Chinese Sovereignty and the Structuration of the International Community

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Myles Hulme
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Political Science
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

China's power and influence are on the rise. Its modern political, economic and social organization have been developing at an incredible pace since the reform period initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978. Currently, China's state capacity compares favourably to that which can be found in the developed world. Its economy is ranked second in terms of nominal gross domestic product, and it trades more than any other state in the international community. A significant proportion of China's population is increasingly affluent, well-educated and well-travelled. As scholar Paul Evans has argued, we now live in an era deeply affected by "Global China" (Evans, 2005).

This paper investigates the impact of China's rise on the international community. It does so from the vantage point of social constructivism. This approach is drawn from the work of Anthony Giddens on structuration theory, which was imported from sociology into the field of international relations by Alexander Wendt (Giddens, 1979 & 1984; Wendt, 1987). Social constructivism and structuration theory postulate that social agents and social structures, such as states and the international community, are inextricably linked in a process of constant interaction, reciprocal influence and mutual constitution. In other words, they posit that the social agency of states "structures" or "constructs" the international community at the same time that the "rule structure" or "social structure" of the international community affects how states interact with each other (Wendt, 1992 & 1999).

Since the end of World War Two, China has not typically played a lead role in the "structuration" or "construction" of the international Community. The United States, the European powers and states such as Canada have. This is most evident in the building of the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU) and the G-8. While many of these international institutions are highly inclusive, they reflect in their initiation and design the national identity and sovereignty of the North Atlantic states. As China's power and influence have increased, however, this scenario has been changing. Not only is Beijing helping to build new international institutions such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Association for Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) regional forums, but it is building them with a "rule-structure" or "social structure" that reflects its own social agency, a phenomenon that is best demonstrated by way of analyzing its national identity and sovereignty (Johnston, 2004; Moore, 2004; Weatherbee, 2005).

How is the national identity and sovereignty of a state or set of states reflected in the initiation and design of international institutions? For one, national identity and sovereignty are particular to every state. Although the socializing influence of the North Atlantic states and the UN have brought virtually every state in the international community onto the same playing field, interpretations of national identity and sovereignty diverge within certain conceptual boundaries. The North Atlantic states, China and the ASEAN member-states have all prescribed to the tenets

of sovereignty elaborated within the UN Charter, but these tenets have received varying degrees of priority and subordination from each respective side as a consequence of their different historical experiences. For instance, the North Atlantic states did not experience colonization and were mostly on the delivering end of Cold War interference. China and the ASEAN member-states did experience colonization and were mostly on the receiving end of Cold War interference. The result of this has been that the North Atlantic states have typically prioritized the characteristics of sovereignty associated with domestic politics and the domestic personality of states, thereby justifying interference. Conversely, China and the ASEAN member-states have privileged the characteristics of sovereignty associated with international politics and the international personality of states, thereby resisting interference (Anderson, 2009; Scott, 2009). A short list of these tenets of sovereignty on the side of the North Atlantic states would be human rights, the rule of law and democracy, while on the side of China and the ASEAN member-states these would include territorial integrity, self-determination and non-interference (Acharya, 2009; Paltiel, 2009). In the field of international relations, these diverging characteristics of sovereignty are more often than not referred to as the "internal" and "external" dimensions of sovereignty (Bull, 1977).

In terms of the reflection of these tenets of sovereignty in the international institutions structured by the social agency of these different sets of states, one has only to look at the rule-structures embedded within them. NATO is an international institution with a membership strictly composed of the North Atlantic states. While there are references in the North Atlantic Treaty to the territorial integrity of its member-states, this treaty does not mention self-determination and non-interference. The Preamble and Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty refer explicitly to the characteristics of sovereignty associated with domestic politics and domestic personality, such as human rights, the rule of law and democracy (NATO, 1949). Over time, these latter provisions have become more and more prominent. In 1999, NATO issued its Membership Action Plan (MAP), which puts forward a series of criteria that call upon states applying to join this international institution to adopt certain criteria associated with domestic politics and domestic personality (NATO, 1999). The SCO and ASEAN are relatively different. The SCO, centred upon China, and ASEAN's regional forums, centred upon the ASEAN member-states, have articulated charters on the basis of what are called the "Shanghai Spirit" and the "ASEAN Way." These two distinct albeit similar expressions of social agency carry the national identity and sovereignty of China and the ASEAN member-states into the structuration and thereby rule-structures of various international institutions. The Charter of the SCO and the Charter of ASEAN refer to human rights, and the Charter of ASEAN makes explicit mention of the rule of law. Most significantly, however, these two charters adhere firmly to the tenets of sovereignty associated with territorial integrity, political independence, and non-interference (ASEAN, 2008; SCO, 2002).

