Chinese interests and most importantly with Chinese culture. Historically China was inward oriented and avoided foreign adventures for reasons other than the maintenance of harmony.

Current day Chinese foreign policy resembles Imperial Chinese foreign policy much more than Mao's assertive crusades in favor of violent revolution in the Third World. Looking back at the tributary system of imperial times, China's major concern was spreading soft power along its borders and developing a peaceful and stable environment in its periphery. Recently, China has reverted to a very similar approach in its international relations. A more pragmatic approach to relations with the United States is a case in point. China has toned down its rhetoric and even accepted American leadership in some issues in order to pursue its goal of peaceful development (Sutter, 2012). This does not mean that competition between China and the United States has abated but rather that it is pursued through constructive engagement. Competition and cooperation can go hand in hand in international relations and China pursues both concurrently. China can be competing against the United States in the international market while at the same time it can work together with it to secure Central Asia from terrorist threats. Thus the goal is to remain engaged and to continuously interact through a combination of dialogue, discussion, and negotiation.

A similar approach can be seen in China's international relations with other powers. Russia before the breakup of the

Soviet Union was China's most important security threat (Fenby, 2008). Today China has active relations with Russia in a vast array of policy issues. Furthermore, China is one of Russia's largest weapons buyers. Border disputes between the two powers have been managed through dialogue and gradual force reductions. As a further step to strengthen engagement with its former foe, China established the Shanghai Cooperation Organization including Russia and several former Soviet Central Republics. This organization functions with the principles espoused by China and Russia, such as respect for sovereignty, and equality among nation-states. While the SCO may not function as rapidly as some Western institutions such as NATO, it has achieved some concrete steps in making Central Asia a safer and more developed region. For instance, China has secured a steady supply of natural gas from the Central Asian states and has managed Russia's fears of an increased Chinese presence in the region. Moreover, competition between Russia and China in the region is still pervasive, but this competition is balanced by cooperation and moderated through constant dialogue, discussions, and negotiations.

China's relationship with the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a great example of China's new emphasis on Holistic Engagement. During the Cold War many countries in the Southeast Asian region were at the forefront of containing the spread of communism (Lockard, 2009; Neher, 2002). Examples of this include Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia. Other countries were aligned with the Soviet Union such as the case of Vietnam and Laos. After the end of the Cold War, China made great efforts to improve relations with all countries in this region through a more balanced foreign policy and respect for their sovereignty. An importance instance of this change in policy was China's removal of support for the Khmer Rouge and support for the United Nations mission for Cambodia (Chandler, 2008). Another example of this was how China gave high priority to relations with ASEAN and negotiated a free trade agreement with the region. Thus, China shows that it can both compete and cooperate with the region. China went as far as to open its agricultural market to ASEAN's competition in its free trade agreement

with the region, something that Japan has refused to do. Nevertheless, there are some important challenges in the relationship between China and the region. The myriad territorial disputes are an important point of contention (Nair, 2008; Narine, 1997, 1998). China continues to be assertive in its territorial claims while at the same time increasing cooperation in other areas. Some improvements are evident in terms of the handling of the territorial disputes in that some formal and informal agreements have been reached regarding the conduct of parties in disputed areas and communication between the involved militaries was also enhanced. Thus, China is actively competing for Foreign Direct Investment, for control over disputed territory, and for a greater share of the market while at the same time cooperating on other issues. China has a strong incentive to seek stability and development in Southeast Asia not only due to the fact that it is located in its vicinity but also because its economy is increasingly interconnected to that of Southeast Asia. Thus, China favors stability, prosperity, and peace for the region in order to achieve its conception of harmony.

Relations with Japan, South Korea, North Korea, and Mongolia present the most important challenge to China's pursuit of peaceful development. Northeast Asia is China's most important area of interest due to its closeness to the mainland as well as due to the security and economic challenges it presents the PRC. Japan is China's main rival for influence in the Asia Pacific Region and historical animosities further exacerbate the difficult relationship (Hook et al., 2005). Nevertheless, China and Japan have managed to cooperate on important issues. Japan provided considerable foreign development aid to China until relatively recently, is one of the largest suppliers of foreign direct investment in China and also an important trading partner. Nevertheless there are considerable challenges in the relationship between the two economic powerhouses. First of all is the dispute over the Senkaku Islands, currently controlled by Japan but claimed by China. Another important issue is Japan's approval of history books omitting Japan's militarism and cruelty in World War II (Kingston, 2011). A third issue of importance to China is Japan's Prime

Minister's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine where several grade A war criminals are buried. The previously mentioned issues present a challenge to Chinese leaders due to domestic nationalism. Chinese popular antagonism towards Japan has increased in the last few years, putting greater pressure on the Chinese leadership to take a tough stance against Japan on important issues such as foreign policy and most importantly on territorial disputes.

