

MAKING SENSE OF A RISING CHINA:
PERSPECTIVES FROM CHINA AND ANGLO-AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

MAKING SENSE OF A RISING CHINA: PERSPECTIVES FROM CHINA AND ANGLO-AMERICA

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China's rapidly ascending status in the world order has sparked an intense debate among the contributors from diverse disciplines of social sciences from economics to politics. Most of these contributions, including the ones in the field of IR, have focused mainly on a single aspect of China's transformation rather than analysing it from a number of facets. Furthermore, these studies have analysed China from their respective standpoints originating from their locations in the core-periphery structure of the world order and social sciences and also from their positions in the power-knowledge nexus. Thereby, the locality of the knowledge produced about China and its relations with power structures ought to be taken into consideration while examining the existing literature. This necessity is the point of departure of this thesis. This study is undertaken to scrutinize the heterogeneity of knowledge, the relationship between power and knowledge production and the region-centricity, in particular the Western-centricity, of knowledge production by analysing the discourse on the "(re-) rising" status of China in the world order from thirteen perspectives originating from China and North America. Within this scope, this thesis contributes to the efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge on China and of decolonizing IR and provides a more comprehensive view on the debate of a

“rising” China. This way, this study aims to reveal the influence of power and different *weltanschauungen* on knowledge production processes.

Keywords: People’s Republic of China, Heterogeneity of Knowledge, Knowledge Production, Power-Knowledge Nexus, Eurocentrism

ÖZ

YÜKSELEN ÇİN’İ ANLAMLANDIRMAK: ÇİN’DEN VE ANGLO-AMERİKA’DAN BAKIŞ AÇILARI

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Doktora, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

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Çin’in dünya düzenindeki hızla yükselen konumu, ekonomiden politikaya çeşitli sosyal bilimler disiplininin pek çok kişinin katkıda bulunduğu yoğun bir tartışmanın doğmasına sebep olmuştur. Uluslararası İlişkiler alanındakiler de dahil olmak üzere bu katkıların büyük bir kısmı, Çin’in geçirdiği dönüşümü birden fazla yönden ele almak yerine, temel olarak bu dönüşümün tek bir yönüne odaklanmıştır. Dahası bu çalışmalar Çin’i, dünya düzeninin ve sosyal bilimlerin merkez-çevre yapısında sahip oldukları konumlarından kaynaklanan bakış açılarına ve iktidar ile bilgi ilişkisinde sahip oldukları konumlarına göre analiz etmektedir. Dolayısıyla, mevcut literatür incelenirken Çin ile ilgili üretilen bilginin yerelliği ve güç yapılarıyla olan ilişkileri göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. İşte bu gereklilik elinizdeki tezin çıkış noktasıdır. Bu çalışma, Çin ve Kuzey Amerika kaynaklı on üç farklı yaklaşımın Çin’in dünya düzenindeki “(yeniden) yükselen” konumu ile ilgili söylemlerini inceleyerek, bilginin heterojenliği, iktidar ve bilgi üretimi arasındaki ilişki ile bilgi üretiminin bölge merkezliliğini, özellikle de Batı merkezliliğini, analiz etmektedir. Bu kapsamda bu tez, Çin üzerine üretilen entelektüel bilgiyi çeşitlendirme ve Uluslararası İlişkileri sömürsüzleştirme çabalarına katkıda bulunmakta ve “yükselen” Çin ile ilgili tartışma hakkında daha kapsamlı bir bakış

sunmaktadır. Böylelikle bu çalışma, iktidarın ve farklı dünya görüşlerinin bilgi üretimi süreçleri üzerindeki etkisini açığa çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti, Bilginin Heterojenliği, Bilgi Üretimi, Güç-Bilgi İlişkisi, Avrupa-merkezcilik

To my family

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| AD | Anno Domini |
| AIIB | Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| BC | Before Common Era |
| BRI | Belt and Road Initiative |
| BRICS | Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa |
| CASS | Chinese Academy of Social Sciences |
| CPC | Communist Party of China |
| CSC | China Scholarship Council |
| HCMT | Historical Critical Materialist Theory |
| HST | Hegemonic Stability Theory |
| IR | International Relations |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| KLP | Keeping a Low Profile |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| SCO | Shanghai Cooperation Organization |
| SFA | Striving for Achievement |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| US | United States |
| WB | World Bank |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance (Marx, 1845/1998, p. 67).

The concept of “hegemony” is considered one of the basic concepts in the discipline of International Relations (IR) in understanding and explaining world affairs. Such that, since the 1970s, there is a lively debate in the IR academia about the issue of conceptualising the notion of hegemony. Events that took place in the 1960s and 1970s, such as the United States (US) failure in the Vietnam War, the relative economic rise of the Western European states and Japan, the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the détente period generated a second debate on the relative decline of the US power and hegemony, which is closely related to the first debate. Since then both the concept of hegemony and the state of the US hegemony have been two of the most deliberated issues in the discipline and it seems that this will be the case in the future as well. In other words, in the last four or so decades the hegemony debate has become an important part of the IR and International Political Economy scholarship. This debate was also closely linked to classical realism’s inadequacies in explaining the changing world order and the emergence of new approaches to international relations such as neoliberal institutionalism, neorealism,

World Systems Analysis and Historical Materialist, or so-called Gramscian, Critical Theory to name a few. Since every approach had a different conception of the international system, each suggested its own conception of hegemony. Some defined it only in terms of material capabilities and as military and economic dominance, whereas others also emphasized the importance of non-material aspects like politics, ideology and culture.

At that time, almost all IR approaches claimed that the demise of the US hegemony was only a matter of time and a new, post-US hegemonic order was about to emerge (Gilpin, 1975; Kindleberger, 1981; Krasner, 1976; Wallerstein, 1991). However, the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and the fall of the mighty Soviet Union changed everything. With the end of the Cold War it became evident that the predictions of a post-US hegemonic world were not materializing. On the contrary, the US increased its relative military and economic power and emerged from its rivalry with the Soviet Union as the invincible sole superpower to lead the world order. Accordingly, in the 1990s, many IR scholars talked about the “end of history” (Fukuyama, 1992), “the unipolar moment” (Krauthammer, 1990/1991) and the persistence of the US hegemony (Ikenberry, 1998/1999). On the other hand, in the last four decades, the world has witnessed the rebirth of China¹ from its ashes. Because of its Chinese² style revolutionary experience and attempts to export this experience to other countries through its support to revolutionary movements in different parts of the world, China had already attracted interest under the leadership of Mao Zedong. However, due to its rapid economic development in the post-Mao period, China’s “rise”, or “the restoration of its rightful place in the world order”, as the Chinese discourse puts it, has drawn the attention of intellectuals, policy-makers and ordinary people throughout the world. This time, rather than the fear of “communist threat”, what aroused interest were the successes of its economic reform experience.

¹ In this thesis, the term “China” refers to the People’s Republic of China (PRC). In the coming chapters, especially in chapter four, the concepts “mainland China” or “mainland” are also used in the same meaning.

² In this thesis, the term “Chinese” refers to the citizens of the PRC.

While research on different aspects of China from economic development to political system and urbanization has grown expeditiously in the last three decades, in the realm of IR, scholarship on China has for the most part been part of the above-mentioned hegemony debate. In other words, there is an extensive literature on China's rapidly increasing status in the international system and its relations with the US as the hegemonic power of the system. Therefore, to clarify and locate the contribution of this study to the literature, the questions of how the existing IR literature conceptualizes the term hegemony and discusses the relationship between an existing hegemon and a rising power, in this case between the US and China, needs to be briefly discussed. Such a discussion regarding the concept of hegemony, China's changing position in the world order and the contemporary Sino-US relations provides a context for the argument that will be developed in the coming chapters of this study.