This paper starts with an analysis of China's national identity and sovereignty. This analysis captures the essence of its social agency and how it influences the structuration and thereby rule-structures of various international institutions. It proceeds with an analysis of two regionally based international institutions within which Beijing's influence is most evident. These two regionally based international institutions are the SCO and ASEAN's regional forums, specifically the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN+3. We conclude with a discussion of how China's influence within Asia is likely to start exerting a greater impact on international institutions that have a wider reach across the international community. This argument is based upon the fact that the SCO and ASEAN's regional forums are increasingly prominent regionally based international institutions with an expanding capacity for exercising a socializing influence upon other states and international institutions, including the UN.

Chinese National Identity and Sovereignty

The narrative on China's national identity and sovereignty starts with the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. This act followed upon years of civil-war between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Kuomintang (KMT), occupation by Japan during World War II, and the carving up of Chinese territories into colonial concessions during China's "Century of National Humiliation" (Hsu, 1983; Swaine, 2000). Shortly before the foundation of the People's Republic of China and the exodus of the defeated KMT to Taiwan, the CPC's People's Consultative Conference approved an interim constitution called the Common Program. This interim constitution put forward the preliminary principles and objectives of Beijing's domestic and foreign policy. On the subject of foreign policy, it stipulated that Beijing would pursue domestic and international peace and stability by restarting its diplomatic relations with any state that would be willing to respect its sovereignty. This required that any state with already established political, economic and social interests in China would have to renegotiate them on terms acceptable to Beijing. At the time of the Common Program's public release on September 29, 1949, there was already significant mention of Beijing's call for the international community to respect its territorial integrity and political independence (CPC, 1949).

The reality of Beijing's domestic and foreign policy experience would contradict these principles for a time, and this would hinder its ability to promote its interpretation of national identity and sovereignty abroad. During the Cold War, China was a victim and perpetrator of foreign interference. The earliest examples of this were Taiwan, where the KMT received support from the United States, and Vietnam, where China delivered support to the Workers' Party of Vietnam (WPV) during the Vietnam War (Wachman, 2007; Zhai, 2000). As China endured a protracted civil war in what is now called the cross-Strait dispute with Taiwan, and as Southeast Asia became more and more concerned with its role in the Vietnam War, China did not abandon its resolve to promote its interpretation of sovereignty abroad. Instead, it hardened it. The first widely accepted interpretation of sovereignty that resembled that promoted by China emerged from the Bandung Conference in 1955, a conference attended by the newly independent states of

Africa and Asia, where Beijing and the future ASEAN member-states found common ground. At the Bandung Conference, China, the future ASEAN member-states, India and more attendees, interacted and found a common interpretation of sovereignty. Issued in the Bandung Declaration, this rendering was decidedly specific to the national identity of these so-called post-colonial states, focusing primarily on the tenets of territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference. At the same time, this declaration acknowledged the Bandung Conference attendees' solidarity with the UN Charter and paid homage to international law and international human rights. Unlike NATO and other international institutions based upon the North Atlantic states, however, there was no call to promote any particular style of domestic politics or domestic personality. What is ultimately most crucial is that within the Bandung Declaration, particular standards of international politics and international personality were promoted, while national identity in the form of domestic politics and domestic personality were protected (Bandung Conference, 1955).