China's relationship with South Korea is mostly affected by the PRC's relationship with North Korea. South Korea shares important historical experiences with China such as Japanese military aggression and colonialism. Nevertheless, the two countries were armed enemies during the Korean War and South Korea is an important American ally. In recent decades China has increased trade with South Korea and has expanded to cooperation to other areas such as student exchanges, and coping with regional health challenges. China has attempted to maintain the status quo in the Korean peninsula by having a good relationship with North Korea while at the same time fostering better relations with South Korea (Sutter, 2012). It should be noted that China's main interest is in regional stability and prosperity rather than in regime change, thus China has attempted to rein in North Korea's aggressive tendencies and rhetoric for forceful reunification of the peninsula. Example of China's constructive engagement with the peninsula include the Six Party Talks to deal with North Korea's nuclear program (Sutter, 2012). While few concrete agreements resulted from those talks, they displayed China's emphasis on holistic engagement with North Korea and other regional powers. China attempted to combine several policy issues such as foreign aid, territorial disputes, cooperation on health threats, and even the repatriation of prisoners so as to balance discussion, with negotiation, and cooperation (Kingston, 2011). By doing this China was attempting to foster a regional community based on mutual respect and most importantly help maintain a harmonious environment for China to rise.

Mongolia was historically part of China's sphere of influence but was later on subsumed into the Soviet bloc

during the Cold War (Fenby, 2008). After the fall of the Soviet Union, Mongolia attempted to have a more independent foreign policy by maintaining good relations with Russia, developing relations with the United States and with China. Mongolia has a strategic position on the North of China and thus is considered to be very important by the Chinese leadership. China has a generally good relationship with Ulan Bator with a well delineated border and increasing trade. Nevertheless, China has observed with apprehension Mongolia's strengthened ties to the West, and in particular to the United States. Some influential Chinese policy makers perceive this as a way to encircle China and thus contain its rise (Wang, 2008). Mongolia has made a conscious effort to reassure China by maintaining balanced relations with Russia and with other regional powers and has increased cooperation with China on a vast array of issues beyond traditional security. Thus the PRC is competing and cooperating with Mongolia as expected by the Model of Harmony through Holistic Engagement.

The PRC's relations with Latin American and Africa have received considerable attention from the media as well as analysts (Brant, 2013). Most reports claim a strengthened Chinese role in those regions due to a high interest in securing natural resources for China's growing needs. Nevertheless, China's foreign policy toward Latin America and Africa is more nuanced than that (Cheng, 2006; Gouvea & Kassiech, 2009). Firstly, the PRC is competing for Foreign Direct Investment against other developing countries in the two regions. Moreover, the PRC sees the two regions not only as sources of natural resources but also as important markets for its manufactured products. Moreover, the PRC has a historical affinity with the region due to similar recent experiences of colonial intervention as well as the challenges of the Cold War. The PRC also has the important interest of increasing support for its views in the United Nations as well as of gaining influence at the expense of Taiwan in terms of diplomatic recognition (Cordoba, 2005). Examples of this include China's attempt to block the sending of peacekeepers to Guatemala due to the country's recognition and support for Taiwan, highly visible aid to certain countries such as Costa Rica and resource rich African countries like Sudan. It

should be noted that while Chinese aid is highly visible and focused on large infrastructure projects, its magnitude is relatively limited (Sutter, 2012). The PRC is still a developing country with a large population under the poverty line and thus cannot afford to provide the level of aid of the developed countries. Most infrastructure projects are built by Chinese companies with Chinese labor and thus most of the money is repatriated. Moreover, the PRC views developing countries as competitors in many industries and thus balances cooperation with competition. One trend that can be clearly seen in the PRC's foreign policy in Africa and Latin America is that the PRC values continued interaction and communication with regional governments. The PRC has established embassies and Confucius Institutes in most countries and engages in a variety of high level visits.