According to Robert W. Cox, "ontology lies at the beginning of any enquiry" (1996, p. 144). Therefore, intentionally or not, each thinking and the concepts used to express that thinking has an ontological standpoint or a philosophy of science. Following Zizek's claim that "Every ontology is political" (2000, p. 158), Wight argues that "Politics is the terrain of competing ontologies. Politics is about competing visions of how the world is and how it should be" (2006, p. 2). Therefore, every approach in IR scholarship has an ontology, be it positivist, post-positivist or critical realist, and therefore, a political attitude.

Different theories of IR have differing perspectives on how to evaluate the world and hence, how to conceptualize hegemony. Since theories are magnifying glasses that include some aspects while excluding others, existing theories do not provide a complete picture of the literature. Furthermore, due to space constraint, in this study, it is not possible to include every single contribution from each IR theory on the hegemony debate. Therefore, this part briefly discusses the scholarly contributions of the positivist mainstream theories of IR, which dominate the intellectual debates in the literature, and critical approaches that challenge the intellectual hegemony of these positivist accounts. In other words, this discussion on the conception of hegemony, China's changing status in the world order and Sino-US relations omits

post-structuralist and non-Western contributions, which hold only a minor place in the IR literature. Nevertheless, a classification of the existing research helps to reveal the deficiencies of previous studies and to position this thesis in the literature. Hereby, such a categorization of the literature and positioning of this study in the existing research helps to clarify the contribution of this thesis.

This study is based on the premise that each theory's conceptualisation of the notions of hegemony and international/world order is closely related to the relationship between power and knowledge creation. Even the choice of concepts to be used in a research is integral to the power-knowledge nexus. As argued by Cox, "Theory is always for someone and for some purpose" (1981, p. 128). This belonging and purposefulness lead theories to have two possible goals to realise. They either accept the world as it is and try to overcome the problems it faces, or they question the existing world order and how it emerged and try to transcend it by building an alternative one. While the former is the path taken by problem-solving theories, the latter is the way followed by critical theories. Even though, by extension of their positivist philosophy, they claim to be value-free and neutral, problem-solving theories are indeed a part of and side with established power relationships and thus are value-laden and ideologically biased (Cox, 1981, pp. 128-130). Critical theories, on the other hand, are aware of the fact that any "ontological standpoint is open to question" (Cox, 1996, p. 144). Therefore, "understanding the ontological differences that lie at the heart of competing visions of the world should be the aim of any properly conceived critical discipline of IR" (Wight, 2006, p. 2).

Furthermore, every theory produced in social sciences occupies a position in the three-layered –core, semi-periphery and periphery– structure of the world order, where each layer has connections to the other two layers. Therefore, IR as a field of social sciences does not consist of a single global discipline, but instead of various national disciplines. In this stratified structure of social sciences, despite their claims for universal validity, the US-centred mainstream problem-solving theories of IR occupy a core position and hence, intellectually dominate the discipline. (Western) European and non-Western IR studies, on the other hand, respectively hold semi-peripheral and peripheral positions (Kristensen, 2016, pp. 143-144; Tickner, 2013;

pp. 632-635). The disciplines belonging to each layer have different capacities to influence the knowledge produced and circulated in the world of social sciences. The academia occupying the core of IR, namely the US-centred mainstream IR scholarship, dominate the means of mental production and to a great extent possess the means to circulate their own ideas and research. While the studies written in the US are widely circulated among and hence speak to the whole of world academia, publications originating from other parts of the world rarely find chances to be paid attention to by the core and also by the semi-periphery and periphery. This dominance enables mainstream US IR to be influential in directing the pathways of knowledge production not only in the US and the West but also throughout the world.

Another important point to consider in evaluating a scientific production is the audience of the knowledge produced and the reason for producing that knowledge. In other words, one needs to know whether the scientific knowledge is generated for an academic community, for policy-makers or for the public, and whether it is a reflexive or an instrumental knowledge. In this context, following Michael Burawoy, this study defines four types of scientific knowledge addressing two types of audience. The first type, *policy knowledge*, is based on pre-existing scientific knowledge and produced to serve the interests of a client in return for a reward, be it a material or a significant one. The second type, *professional knowledge*, is produced with the aim of expanding a research programme without questioning the defining parameters of that research programme. Policy and professional knowledge are instrumental knowledge, whereas the remaining two are grouped as reflexive knowledge. Different from the previous ones, *critical knowledge* production involves the questioning of and discussion on the underlying assumptions, especially value assumptions, of research programmes. Finally, the last type, *public knowledge*, provides a way of communication between the scholars and the public in matters related to societal aims and the means of reaching those aims. Critical and public knowledge are reflexive knowledge because they, respectively, enable dialogue in between scholars about value relevance of a research programme and in between the academia and extra-academic audience on societal goals. While natural sciences underline instrumental knowledge, humanities emphasize reflexive knowledge.

Social sciences, on the other hand, is positioned in the middle encapsulating both types of knowledge and hence, speaking to both academic and extra-academic audience. Nevertheless, disciplines in social sciences diverge in terms of their inclination to different kinds of knowledge. Economics is increasingly dominated by instrumental knowledge, whereas political science covers both instrumental and reflexive knowledge. Therefore, despite in varying degrees, all social sciences disciplines are reflexive and hence, have value stances or standpoints. In most cases, studies in economics are interested in the market, whereas political science scholarship is focused on the state. However, such a general distinction on standpoints develops into oversimplification since in every discipline some scholars produce knowledge out of the mainstream and therefore, differently from the dominant value stances of their discipline. In other words, while some economist scholars do not focus on the market, some political scientist are interested in non-state value stances. Furthermore, some also try to overcome the disciplinary boundaries by producing interdisciplinary studies (Burawoy, 2007, pp. 139-141).

Locality of knowledge production and divergent histories of different localities matter on the type and audience of knowledge produced as well. There has never been a linear global historical development of social sciences, as reflected by the majority of the (mainstream) Western academia, and hence, the experience of the core (Western) social sciences should not be treated as the sole model for semi-peripheral and peripheral academia. In other words, different national and regional social sciences knowledge production have differing development trajectories. However, knowledge generation does not occur in vacuum and thus, all local knowledge production experience is naturally influenced by the experiences of other national and regional social sciences knowledge production. Therefore, one needs to pay attention to the locality of social sciences knowledge production and its relations with different localities of the knowledge of the world. Moreover, the current world order is still dominated by neoliberal ideology that hinders the autonomy of and the type of knowledge produced by the academic community throughout the world. To overcome its current problems, social sciences scholarship needs to establish an interdisciplinary dialogue and an alliance that shows and links the differences between regional, national and local scholarly production as well as that overcomes

the hegemony of the neoliberal ideology. To accomplish such a goal, instead of focusing solely on the linear historical development of social sciences as was experienced by the Western academia, new research must be aware of the diverging experiences of semi-peripheral and peripheral academia and reflect their distinctive approaches to social sciences (Burawoy, 2007, pp. 139-146). *Ergo*, every assessment about the knowledge produced as part of the IR scholarship should consider the above-discussed points on knowledge production.

As indicated above, there is a vast literature debating the concept of hegemony, the relationship among an existing hegemon and a rising power and relatedly, the ascending status of China in the international system and China-US relations. However, despite the existence of a small but growing number of critical and non-Western research on these issues, the literature has been dominated by mainstream Western IR approaches; realism and liberalism and their variants.

Mainstream IR studies on China's rising status and the relationship between China and the US can be separated into two accounts. Scholars, which can be categorized as pessimist, that base their thoughts on realism mainly focus on the adverse impact of China's rise to the US-centric world order and the likelihood of the challenge that China poses to the West and, in particular, to the US. Liberal studies, which can be categorized as optimist, on the other hand, primarily address China's successful integration into the international system and hence, the likelihood of a peaceful transformation of the unipolar character of the international system. Both pessimist and optimist research on China can be classified as instrumental knowledge with a US-centric standpoint. In other words, having intent to provide stability in the international system and thus, to the US leadership, these studies primarily produce instrumental knowledge benefiting the US state.