At the Bandung Conference, China's most prominent expression of social agency was delivered in the form of its "Five Principles for Peaceful Coexistence." The story behind these five principles is that in the wake of the Korean War, the US had implemented its Cold War foreign policy of containment to prevent the spread of communism from the Soviet Union and China into the newly independent states of Africa and Asia. As part of this Cold War foreign policy of containment, Washington started to negotiate a series of bilateral and multilateral security and defence treaties with states within China's immediate vicinity, these included the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand. At the crux of this strategy was Taiwan, where Washington supported the KMT in maintaining China's diplomatic relations as the "Republic of China." As the "Republic of China," Taipei also held on to China's seat in the UN, thereby preventing Beijing from interacting with the most important international institution in the international community. Beijing reacted to this situation with its own Cold War foreign policy of peaceful coexistence in order to reduce the fears and tensions felt towards the People's Republic of China in the newly independent states of Africa and Asia. Initially, the Cold War foreign policy of peaceful coexistence was a joint-strategy of China and the Soviet Union to break free from containment. Soon, however, China elaborated the full Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in its interaction with India. This act centred upon China's effort to reach out to the developing world in order to reduce its Cold War foreign policy dependence on the Soviet Union (Garver, 1993). Published on June 28, 1954 in a joint-communiqué between China and India, the five principles were: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence (Chai, 1972).

To this day, the Five Principles for Peaceful Co-existence have continued to serve as the basis for much of China's bilateral and multilateral interaction with the international community. By 1955, China had thereby clearly and effectively articulated an interpretation of its national

identity and sovereignty domestically and abroad. The Century of National Humiliation and occupation by Japan had led the CPC's People's Consultative Conference to prioritize the tenets of sovereignty that would insulate China's national identity from foreign interference. With its bilateral and multilateral interaction with the Soviet Union and the newly independent states of Africa and Asia, Beijing was already actively projecting this interpretation of national identity and sovereignty into the international community. Nonetheless, the reality of Beijing's domestic and foreign policy experience would continue to contradict its domestic and foreign policy rhetoric for some time to come. Combined with containment, it would have little success in promoting the Common Program, the Five Principles for Peaceful Coexistence or the Bandung Declaration within the international community as a whole. War between China and India broke out in 1961, and accusations of Beijing's continued support for the WPV in the Vietnam War persisted. It was not really until China was able to break free from containment, accede to the UN, and initiate its reform period under Deng Xiaoping that this scenario would radically change (Garver, 2005).

In 1971, the People's Republic of China acceded to the UN. This was largely a result of its "peace offensives" premised upon its Cold War foreign policy of peaceful coexistence and the outreach of a few North Atlantic states such as France and Canada in the exchange of diplomatic relations with Beijing (Martin, 2008; Wu, 2005). With a majority of votes in the UN General Assembly in its favour, the People's Republic of China replaced the Republic of China on October 25, 1971. Beijing would then slowly achieve membership in virtually every international institution of significance, culminating most recently in its December 11, 2001 accession to the WTO (Paltiel, 2007; Zhang, 1998). The contemporary impact of China's rise on the international community was not simply an effect of it being able to break free from containment, however. It was driven predominantly by the engine of China's rise. This was its increasingly modern political, economic and social organization, all of which had started to develop at a rapid pace ever since the reform period initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978. With the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, Deng succeeded as leader of the CPC. He took the CPC on a new domestic and foreign policy trajectory that would emphasize a politically controlled opening of China's command economy. Most significantly, his emphasis on the stability of domestic and international politics as a medium within which modern economic and social development could occur would lead him to articulate a late-Cold War foreign policy that would emphasize rapprochement with the United States and the stabilization of China's relations with the international community, especially within Asia. It was these initiatives that would ultimately provide China with not only stable domestic and foreign policies that would fit rhetoric to reality, but also the power to exert a greater impact on the structuration of the international community (Garver, 1993 & 2005).

<center>Case Studies: ASEAN and SCO</center>

The reform period changed China tremendously. Over the past thirty years, it has helped China to fit its foreign policy rhetoric with reality, and it has provided Beijing with the state capacity, economic size and social affluence to have a greater impact on the international community. Nowhere has this been more evident than within Asia, where ASEAN's regional forums' and the SCO's rule structures have varyingly come to reflect China's national identity and sovereignty. It is within these regionally-based international institutions that China's social agency has been most evidently felt in the structuration of the international community.