Resources loom large for the PRC leadership and thus engagement with resource rich countries such as Sudan, Nigeria, Chile, and Venezuela are considered to be important. The PRC is a net importer of oil and also imports other raw materials such as cooper and lumber. Due to this increased need, China has tried to diversify its sources in order to secure a stable supply of the aforementioned resources (Brant, 2013; Saul, 2013; Sutter, 2012). This has resulted in China's engagement of increasingly distant countries such as Sudan and Venezuela. Nevertheless it should be noted that the PRC has avoided a lopsided support for those countries and combines cooperation with competition on other issues. One example of this was China's distancing from Venezuela on certain issues such as direct confrontation with the United States (Sutter, 2012). The PRC's goal is basically to have a good working relationship with both the Global South as well as with the developed countries. In order to do this good communication is important and a combination of cooperation of competition leads to a pragmatic engagement resulting in mutual benefits.

The PRCs relationship with the European Union is very similar and highly dependent on China's relationship with the United States. Nixon's rapprochement with the PRC gave the European the signal that the United States viewed China

as a good counterweight to the Soviet Union (Fenby, 2008). This resulted in a decade of improved relations between the PRC and several members of the European Union. The PRC started to receive increasing amounts of foreign development aid from both the United States and the European Union. This trend came to a halt with the Tiananmen Square Massacre of 1989 (Sutter, 2012). The fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent opening of the Soviet Union led many in the West to believe that a similar reform process would take place in the PRC. A few years before, the Republic of China had made the transition to Democracy, and a similar process was expected in the PRC. Nevertheless, the pro-democracy protests that took place in China around Tiananmen Square were forcefully suppressed by the PRC leadership. Students were attacked by the People's Liberation Army and censorship was strengthened. This came as a surprise to the West and was strongly condemned by the most European Powers and by the United States.

Tiananmen Square resulted in sanctions being imposed by both the United States and by the European Union. Nevertheless it should be noted that American pressure prolonged the sanctions while most European powers wanted to reengage with China in order to promote Human Rights and Trade. The PRC was surprised at the strong and concerted reaction and focused on courting European powers to end the embargo on arms sales as well as other sanctions. Public condemnation of the PRC was followed by a rapprochement between the European Union and the PRC which led to high level meetings and an increase in trade (Weitz, 2011). Eventually the increase in trade resulted in a trade deficit with China and in considerable trade disputes over dumping and unfair trade practices on the part of the PRC.

The PRC's relationship with the European Union is multifaceted and complex. First of all, the European Union is not a monolithic block but rather a cooperative arrangement between a diverse set of actors with individual interests (McCormick, 2005). Due to this, the PRC has focused on dealing with individual member countries for security issues while dealing with the EU for trade and aid. The European

Union has a strong focus on the promotion of human rights as well as environmental protection yet it takes a softer approach than the United States in terms of the path towards the achievement of those goals. Due to this, the PRC has found it relatively easy to engage with the EU on a vast variety of issues including cooperation and competition. For example, the EU and the PRC compete on a wide variety of issues such as in terms of the role of developing countries on climate change. While the EU and the PRC cooperate in terms of increasing trade and fostering non-violent resolutions to international conflicts. Thus the relationship between the EU and the PRC includes negotiation, discussions, and dialogue leading both parties to a greater understanding of each other's needs and concerns.

6. Conclusions

The present study has applied the Model of Harmony through Holistic Engagement to the PRC's Foreign Policy. In addition to a brief overview of the PRC's foreign policy history, contemporary developments have been discussed and evaluated through the application of the model. Thus a description of the PRC's foreign policy was followed by an analysis of, and subsequently by an evaluation of the overall foreign policy in terms of the degree of fit with the model in question.

Based on the analysis conducted in the previous section of this study, the PRC's foreign policy fits the Model of Harmony through Holistic Engagement. It is clear that the PRC avoids zero-sum evaluations of its relationship with other powers and instead adopts a more nuanced approach combining negotiation, dialogue, and discussions in order to compete and cooperate in the pursuit of harmony. This conclusion is compatible with constructivist and liberal conclusions regarding the PRC's foreign policy behavior. Therefore, the PRC's peaceful rise is in fact not only a foreign perception of the PRC's behavior but also part of the PRC's *emic* view of the international system and of the proper way

to function as a responsible and increasingly important member of it.

Therefore, the PRC's foreign policy fits the Model and shows that it has considerable theoretical traction even in explaining the PRC's interactions with a wide variety of regions. It is important to remember that the model is *emic* in nature and was developed based on official documents and speeches produced by regional powers. This partly explains the high level of fit between the theory and the actual events. Nevertheless, it is important to interpret the events through a model developed from the point of view of the main actors rather than imposed on them by external powers.

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Dr. Otto F. von Feigenblat, Northwood University (USA)

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