Realist theories of IR primarily focus on the concept of power and the relative power potentials of different actors when analysing the international system. They consider rational states as the main actors in the self-help world where there is no overarching power to regulate the anarchic nature of the international system. Thus, states are responsible for their own survival and act accordingly to increase their power potentials. Furthermore, for realists, since only strong states carry the potential to

change the power balance in the international system their research focus on great powers. In other words, realist perspective has a rationalist and state-centric understanding of world politics. As a security- and power-oriented approach, it emphasizes the ultimate aim of security provision by means of military power.

Realist perspective is divided mainly into two lines of thought on the issue of conceptualising hegemony. The first one, Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST), claims that in order the international system to overcome chaos and have order, a dominant state needs to organize the economic, political and territorial aspects of the international system in ways that benefit all members of the system. However, more so than other states, the hegemon itself benefits from maintaining order in the system. In other words, as militarily and economically the most powerful state in the system, by managing the international economy, politics and law, a hegemonic state both fulfils its own interests and simultaneously provides public goods to other states that are eager to participate in the system. By this way, it gains the support of other states and hence, ensures the legitimacy of its dominance. At this very moment, the hegemon's position in the hierarchy of prestige and in the distribution of power in the international system overlaps. In other words, the hegemon possesses the strongest economic and military power in the world while at the same time occupies the heights of the hierarchy of prestige. Once this equilibrium is disrupted, however, the system runs into a crisis which creates opportunities for rising powers to challenge the dominant power. Put differently, the system turns out to become a zero-sum game. If the hegemonic power cannot overcome the threat posed by the challenger, their rivalry may end in a hegemonic war. At the end of the war, the victorious power establishes a new stable system representing the new international power distribution and the rules and rights that are compatible with this distribution (Gilpin, 1989, 1994).

Another variant of the realist conception of hegemony is the one provided by offensive realism, which claims that the only way for a great power to feel safe in the anarchic international system is power maximization and hence, being the most powerful state in the system. In other words, only by achieving the position of hegemony a state can be sure of its survival. Hence, for offensive realists, the

concept of hegemony is synonymous with domination. Despite their desire to achieve world hegemony, throughout the world history, no state could achieve that status but only regional hegemony. To maintain its regional hegemonic position, a regional hegemon needs to follow a two-staged policy. First, it needs to prevent other states in its own region from altering the existing power balance in the region and hence, from challenging its hegemony. In addition to the first, the regional hegemon ought to hinder other states from initially dominating another region and eventually the international system. In other words, to maintain its domination, a regional hegemon must support the power balance among the competing great powers in another region and prevent another state from achieving first regional and then world hegemony. In this endeavour, John J. Mearsheimer claims, great powers may use a number of means, from external balancing to waging war (2001, 2004, 2010, 2014).

For many realist thinkers, currently, the primary challenge to the US dominated liberal international system comes from China. Although some scholars also regard India and Russia as other contender states with potentials to pose threat to the US power (Ahrari 2011; Nadkarni 2010), since the early 1990s, with its distinct political and economic system, China has been at the centre of attention of most US intellectuals and policy-makers (Christensen, 2001, 2015; Friedberg, 2005; Mastanduno, 2014; Mearsheimer, 2004, 2014; Swaine, 2010). Pessimist Western scholars and policy-makers, Mearsheimer being in the first place, evaluate the Chinese renaissance as a threat to the US leadership and compare its growing power with the rise of Wilhelmine Germany before the First World War, and Nazi Germany and militarist Japan before the Second World War. In line with the realist conception of hegemony, these academic and governing elites claim that, similarly to previous challengers, if successful in its rise and closing the power gap with the US, China will try its best to challenge the US leadership and transform the existing liberal international system to suit its own interest. Concordantly, following the footsteps of previous great powers, it will follow a two-staged strategy. China will, first, seek to alter the existing power relations and establish a sphere of influence in its immediate neighbourhood. If successful it will then challenge the US leadership in the rest of the world. To prevent China from dominating the Asian region and

eventually challenging the US leadership throughout the globe, the best strategy for the US to pursue is offshore balancing. With such a strategy, the US can buck-pass the costs of containing China's rise to its neighbouring states while supporting them as an offshore balancer (Mearsheimer, 2001, 2004, 2010, 2014).

For Graham Allison, the possible failure of the US in its goal of containing the rise of China and a resultant confrontation between the two powers would be the worst-case scenario the world may face. In other words, supposing that China successfully completes its economic and military development and threatens to displace the US from its leadership position, in the end, these two powers may be caught in Thucydides' trap. In other words, China and the US and hence the world may face the risk of an all-out war. However, this is not an unavoidable outcome. If one or both of the powers accept to step back or find ways of living in a new kind of relationship, then China and the US can escape Thucydides' trap and may keep the peace (Allison, 2017).

Neoliberal IR thinking, on the other hand, while still primarily conceptualising hegemony in terms of military and economic capability, also includes non-tangible factors like soft power. In other words, rather than the idea of military power dominating all other sources of power and explaining every single change in the international system in terms of differences in military capabilities, neoliberals claim that each different issue-area requires a different kind of power resource and thus, different types of power need to be used to explain distinct situations. Furthermore, following the collective goods version of HST, neoliberal theorists focus on international economic relations and the ability of a hegemonic state in conducting these relations by liberalizing international trade, managing the international monetary system, supplying the international currency and investing in and supporting development in the periphery. According to the liberal version of HST, chaos in the world economy and politics can be overcome and stability can be achieved only under a hegemonic power that plays the roles of a stabilizer by successfully managing the open international economic system (Kindleberger, 1973, 1981). Thereby, neoliberal scholars try to distinguish their own conceptualisation from the realist definition of hegemony.

As inheritors of idealist thinking, Robert O. Keohane and Joseph Nye focus on peaceful change, rather than conflict, in the international system. Accordingly, they indicate that with the increasing potential for cooperation in international politics and economy, the possibility of peaceful change between an existing hegemon and a rising power has improved since the late 1970s. Furthermore, due to the effectiveness of international institutions, norms and regimes, the stability of an international system can be maintained even if the hegemony fades away. This optimism stems from the rising socialization among the members of the international community. With the increasing volume and value of economic activities among nations and the integration of a growing number of states to the world economy and politics, states more actively engage with others. Hereby, as nations benefit from their engagement with the outside world, they incrementally abandon their isolated self-interests and favour reciprocal gains and common interests. Throughout the process, states gradually become more disposed to absolute gains, cooperation and peaceful relations and hence, less prone to zero-sum calculations, power politics and war. By establishing rules and processes for managing the interactions among states, international institutions and regimes play important roles in transforming the international system into a positive-sum game. This way, they create the necessary infrastructure for a peaceful international environment (Keohane, 1984, 1986; Keohane & Nye, 2012; Nye, 2004, 2011).

Different from most realist research, liberal studies focus on the positive aspects of China's engagement with the world and the opportunities it provides to other countries like economic dynamism and stability. As proponents of an approach that focuses more on cooperation and interdependency among actors, many liberals claim that there is a prospect for peaceful change in the existing international system. Following the neoliberal logic, optimist scholars suggest that as China's economic integration to the world economy continues and the interdependency among the Chinese economy and the world economy, especially the US economy, increases China and the outside world socialize with each other more. This way, they learn about each other's intentions and hence overcome the problem of uncertainty. Therefore, in due course, China transforms into a status quo power and a responsible stakeholder that pursues a foreign policy compatible with the current

international system. In other words, it leaves its relative interests aside and focuses more on shared interests with other nations such as the open trade system and global climate change (Andornino 2010; Johnston, 2003; Lanteigne, 2005; Shambaugh, 2004/2005).

Neoliberal scholars further claim that it is hard to find clear cut evidence for realist claims that China has revisionist preferences to change the distribution of power in the international system to establish its hegemony (Beeson, 2013; Johnston, 2003, 2013, 2016/2017). Furthermore, according to Edward S. Steinfeld, China is not a rule maker in the international system, but instead a rule taker. Therefore, China has been successful in transforming itself into an economic powerhouse and a strong state by following the rules set by the Western powers and, for the most part, by the US in the post-Second World War era (2010). Hence, Ikenberry claims, the US cannot obscure China's rise in the international system. Therefore, if it wants to keep China a part of the liberal international system and continue its leadership, the US needs to enhance international institutions and the rules governing the system, instead of undermining them (2008).