ASEAN was established in 1967 with the Bangkok Declaration. The relevant examples of ASEAN's regional forums: the ARF and ASEAN+3, were established in 1994 and 1997 respectively. Of course, ASEAN does not include China, and its rule-structure most evidently reflects the ASEAN member-states' national identity and sovereignty. As noted, however, the ASEAN member-states and China share a common interpretation of sovereignty as expressed in the Bandung Declaration. Although ASEAN and China have certainly had their differences, this common interpretation of sovereignty has facilitated interaction between the two sides. In fact, while ASEAN was established to counter the foreign interference of China and other states in the Vietnam War and Southeast Asia, cooperation between the ASEAN member-states and China has increased exponentially, especially since the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989 and the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 (Ba, 2003 & 2006; Weatherbee, 2005).

The Bangkok Declaration was issued on August 8, 1967. It contained a series of statements from the five founding ASEAN member-states: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, that clearly articulated their interpretation of national identity and sovereignty. The Preamble to the Bangkok Declaration indicates that the purpose of ASEAN is to pursue regional stability and development on the basis of mutual cooperation, equality, political independence, resistance to foreign interference and the protection of national identity. This declaration, which was not legally binding, was signed in the midst of the Vietnam War, where the United States, the Soviet Union and China had all taken on a role of Cold War interference. It also contained the ASEAN member-states' renewed commitment to the UN Charter (ASEAN, 1967).

After the Bangkok Declaration, the next step in the development of ASEAN was the February 24, 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. This was the first legally binding international agreement within ASEAN, as the Bangkok Declaration was little more than a series of statements on international principles and a framework to start a process of international summitry between the five founding ASEAN member-states. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation established a framework for the conduct of international relations. Interestingly, unlike any such international agreement between the North Atlantic states, it made no references to the domestic politics and domestic personalities of its parties. In fact, the Preamble refers explicitly to the Bandung Declaration, while Article 2 of this treaty states that parties to this international agreement shall adhere to the following principles: (a) mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national identity of all states; (b) the right of

every state to lead its national existence free from foreign interference, subversion or coercion; (c) non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; (d) settlement of differences and disputes by peaceful means; (e) renunciation of the threat or use of force; and (f) effective cooperation (ASEAN, 1976).

Unlike the EU, ASEAN has never touched upon the domestic politics and domestic personality of the ASEAN member-states or the states with which ASEAN interacts. It has called for compliance with international law and international human rights, but it has never created a mechanism in any area of cooperation to actually enforce compliance beyond the national-level. In the ASEAN Charter of 2008, this is still apparent. So, too, is this apparent in the admission of five new ASEAN member-states: Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, not all of which adhere domestically to international law and international human rights. While the ASEAN Charter of 2008 was much heralded, it continues to promote the "ASEAN Way," which is to proceed on the basis of "consultation" and "consensus." There is no EU-style qualified majority voting, and there is nothing akin to the EU Parliament. Effectively, ASEAN does not link domestic politics and domestic personality to international relations. Instead, it codifies the conduct of international relations by focusing solely on the international politics and international personality of the ASEAN member-states and the states with which it interacts. Interestingly, it was the North Atlantic states' reaction and the ASEAN member-states' lack of reaction to the domestic politics and domestic personality of China in the wake of the Tiananmen Square Incident that first led Beijing to seek friendlier and more cooperative relations with ASEAN (Ba, 2003 & 2006).