Critics of the existing world order, on the other hand, have approached the concept of hegemony, "China's 'returning' to the centre of the global economy" (Hobson, 2015, p. 240) and China-US relations from a very different standpoint than all mainstream accounts. Some critical research has even viewed China's improving position in the world system as an opportunity for overcoming the unjust existing world order and this way, establishing a new order that is sensitive to cultural and historical differences and experiences of diverse societies (Arrighi, 2007; Garcia & Borba de Sá, 2013). However, compared to mainstream IR studies, the number of non-mainstream and critical approaches on China and its relations with the US are inferior in number. Nevertheless, their contributions to the hegemony debate have been important supplements to the literature. Their emphasis on the relationship between power and knowledge production has also significantly contributed to the heterogeneity of knowledge production in the discipline. Their ideas in particular on the need to overcome the Western-centric nature of mainstream approaches and to free knowledge production from the dictates of the existing power structures, despite

their insufficiency in fulfilling these promises, have been influential in efforts of diversifying knowledge in the field.

Non-mainstream contribution to the hegemony debate in the IR literature was pioneered by the world-systems analysis, which has a very different approach to scientific knowledge and social sciences than the mainstream accounts. First of all, world-systems analysts do not regard their contribution as a theory of the social world, but as a protest against the way social sciences has been structured and as a challenge to the prevailing mode of scientific knowledge making. Furthermore, rather than having a state-centric approach to the world affairs, world-systems analysis takes “world-system” as its basic unit of analysis and this way, aims to provide a non-region centric, political-economic history of the world system (Frank & Gills, 1993; Wallerstein, 2006b, 2011). In this context, Immanuel Wallerstein defines hegemony as the leading power with the capacity to organize the capitalist world-system in such a way that the interstate rivalry never reaches to the point of terminating the ceaseless accumulation of capital, which is the structural priority and the underlying basis of a capitalist system. In other words, the hegemon manages the system in such a way that the interstate rivalry never becomes so dense to terminate the capitalist system itself. His definition primarily rests on economic grounds. Such that in order for a state to achieve the hegemonic position, it simultaneously needs to gain supremacy in agro-industrial production, commerce and finance in the world-system. This way, the hegemonic state can reframe the rules and norms of the system in such a way to benefit its own needs, while also providing benefits to other core-states. However, while economic supremacy is a must, in order to have legitimacy, a hegemon needs to base its leadership on military, political and cultural supremacy as well (Wallerstein, 2006b, 2011). Giovanni Arrighi, on the other hand, benefiting from the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, criticizes Wallerstein’s definition and identifies his conception of hegemony as dominance. For him, a hegemon should be defined as a state that operates as the leading and governing power of an interstate system. In other words, economic supremacy is not sufficient for hegemony construction. In order to gain hegemony, a state further needs intellectual and moral leadership. Therefore, the concept of hegemony brings coercion and consent together (2007, 2010).

Different from pessimist Western scholars and policy-makers, Arrighi does not regard China as a threat to the world. In contrast with realist scholars like Mearsheimer, he claims that the reason for relative US decline in world politics is not the rise of China, but mistakes made by previous US administrations, such as the Iraq War in 2003. Quite the contrary, China's rising economic power in the world-system has been the result of the US attempt to transform its leadership into "domination without hegemony". Furthermore, Arrighi is quite optimistic about China's improving status in the system. He thinks that if realized, the emergence of an East Asia centred world society, which proposes an alternative to the energy-consuming and environmentally damaging Western development path, would create a more egalitarian and ecologically and socially sustainable world order (2007, 2010). Other world-systems analysts, on the other hand, find the possibility of China building a hegemony and an alternative fairer world-system less likely (Karataşlı & Kumral, 2017; Li, 2005, 2008; Zhang, 2017).

Historical Materialist Critical Theory (HMCT) proposes a different conception of hegemony than both mainstream IR theories and the world-systems analysis, by applying the Gramscian notion of hegemony to the international/world level. Differently from the recently discussed perspectives, rather than having a state-centric perspective or giving priority to the structure, HMCT evaluates the world at three levels of social forces, state and international relations. Within this context, for HMCT, the commonly used identification of hegemony as the dominance of a great power over other states does not reflect a hegemonic order, but a non-hegemonic order that can be called "dominance". Dominance of a powerful state may be a necessary condition, but it is not enough for hegemonic build up. In order for a hegemonic order to be established, the consent of subordinate classes and state-society complexes is the essential condition. Historically, hegemonies are first established at the national level and later expanded to the global level. After a social class establishes its hegemony at the state level, this national hegemony with its institutions, culture and technology is transferred to the global level by getting the consent of other state-society complexes. While core countries adapt themselves to the new order smoothly, emulation of hegemony in peripheral countries is a complicated process. Unlike the former ones, states in the periphery do not have the

capacity to accomplish self-generated social revolutions and hence, only through a passive revolution can they imitate some aspects of the hegemonic society and thus, transform their societies. However, the process of hegemonic maintenance creates its own problems. While initially the leadership position of the hegemon is unchallenged and hence stable, in the process of time, the novelty of the system wears off and counter-hegemonic forces emerge with the intention of delegitimizing the existing hegemonic order and creating a new-counter society. If counter-hegemonic forces are successful in their goals, then the hegemonic power loses its legitimacy and a different kind of society can be built. Otherwise, the hegemonic power either maintains its position and the legitimacy of the system or loses its legitimacy and the world order transforms into a domination without hegemony (Arrighi, 2007, 2010; Cox, 1981, 1983; Cox & Schechter, 2002; Gill, 2008; Morton, 2007, van der Pijl, 2004, 2005).

HMCT perspective to the case of China includes an analysis on Chinese social forces, the state and China's relations with the outside world. Therefore, it starts with a discussion on the transformation of the Chinese state-society complex that has been taking place in the last four decades. In line with the hegemony conception of HMCT, Kevin Gray, Elaine Sio-ieng Hui and Kees van der Pijl evaluate China's opening up and reform era as a process of passive revolution experienced under the leadership of the dominant state-class (Gray 2010; Hui 2017; van der Pijl, 2012). Alex Callinicos, on the other hand, rejects their claim for passive revolution and instead indicates that rather than a transition from a socialist to a capitalist economy, China has been experiencing a transition from an autarkic state capitalism to another variant of capitalism (2010). Whether through a passive revolution or not, other scholars of HMCT, on the other hand, examine the influence of China's transition to the world order. Bentley B. Allan, Srdjan Vucetic and Ted Hopf, by focusing on the distribution of hegemonic identity, elite level beliefs and common sense in great powers, claim that the prospect of China becoming a hegemon does not seem bright since China does not carry the potential to build a counter-hegemonic coalition with the support of other great powers and hence, alter the world order (2017). Ham Myungisk and Elaine Tolentino, on the other hand, focus on China's relations with developing countries through the China Scholarship Council (CSC) and argue that,

unlike with great powers, China has been successful in distributing its values and ideas among peripheral countries. Finally, Cox, looking back at the traditional Chinese world order, thinks that China's transition into a responsible stakeholder may contribute to the efforts of transforming the existing world order into a plural one that respects and values different cultures and lifestyles (Cox & Schechter, 2002; Garcia & Borba de Sá, 2013).

In brief, regarding the debate on how to conceptualise the notion of hegemony and China's ascending status in the global order and relatedly, its relations with the US, the literature is, for the most part, dominated by two contending perspectives emanating from their positions in the core-periphery structure of social sciences and their relations with the existing power structures of the world order. Mainstream theories of IR, despite having minor differences among them, conceptualise hegemony essentially on material terms and evaluate China's rise as a problem or a threat for the US to overcome. In short, the dominant approach in the discipline analyse China through the lens of (US) state security. In line with this stance, mainstream approaches produce knowledge in the service of the US state and hence, propose policy options for the ruling classes of the US. In other words, as problem-solving theories, mainstream IR research are fundamentally instrumental, both as policy and professional, knowledge production efforts speaking to the US academic elite and policy-makers. World-systems analysis and HMCT, on the other hand, as non-mainstream Western approaches, hold positions in the semi-periphery of social sciences. While their hegemony conceptions differ, with the exception of Arrighi acting as a bridge in between these two approaches, HMCT and world-systems analysis evaluate China's rejuvenation to see whether it contributes to the efforts of transcending the unjust power structures of the existing world order and accordingly, finding alternative ways of creating a just world system. Hence, these are reflexive knowledge production efforts that focus on the fundamental values of the society as well as examine and question the underlying assumptions of scientific projects. In other words, as critical theories, they engage in dialogue both with the public on ways of achieving societal goals and also with the community of scholars on value relevance of research programmes.

Notwithstanding their diverging and in a sense contradictory attitudes to the knowledge-power nexus and Western-centric knowledge production in social sciences, in fact, mainstream and critical Western IR approaches share similarities as well. As will be discussed in chapters one and two in detail, like the mainstream Western IR, the knowledge produced by the scholars of world-systems analysis and HMCT, although unwittingly, are also originated in Western-centric thinking. In other words, these critical approaches have fallen into the traps of Eurocentrism, which makes them, quite paradoxically, contributors to the existing unequal power structures that they have been questioning since their earliest days as research programmes (Hobson, 2007, 2012; Hobson & Sajed, 2017). Critical Western approaches, in their attempts to question Eurocentrism and imperialism, mainly focus on the history of the West and evaluate colonialism and imperialism from the perspectives of the colonizing and imperialist states, while neglecting the experiences, histories and thoughts of the colonized and the exploited. In other words, they consider the motivations of the colonizers, while overlooking anti-colonialist struggles. This negligence makes their critique incomplete and insufficient (Halperin, 2006, pp. 43-44; Jones, 2006, p. 12; Miller, 2013, p. 2; Saurin, 2006, p. 34). Similarly, they take the anarchic nature of the Westphalian state-system as given and thereby, ignore other historical international systems (Ringmar, 2012, 2019). Furthermore, both mainstream and critical Western IR studies almost exclusively benefit from the ideas of Western thinkers like Thucydides, Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Antonio Gramsci and Karl Marx and neglect the contributions of non-Western intellectuals. This way, they exclude a vast amount of thinking, experience and knowledge of the world. In brief, despite their claims for universal validity, even the most “scientific and universal” theories stem from local experience and ideas and hence, have cultural limits (Pasha, 2006, p. 68; Nardin & Bain, 2019). In the cases of mainstream and critical IR knowledge production, this locality is the Western world.

In line with the idea of Cox that the power of knowledge reflects the power of the producer of that knowledge, the IR discipline’s Western- or Euro-centric knowledge is rooted in the omitted colonial and imperialist legacy of European civilization, which needs to be acknowledged by new contributions to the literature to provide a

more complete picture of the history of the world. In other words, new research needs to widen the existing IR knowledge by decolonizing IR as well as social sciences knowledge production. Only this way IR can be studied from the perspective of the world or from a humancentric perspective. Thence, the reality that even the most prominent proponents of critical knowledge production fall into the traps of Western-centrism makes the efforts of decolonizing IR and transcending Western-centrism in social science knowledge production even more important. However, such an endeavour of de-parochializing IR must be careful in not diverting towards another type of region-centrism, for example Sino-centrism.

Wallerstein defines Eurocentrism as a malady the world needs to be cured of (1993, p. 295). However, in order to cure a disease, one needs to diagnose it correctly. Therefore, to overcome the Eurocentric knowledge production in IR and, in general, in social sciences scholarship, first and foremost, what is meant by the problem of Eurocentrism must be identified.

The Western-centricity of the discipline of IR stems from the colonial and imperialist character of the world order. As a social science discipline developed by the Western academia during the apogee of colonialism to explain the relations between states, IR scholarship, since the very beginning, has endowed with colonial and imperial reasoning (Saurin, 2006, p. 24). Accordingly, dominant interpretations of IR picture the world order as “the coloniser’s model of the world” (Blaut, 1993; Saurin, 2006, p. 26). Furthermore, in line with Marx’s idea that “The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production” (1845/1998, p. 67), knowledge produced to identify the world order reflects the thoughts and thus, the interests of the owners of means of production, in other words, the powerful. Therefore, there is an inherent nexus between knowledge production and holders of power. Accordingly, the world’s knowledge is produced by and for the benefit of the owners of the means of production. Because the world is still organized under a colonialist and imperialist order, orthodox IR knowledge production reflects colonialism and imperialism (Saurin, 2006, pp. 27-31; Tickner, 2013). In short, to provide a complete picture of the world order, IR scholarship must study and explain colonialism (Miller, 2013, p.

2) and imperialism. However, such a study must include the experiences, histories and thoughts not only of the powerful but also of the colonized and exploited.

There are broadly two different ways of thinking about colonialism. The orthodox thinking treats colonialism as a transhistorical phenomenon and characterises it as the subjugation of local peoples under foreign rule. Since people are no longer living under alien administrations, this thinking claims, colonialism is a thing of the past and the world is experiencing the era of postcolonialism. This dominant account of (Western) IR wittingly ignores and escapes from the violent colonial and imperialist past of the West. The second, heterodox, thinking, on the other hand, states that what the prevailing thinking describes as a thing of the past is classical colonialism, which was at the time an important stage in the evolution of capitalist imperialism. However, while colonial rule was replaced by other types of polities, as an idea, colonialism continues to act as an important pillar of capitalist imperialism. Since capitalism is the defining characteristic of the world order, it is not possible to talk about a post-imperialist era. To the contrary, contemporary imperialism continues its domination through neo-colonialist forms (Jones, 2006, p. 9; Krishna, 2006, p. 89; Saurin, 2006, pp. 28-31). Therefore, a historical analysis of the world needs to pay attention to both imperialism itself and (neo-) colonialism(s) as particular phases of imperialism.

As the dominant IR tradition recognizes the world order as a postcolonial order, it has substituted empires with nations, which are organized under states, as its basic unit of analysis. This way, mainstream IR creates an illusion of a post-imperial world order, in which imperialism is succeeded by the international (Saurin, 2006, p. 31). To fix this imperial illusion, instead of solely studying (nation) states and regions as separate entities, IR scholarship must further analyse classes, groups and social networks and contextualise them in relation to world developments in a comparative and historical perspective (Halperin, 2006, p. 45, 58). Furthermore, through its domination of the means of knowledge production, imperialism dictates knowledge and meaning to subordinate societies. In other words, imperialism imposes its own projection of the world as “the truth” and thereby reproduces colonialist knowledge. The other side of this process is the denial of imperialism to

recognize the historicity of the “rest” as the “other” of the West and the refusal to debate with its “other” “the truth” of its own version of history. In other words, the orthodox Western IR does not legitimize other societies’ right for international recognition and for writing their own histories (Jones, 2006, p. 2; Saurin, 2006, pp. 34-36). For all these reasons, students of IR must contribute to the efforts of diversifying the knowledge of the world by decolonizing IR and in general social sciences and furthermore, transcend Western- or Euro-centricity of knowledge production which originate from the colonialist and imperialist characteristic of the existing world order. However, the task of decolonizing IR and, in general, social sciences cannot be successful just by studying and including non-Western histories and experiences. It further needs the questioning of ontology, history and methods and undertaking the political economy of knowledge production (Saurin, 2006, p. 25, 38), which is a great and challenging task to accomplish.