The Tiananmen Square Incident resulted in an assertive reaction from the North Atlantic states. Sanctions were placed on China, a few of which are still in effect to this day. ASEAN's response was different. It was subtle in its reaction, focusing less on China's internal affairs and more on its international relations. ASEAN was decidedly more concerned with ensuring that China's rise in the international community would not become a threat to the geo-political and geo-economic security of the ASEAN member-states. In light of China's post-Tiananmen Square Incident isolation, Beijing saw the opportunity to open up more interaction with the ASEAN member-states, and it acted quickly to make the first move. In 1990, Premier Li Peng embarked on a tour of Southeast Asia to calm any sense of threat and foster more amicable relations. He was successful. In 1991, China's Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, was invited for the first time to participate in ASEAN's international summitry, which had already expanded to include states beyond the ASEAN member-states. This eventually led to a number of bilateral international agreements between China and ASEAN, and it contributed directly to the development of ASEAN's regional forums, including the ARF and ASEAN+3 (Johnston, 2004; Moore, 2004; Wang, 2005).

An important point of clarification is that as China started to interact more with ASEAN, China's social agency was not structuring the two side's bilateral international agreements and ASEAN's

regional forums simply as it saw fit. Rather, China and the ASEAN member-states' already shared an interpretation of sovereignty that dated back to the Bandung Declaration, and this enabled Beijing and ASEAN to interact in the structuration of bilateral international agreements and ASEAN's regional forums in a way that reflected this affinity. This argument is best demonstrated by the fact that in 2003, China was the first non-Southeast Asian state to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. This treaty not only reflects China's and the ASEAN member-states' shared interpretation of sovereignty, but as previously mentioned its Preamble refers explicitly the Bandung Declaration (Weatherbee, 2005).

Beyond bilateral international agreements, China is a member of the ARF and ASEAN+3. The ARF has operated since 1994 as a venue to discuss bilateral and multilateral security concerns within Asia, specifically Southeast Asia. ASEAN+3 has operated since 1997. The "Plus 3" represents China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. This regionally based international institution received a significant boost in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis, when the ASEAN member-states varyingly felt that the solutions proposed by the WB and IMF were a form of foreign interference (Moore, 2004). Centred upon the ASEAN member-states, these two regionally based international institutions are forums within which China has been able to project its interpretation of national identity and sovereignty with the help of a set of states that share an affinity with that interpretation. In the ARF, China has kept its cross-Strait dispute with Taiwan off of the list of security concerns within Asia. This is because Beijing has successfully represented this security concern as an issue related to the domestic politics and domestic personality of China, not to its international politics and international personality (Johnston, 2004). In the ASEAN+3, China has contributed significantly to mechanisms that can either act on their own or act in cooperation with the WB and IMF in assisting the ASEAN member-states in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis and beyond. Most notably, these mechanisms have included the Chiang Mai Initiative. This initiative started in 2000 after a meeting between the finance ministers of the ASEAN+3. The Chiang Mai Initiative is a currency swap mechanism. Like the WB and IMF, it was implemented to help states in financial crisis to handle current account deficits. Initially, it was conceived as a venue for bilateral currency exchanges between China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the five founding ASEAN member-states. With the assistance of China's substantial currency reserves, it has recently been expanded into a multilateral currency swap mechanism with foreign currency reserves of US $120 billion (ASEAN, 2010; Lincoln, 2008).

From the point of view of Beijing and the ASEAN member-states, interaction between China and ASEAN has been significantly rewarding. As of 2010, the two sides have implemented a China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (CAFTA), which covers a territory of approximately 14,120,000 km^2, a population of approximately 1,940 billion and an international market of approximately US $7.6 trillion (ASEAN, 2010). Political, economic and social interaction between the two sides continues to rise. Since the implementation of CAFTA, bilateral trade has accelerated.

China is now ASEAN's third largest bilateral trade partner, ASEAN is now China's fourth largest bilateral trade partner. Interaction is also on the increase between China, the ASEAN member-states and the international community as a whole. The ARF includes 16 states other than China and the ASEAN member-states. The newest of ASEAN's regional forums, the East Asia Summit (EAS), was initiated in 2005. It includes not only China, but also Russia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Australia, India and the United States (Simon, 2008).