The attempts to diversify the knowledge of the world and to decolonize IR and, in general, social sciences require the recognition of the heterogeneity of knowledge production as well. In other words, knowledge produced in social sciences and, in particular, IR is rooted in different localities of the world. As indicated above, knowledge is produced in localities that have divergent development trajectories, academic experiences and characteristics. Even though local knowledge production efforts are influenced by the knowledge produced in different regions of the world and especially, by the orthodox Western thinking that dominate social sciences and hence, IR knowledge production, each locality, as a matter of course, has distinctive and valuable contributions to the knowledge of the world. Therefore, to decolonize social sciences and, in particular, IR and diversify knowledge production, one needs to be aware of the heterogeneity of knowledge produced throughout the world. In other words, recognizing and regarding the mosaic like structure of knowledge production is a must for the students of social sciences and in particular, the students of IR in their struggles for transcending the Western-centricity of knowledge production and for decolonizing IR and, in general, decolonizing social sciences.

Within this scope, this thesis asks the following research question: What can be learned about the heterogeneity of knowledge production from the contributions of

mainstream and critical Western and Chinese approaches to the debate on a rapidly transforming and “rising” China? Furthermore, it asks the question of what is to be learned from this same discussion about the relationship between power and knowledge production in social sciences and the region-centricity of knowledge production efforts.

Through its focus on the discourse regarding China’s ascending status in the world order, this study claims to contribute to the literature by revealing the close relationship between scientific knowledge production and the existing power structures in the Chinese and US societies and the locality of the knowledge about China. In other words, by analysing the literature written by mainstream and critical North American and Chinese intellectuals, this study contributes to the efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge and decolonizing IR. However, this is a great task to achieve and hence, this study cannot and does not endeavour to resolve the issue of decolonizing IR knowledge. It is a matter to be answered by joint knowledge production efforts of scholars with diverse intellectual backgrounds throughout the world. Therefore, this thesis needs to be regarded as a contribution to these efforts.

There are two primary reasons for choosing China as the point of attention of this study. First of all, China has attracted a great deal of attention and hence, is much-debated all over the world by the academia, policy-makers, business people and common citizens with diverse professions. This interest has created a vast literature on many aspects of China from economy to politics and to society. As for the discourse produced in the IR literature, it has been dominated by mainstream approaches and hence, by Western-centric knowledge. Nonetheless, current era China cannot be fully grasped only through the Western-centric perspective that ignores the history of colonialism and imperialism. As for the vast majority of societies in the world, colonialism and imperialism played a very important role in shaping the self-identification of China. Even though this study does not have a focus on pre-socialist era China, or on the so-called Century of Humiliation, which refers to the era of colonial interference in China from the start of the First Opium War in 1839 to the formation of People’s Republic China (PRC) in 1949, any

research on China ought to keep in mind the influence of colonial experience on the Chinese mindset. Colonialism has left a legacy of “post-imperial ideology” in China that shapes both the country’s self-identification as well as policies towards the outside world. As a result of this legacy, for example, China is highly sensitive on issues of its territorial sovereignty and international status (Miller, 2013, p. 2). Therefore, one needs to be aware of the legacies left by imperialism while evaluating China’s place in the world order and its relations with other countries, especially the Western countries and, in particular, the US.

The other reason for selecting China as the focal point is the intention and vigorous efforts of the Chinese state and academia to develop homegrown theorizing. As China rapidly improved its economic capacity and position in the international hierarchy of states, the Chinese ruling and academic elite started discussing the need to produce knowledge rooted in the Chinese soil, rather than importing it from the West. Despite the fact that China has a long way ahead of it in its struggle for homegrown knowledge production to be heard and accepted worldwide, especially taking into account the persistent Western hegemony in social sciences, due to its increasing ownership of the means of production, it is reasonable to expect China to become a significant contributor of world knowledge production in the not so distant future. Furthermore, throughout the human history, China has been an important source of knowledge, from philosophy to the sciences. Therefore, it has a very rich intellectual tradition to ground its current efforts of knowledge production onto. In fact, numerous Chinese intellectuals with diverse ideational backgrounds base their ideas on traditional Chinese philosophy. Thereby, efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge in the discipline ought to consider China’s identification of itself and the world.

In their endeavour of developing homegrown approaches, Chinese academia engages primarily with the core, that is the US academia. While there are some efforts for creating links with semi-peripheral and other peripheral academic communities (Chen, 2010; Sun, 2000a, 2000b), Chinese intellectuals fundamentally talk to and try to get the attention of the US IR community. However, it is not possible to state that the US IR academia is eager to get in a dialogue with their

Chinese counterparts. Their main audience, as will be discussed below, is the US academia and state.

In this context, this thesis is composed of four chapters, each analysing different perspectives, either from the West or from China, on the concept of hegemony, the transformation of China in the post-Mao period and China's changing position in the world order. Chapter two covers the contributions of postclassical realism, offensive realism and neoliberal institutionalism to the debate in the IR literature on the concept of hegemony, hegemony construction, the relationship between an existing hegemonic power and potential challenger powers and the likelihood of change in the international system. Since both of the first two approaches rest on realist assumptions and are inclined towards providing hegemonic stability, they are grouped under the same subheading. After evaluating the theoretical contributions of realist and neoliberal approaches to the hegemony debate, the chapter provides a discussion on the rise of China from the point of view of each approach. In other words, the chapter discusses China's rise in the international system from the perspectives of realist and neoliberal accounts. The aim of chapter two is to show the relationship between mainstream Western (US) IR academia and the US state and therefore, the Western-centric nature of orthodox knowledge production in the discipline.

The third chapter changes the course of the study to critical Western IR approaches by providing an analysis on world-systems analysis and HMCT. As these approaches have emerged as alternatives to mainstream US IR theories, the chapter includes an evaluation of orthodox IR knowledge production from the perspectives of these critical approaches as well as their conceptualisations of hegemony, hegemony-building processes and the relationship between an existing hegemon and its potential challengers. Similar to chapter two, after analysing each approach's theoretical contributions on these issues, chapter three continues with a discussion on China's changing position in the world system/order through the lenses of world-systems analysis and HMCT. This way the chapter intends to discuss the similarities and differences between these two critical approaches. Furthermore, it aims to show the insufficiency of these perspectives in overcoming the Western-centric

knowledge production of mainstream IR theories and their paradoxical positions in the power-knowledge nexus.

After analysing Western mainstream and critical standpoints of IR, the study turns its attention to the Chinese perspectives on the ways of identifying and analysing the world. Within this direction, after briefly examining the attempts for creating a Chinese School of IR in the last three decades, chapter four provides an analysis on distinctive ideas of two mainstream Chinese IR approaches, the *Tianxia* approach and the Tsinghua approach or moral realism, on the issues of hegemony conception and leadership in the world order. Both of these approaches benefit from the traditional Chinese philosophy in their analyses. Therefore, the chapter, furthermore, includes a discussion on the universality of (Western) knowledge production and philosophy of science, especially from the perspective of the uniquely China-centred *Tianxia* approach, which claims to propose an alternative to the Western thinking with its distinctive ontology. Similar to the chapters two and three, the theoretical parts of chapter four are followed by a discussion on China's rising status in the international order from the mainstream Chinese point of view. Finally, the chapter ends with an evaluation on the relationship between the Chinese IR academia and the ruling elite of China.

Chapter five has a distinct structure and content from previous chapters. Differently from the preceding three chapters, this last chapter on critical and neo-conservative Chinese perspectives focuses substantively on China's domestic economic and political transformation, rather than its relations with the outside world and the US in particular, while reflecting on external affairs briefly and in relation to domestic transformation. Hereby, the chapter provides an analysis on the differences and similarities between the New Leftist and New Confucian approaches to the issues of the state, legitimacy, modernity and neoliberal hegemony. Because these critical perspectives position their ideas in opposition to Chinese liberalism, the chapter includes a brief evaluation of the ideas of Chinese liberals as well. The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis on the intellectual debates in the post-Mao and in particular, the post-Tiananmen era China, and of the link between knowledge

production and power in the context of disestablished or out of mainstream intellectuals.