China's interaction with ASEAN and the success of ASEAN's regional forums helped to provide China with the confidence to establish the SCO, the first international institution initiated and designed by Beijing. The SCO was established in 2001 with the Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO, 2001). It is a decidedly post-Cold War international institution, focusing on political cooperation in the elimination of terrorism, extremism and separatism and economic cooperation in the face of increasing economic and social interdependence between states. Its origins date back to the late-Cold War, when China and the Soviet Union were trying to settle a series of border disputes in Northeastern Asia and Central Asia. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, China and Russia continued negotiations on the border disputes in Northeastern Asia. For the border disputes in Central Asia, China had to turn to the newly independent states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In order to maintain what had already been achieved, Beijing, Almaty, Bishkek and Dushanbe invited Moscow to return to the table. In 1996 and 1997, these five states signed two multilateral international agreements: the Treaty Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions and the Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation. These two multilateral international agreements set the foundation for the SCO in the form of the Shanghai Five, which proceeded to meet over the next of five years in Shanghai, Moscow, Almaty, Bishkek and Dushanbe. On June 15, 2001, the Shanghai Five returned to Shanghai with Uzbekistan, and the contemporary SCO was formed (Fravel, 2008).

Since its initiation, the SCO has privileged the characteristics of sovereignty associated with international politics and the international personality of states, while it has subordinated the characteristics of sovereignty associated with domestic politics and the domestic personality of states. Its rule-structure thereby clearly reflects China's social agency and its interpretation of national identity and sovereignty in the structuration of the international community. Like the Bangkok Declaration, the Declaration on the Establishment of the SCO was not a legally binding international agreement. It called for the six founding member-states of the SCO to abide by the UN Charter and the "Shanghai Spirit," the latter of which had already been forged by the Shanghai Five. In reference to the UN Charter, it stated that SCO member-states should respect territorial integrity, political independence, and non-interference. In reference to the "Shanghai Spirit," it stated that SCO member-states should interact on the basis of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, mutual respect for different civilizations and common prosperity.

In subsequent SCO documents, the "Shanghai Spirit" has been referred to as "the underlying philosophy and the most important code of conduct in the SCO" (SCO, 2001 & 2006).

The Declaration on the Establishment of the SCO called upon the six founding member-states to create a secretariat, a regional anti-terrorism centre and a charter. The SCO Charter was issued in 2002. In the Preamble, it refers to the SCO member-states renewed support for the UN Charter, the Treaty Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions, the Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation and the Declaration on the Establishment of the SCO. Article 1 states that the objectives of this organization are to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism and to encourage the SCO member-states to cooperate in economic and social development. It does refer to international law and international human rights, but like ASEAN it does not propose any mechanism to enforce compliance beyond the national-level. Article 2 lists the key principles of this organization, which are: (a) mutual respect for sovereignty, (b) political independence, (c) territorial integrity of states and inviolability of states' borders, (d) non-aggression, (e) non-interference in internal affairs and (f) non-use of force in international relations. In addition, the SCO Charter states explicitly that the SCO is not a military alliance, and that it is not directed at any "other states and international institutions" (SCO, 2002). This is most likely drawn from China's historical experience with the US Cold War foreign policy of containment, with which Washington developed a series of bilateral and multilateral security and defence treaties with states within China's immediate vicinity.

The SCO has developed rapidly. In 2002, the SCO Secretariat started operations in Beijing. In 2004, the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure was set up in Tashkent. Beyond its physical infrastructure, the SCO has started to cooperate much more extensively. This is best demonstrated by the fact that the SCO member-states' have already created a legally binding framework for the conduct of international relations. Like ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, the SCO's Treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation outlines the principles that the SCO member-states are to adhere to in their interaction with each other. The Preamble of the Treaty on Long-Term Good Neighbourliness states that the SCO member-states adhere to the principles of the UN Charter, and that they are not engaged in a military alliance directed at any other states and international institutions. Article 4 stipulates that the parties shall respect the principles of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, while Article 11 indicates that the parties shall cooperate in the fields of international law and international human rights. Compliance with Article 11 is, however, left clearly within the prerogative of the SCO member-states (SCO, 2007).

As a non-military alliance, the SCO is best compared to the OSCE, not NATO. These two regionally based international institutions fall under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter: "Regional Arrangements," whereas NATO would fall under Chapter VII: "Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression." As a brief comparison between the SCO and OSCE, the OSCE's Paris Charter for a New Europe states that its core principles are

human rights, the rule of law and democracy. In fact, this charter stipulates that human rights are a birthright of all human beings, and that they are to be protected by the rule of law at the national-level. Democracy is referred to as the only system of domestic politics and domestic personality for the OSCE member-states. Even this charter, however, pays heed to territorial integrity (OSCE, 1990). The SCO's Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation states that the SCO member-states "shall respect each other's right to choose ways of political, economic, social, and cultural development." Although recall that Article 11 indicates that the SCO member-states shall cooperate in the fields of international law and international human rights (SCO, 2007). The contrast between these two regionally based international institutions is not absolute. The SCO and the OSCE adhere firmly to the UN Charter. In reality, the SCO simply privileges the "external" dimension of sovereignty, while the OSCE privileges the "internal" dimension of sovereignty.

The SCO has developed international relations with other states and international institutions. This is potentially where the SCO will itself have a socialization impact on the international community, an influence that could exceed that of ASEAN's regional forums. In terms of its relations with other states, the SCO has four observers: India, Iran, Mongolia, and Pakistan, and two dialogue partners: Belarus and Sri Lanka. The SCO has also set up an SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group as well. In 2010, the SCO started to actively discuss the possibility of drafting an accession protocol for new member-states. In all probability, this will be released this in 2011, the ten-year anniversary of the SCO. Without its observers and dialogue partners, the SCO currently has a territory that covers approximately 30,251,500 km^2, a population of approximately 1.540 billion and an international market of approximately US $7.539 trillion. The SCO has already developed contacts with the UN and other regionally based international institutions. These contacts were forged over the past seven years. In 2004, the UN General Assembly passed resolution 59/48, which conferred observer status upon the SCO within the UN. In 2009, the UN General Assembly passed resolution A/64/183, which called for more interaction between the SCO and the UN Secretariat. On April 5, 2010, a Joint-Declaration on Cooperation between the SCO and the UN was issued, which finalized this initiative (SCO, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2010a & 2010b).

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

In conclusion, this paper has argued that China developed an interpretation of its national identity and sovereignty that led it to privilege and subordinate the "external" and "internal" dimensions" of sovereignty respectively. By 1955, China had already articulated this preference in the form of its Common Program, the Five Principles for Peaceful Coexistence and the Bandung Declaration. Initially, however, the US Cold War foreign policy of containment and Beijing's inconsistent domestic and foreign policy behaviour inhibited it from projecting its interpretation of national identity and sovereignty abroad. China's accession to the UN in 1971 and the reform period initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 radically changed this. The reform

period helped China to fit its domestic and foreign policy rhetoric to reality, and Beijing's newfound ability to interact with the international community enabled it to forge more amicable and cooperative international relations. Most significantly, the reform period provided China with the state capacity, economic size and social affluence to have a greater impact on the international community. It was then argued that the impact of China's social agency on the international community has been most evidently felt within Asia, where ASEAN's regional forums and the SCO's rule-structures have varyingly come to reflect China's national identity and sovereignty.

How will China's social agency influence the structuration of the international community beyond 2011? From the vantage point of social constructivism, the social agency of states and the rule-structure of the international community are inextricably linked in a process of constant interaction, reciprocal influence and mutual constitution. China and the ASEAN member-states have privileged the "external" dimension of sovereignty: territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference, while the North Atlantic states have privileged the "internal" dimension of sovereignty: human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The international institutions that these two sides have built have reflected these two dimensions of sovereignty. In turn, they have affected the behaviour of states interacting within them. As China and the ASEAN member-states proceed to build more influential and inclusive international institutions, more states will presumably be affected by them. Of course, China, the ASEAN member states' and the North Atlantic states all adhere to the UN Charter. China's structuration of the international community will not be revolutionary, even if its rise continues apace. What would occur is that the international community would become more and more disposed towards privileging the tenets of sovereignty associated with international politics and domestic personality, while subordinating those associated with domestic politics and domestic personality.

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