Notwithstanding the discrepancy of this chapter in the structure of the thesis, these critical perspectives on rapidly transforming China occupy a very important position in the debate on the rise of China for a number of reasons. The dominance of Western-centric knowledge in the literature and the publishing industry inhibits and obscures the knowledge produced in non-Western scholarship to circulate among the global social sciences community. This creates obstacles for non-Western, critical or non-mainstream perspectives, since it is quite difficult for these intellectuals to find convenient channels to widely circulate their research even in their home countries. Furthermore, these approaches have either a combination of Chinese and Western or uniquely Chinese philosophical backgrounds and hence, are important contributions to the efforts of homegrown theorizing. Therefore, providing a space for critical and neo-conservative Chinese intellectuals as well as mainstream Chinese approaches in this thesis crucially contributes to its goal of contributing to diversifying intellectual knowledge production in the discipline.

Another reason stems from mainstream IR's insistence on separating economics and politics and inside and outside in its research, which contributes to the illusion of the international created by the discipline. On the contrary, from the very beginning, multidisciplinary has been an inherent characteristic of the discipline due to the fact that it brings economics, history, law, politics and sociology together (Nardin & Bain, 2019). Non-mainstream Chinese perspectives, unlike IR mainstream, have a multidisciplinary approach and simultaneously benefit from economics, history, philosophy, politics and sociology in their analyses on China and proposals for alternative visions for the future of their country and the world.

Such an endeavour of revealing power-knowledge nexus and the importance of locality on knowledge production, as a matter of course, has some limitations. First limitation stems from the dominance of mainstream US IR academia on the knowledge produced, circulated and studied in the discipline. Since, as many others, the writer of this thesis has been exposed to such an education for a long period of time, overcoming the inherent Western-centric thinking about world affairs creates a

major challenge. Furthermore, the dominance of mainstream US IR limits the number of non-mainstream and non-Western, especially Chinese studies about the issues regarding the changing status of China in the world order. In other words, there are not many studies produced in particular by Chinese scholars. This point creates another limitation related to language. There are insufficient number of researches done by the Chinese academia and an important part of these studies are written in the Chinese language, which are not accessible to the author of this thesis. In other words, this study is confronted also with the language barrier. Therefore, this thesis is limited to primary and secondary sources written in the English language.

In brief, taken together, these four chapters provide a more comprehensive view on the debate of a “rising” China and its influences on the world order. In other words, rather than analysing the phenomenon of China from a single Western theoretical perspective as the vast majority of the literature does, this study brings together the knowledge created by IR scholars, political scientists and philosophers from the two main proponent sides, the West and China, into a single discussion of making sense of a rising China. Through its analysis of thirteen Western and Chinese approaches, grouped under four chapters, on the changing characteristic and position of China in the world order, this thesis aims to answer its research question on the heterogeneity of knowledge production, power-knowledge nexus and region-centricity of knowledge and hence, reveal the influence of power and different *weltanschauungen* on knowledge production processes.

CHAPTER 2

MAINSTREAM US CONCEPTIONS OF A RISING CHINA: OFFERING LESSONS FOR THE US POLICY MAKERS

From the late-19th century onwards, the idea of Manifest Destiny, namely the US is destined to spread liberal democracy and capitalism first throughout North America and then the world, has been guiding the desires of the US elite to achieve and maintain the global leadership of the US. Nonetheless, this claim for global leadership has never existed without challengers. Immediately after the Second World War, when the US seemed unrivalled in economic and military terms, the Soviet Union appeared as the economic, ideological and military rival of the US global hegemony. The US used all available means, from alliance building to soft power construction and ideological battle, to withstand and overcome the challenge posed by the “communist threat” to its leadership in the international system. In this struggle against communism, in addition to the governing elites of the country, organic intellectuals had played critical roles as well. In line with the pivotal position the US had occupied in the world economy and politics, the mainstream US academia had occupied the central position in global knowledge production. Throughout the Cold War years, the US social sciences community and especially economics and IR scholars used their hegemony in world knowledge production to support their state’s interests. In other words, during the Cold War years, many US intellectuals served their state by contributing to policy making processes as well as by producing intellectual resources to prop the legitimacy of the US hegemony.

With the fall of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union, in the 1990s, the US has emerged as the sole superpower and hence, the structure of the international system transformed into unipolarity. Nevertheless, contrary to the expectations of Francis Fukuyama and many of his peers, the end of the Cold War neither meant the end of history nor proved that liberal democracy was an invincible ideology. As the centre

of gravity of the world economy shifted from the Western hemisphere to East Asia, the unipolarity of the international system has incrementally given way to an international order resembling multipolarity with a number of different civilizations and polities asking for recognition and respect and to varying degrees proposing alternative ways of life and politics to the Western liberal democracy. Among them, the most significant has been the puzzling rise of China with its distinct political-economic system. China's ascend in the hierarchy of the international system has created a sense of threat and urgency among the US policy makers and intellectuals. Such that in the last couple of decades mainstream IR academia and the US political circles have been discussing the challenge posed by the single-party political system and state-led development model of China to the US-led liberal international order. Similar to the Cold War era debates on the hegemonic decline of the US, this has initiated a discourse on the possibility of a hegemonic transition, turmoil in world politics and a future authoritarian world order led by China. In other words, the rapidly improving status of China as a competitive power and its (future) impact on the US-led order has sparked a renewed intellectual and political interest in the US in the concept of hegemony, which led to a growing number of studies on the issues of hegemonic transition and China-US relations. However, the vast majority of studies done by the US IR community have been dominated by mainstream opinions and scholars, who are deeply integrated into the power-knowledge nexus in the country. These studies analyse the phenomenon of China from a US-centric perspective and thus, are primarily concerned with the ways of countering the rise of China as a challenger of the US lifestyle. In other words, they evaluate the rise of China as a matter of US security and accordingly, propose policy options to the US state to overcome the "China threat". Therefore, the mainstream US IR community produces knowledge in the interest of and hence, speak to the US ruling class. Furthermore, in their analyses, they almost only consider the official documents and declarations of the Chinese officials, while neglecting the diversity of ideas and future visions about China originating from intellectuals and ordinary citizens in the vast Chinese public sphere.

In line with the curiosity of the thesis to understand and show the close nexus between knowledge production and power structures, the heterogeneity of

knowledge and the influence of region-centricity on the knowledge produced about China, this chapter aims to reveal the influence of the intellectual hegemony of the US academia in global social sciences knowledge production, the Western-centricity of mainstream US IR as well as the relationship between the mainstream US IR academia and the US state on the debate about conceptualising hegemony and a rising China. Within this context, this chapter provides an analysis on the differences and similarities between three “American” IR theories to the issues of conceptualising “hegemony”, hegemony-building processes, and the relationship between an existing hegemonic power and a (potential) challenger power(s). After evaluating the contribution of each approach to the hegemony debate, the chapter provides a discussion on the rise of China from the point of view of each approach. This way it intends to discuss the differences and similarities among US-centred approaches of postclassical realism, neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism and evaluate the relationship between the mainstream IR community and the US state.

2.1 Mainstream US IR Theories: Theorizing Stability

Notwithstanding the fact that the IR discipline was not originally founded in the US, mainstream US IR theories of realism and liberalism with their neo-variants have dominated the field in the post-Second World War period. So much so that Stanley Hoffman, in his famous 1977 article, defined the discipline as “An American Social Science” (1977). This is still mainly the case, and that’s why issues of how to conceptualise hegemony and the rise of China have been dominated by the two mainstream IR theories of neo-realism and neo-liberalism. These two theories with their several variants made important contributions both to the debate on conceptualising hegemony and to China’s rise and the way this rise affects and transforms world politics. However, due to time and space constraints, here, only two realist variants of postclassical realism of Gilpin and offensive realism of Mearsheimer, and neoliberal institutionalism of Keohane and Nye are analysed. As discussed above, these three theories are problem-solving theories that try to overcome the troubles the existing US-centred international system faces with. For that reason, these theories are regarded as theories of stability that aim to

(re)stabilize the existing world order by solving the problems it encounters. In other words, they are “designed for hegemonic maintenance” (Ren, 2016, p. 37).

In this context, this part of the study examines how postclassical realism, neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism approach to the issues of conceptualising hegemony, hegemony-building processes, and the relationship between an existing hegemonic power and a (potential) challenger power(s). In other words, this section starts with a postclassical realist and an offensive neorealist analysis of the concept of hegemony. It then moves on with a discussion on China’s rise in a *realist* world. Next, it continues with a neoliberal institutionalist approach to the debate on hegemony. Finally, the section ends with a discussion on the rise of China in an *interdependent* world.

2.1.1 Realism and Hegemonic Stability

Numerous IR theory books divide realism into two main strands of classical realism and structural realism/neorealism.³ According to the narrative in these books, while the history of the former goes back to the writings of Thucydides, as a part of the IR discipline it is based on the writings of Edward Hallett Carr and especially, Hans Morgenthau. The latter, on the other hand, is based on the writings of Kenneth Waltz, in particular his 1979 masterpiece, *Theory of International Politics*, which aims at the scientification of realism on the basis of Imre Lakatos’ thoughts (Wohlforth, 2011, pp. 501-502). Since the book’s publication, Waltzian neorealism has become the “standard bearer of realism” (Wohlforth, 2011, p. 499). Furthermore, according to William Wohlforth, “The Morgenthau-Waltz-Mearsheimer succession became the standard narrative about American realism” (2011, p. 501). In other words, Mearsheimer and his theory of offensive realism has become the heir to Waltz and his neorealism. Stephen G. Brooks, on the other hand, claims that in addition to these two variants realism has another branch called postclassical realism. Postclassical realism shares some important assumptions with classical realism and neorealism, but it also differs from them in other significant

³ Two such examples are Dunne, Kurki & Smith, 2013 and Burchill & Linklater, 2013.

aspects. The most important difference among these three variants, according to Brooks, is the main drive affecting the state behaviour. While classical realists and neorealists assume that states behave according to the possibility of conflict, postclassical realists claim that states act upon the probability of aggression. That's why the former two lay emphases on the balance of military capabilities, whereas the latter mentions the importance of other factors like technology, geography, and international economic pressures as well. Furthermore, while classical realism and neorealism make static analyses, postclassical realism has a dynamic conception of relations (1997, pp. 445-463).

Following Brooks, in this study, postclassical realism and neorealism are regarded as the main competing variants of realism. Thus, in this part, as representatives of postclassical realism and neorealism the writings of Gilpin and Mearsheimer are examined respectively. These two scholars have made important contributions to the debate on the concept of hegemony and hegemonic rivalry. As elaborated above, despite their differences, both are problem-solving theories and share the goal of providing stability to the existing world order. Therefore, even so Mearsheimer's contributions to the concept of hegemony cannot be counted as part of the hegemonic stability theory literature, in this study both contributions are discussed under the label of hegemonic stability.

2.1.1.1 Cycles of Hegemony and Hegemonic Stability

Following the basic assumptions of realism, in *War and Change in World Politics*, Gilpin aims to provide an analytical framework for understanding the issue of war and change in international politics. Despite his praise to Waltz and his classic *Theory of International Politics*, in his seminal work Gilpin offers an alternative (post)classical realist analysis, which integrates sociological and economic approaches to international political change. In other words, he is a "methodological pluralist" who rejects the distinction made by structural realists between politics and economics, and synthesizes them (Mastanduno, 2014, p. 162). Furthermore, unlike Waltz, Gilpin does not seek for a scientific analysis of international politics. Even though he agrees with the claim that identifying recurrent patterns, common

elements and general tendencies in history is possible, he has no intention of providing “laws of change” in world politics (1994, p. 3).

Gilpin states that in order to understand and explain international political change, an analysis should focus on the international system, and especially on political actors, which try to improve their interests by changing the international system. The interaction between states and the system is a mutual one where both sides have influence on each other. Thus, while states can change the course of the system, the success of such states in achieving their goals is dependent on the nature of the international system (Gilpin, 1994, p. 10).

As a classical realist, Gilpin indicates that states, which are self-regarding actors that consider other states as potential threats, are the principal actors of an international system.⁴ Notwithstanding many important changes in world politics throughout history, as in the previous millennia the struggle for power and wealth among states in an anarchic world is still the main characteristic of international politics (Gilpin, 1994, p. 7). Despite his emphasis on the anarchic nature of world politics, according to Gilpin, interactions among states have a high degree of order and the system puts limitations on the actions of states (1994, p. 28).

In an anarchic world, in order to improve their relative positions, states pursue three main objectives. The first objective is to conquer new territories of other states to increase their respective share of power. Therefore, for Gilpin, “a theory of international political change must of necessity also be a theory of imperialism and political integration” (1994, p. 23). Second, by threatening others, forming alliances and creating spheres of influence states try to increase their influence on how other states behave. Hereby, they intend to set up the rules of the international political system in such a way that their economic, security and political interests are fulfilled. Finally, states aim to control⁵ (Gilpin, 1994, p. 28) or at least influence the

⁴ Yet, they are not the only actors in the system and especially multinational corporations are also considered as important elements in the international system by Gilpin. See also Gilpin, 1975.

⁵ Here, the term “control” is used as “relative control”. Throughout the history, no state has ever had the capacity to control the entire world economy and this is why some forces have had the opportunity to escape from the control of dominant state(s) and pioneered change.

way the world economy operates. Similar to the first two objectives, having an ability to control or influence the world economy can improve a state's capacity in fulfilling its interests (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 23-24). For a state to accomplish these objectives, it must be a powerful one, or namely a great power. In other words, basically states that have the capability to enforce the rules and norms that govern the international system can control or influence the international system. For that reason, even though Gilpin acknowledges the importance of weaker states in legitimating the dominance of great powers, he mainly focuses on the latter.

Being aware of the insufficiency of focusing only on material aspects of power, in his analysis Gilpin takes into account both material and non-material aspects. Still, in his narrow definition of power he only includes material aspects (military, economic, and technological capabilities of states) and defines non-material aspects as prestige (Gilpin, 1994, p. 13). In this context, the governance of the international political system rests on three components: the distribution of power among political actors, the hierarchy of prestige among states, and the set of rules and rights, which regulates the interplay among states. The first component, namely the power distribution among coalitions of states in the international system is the principal form of control in all systems. The coalition, which is relatively in a stronger position in the hierarchy of power and prestige, gains the right to set up the rules of the system and thus governs it by organizing the networks of interaction among the constituents of the system. Historically, there have been three types of structure in international systems. The first is the imperial, hegemonic or unipolar structure, which can be defined as the domination of one state over others. The second is the bipolar structure in which two powerful states govern the system. The third type is the balance of power in which three or more powers govern the relationship between the components of the system, and especially the relationship among each other. The hierarchy of prestige, which is the second component of controlling the international political system, is closely linked to the concept of power. Both power and prestige serve for the fulfilment of the interests of stronger states. However, while stronger states may use their power to force lesser states to obey the rules established by the stronger, by highlighting prestige, dominant states may get the support of others without needing to resort to force. So, with its moral and functional basis prestige

can make subordinate states to follow the lead of stronger state(s). Thus, prestige can provide legitimacy to the international system. A point to make here is that despite his emphasis on prestige, Gilpin qualifies prestige as a complement to material power (1994, pp. 28-31). In his own words, “prestige refers primarily to the perceptions of other states with respect to a state’s capacities and its ability and willingness to exercise its power” (Gilpin, 1994, p. 31). Therefore, closely linked but distinct concepts of power and prestige are important components in governing the international system, and stability is achieved only when the international hierarchy of prestige reflects the international distribution of power. Otherwise, the system becomes ripe for rivalry and conflict. The set of rules and rights that regulates the interplay among states is the third component of the governance of an international political system. At least in the modern era, it is commonly stated that these rights and rules are universal in the sense that they reflect the mutual understanding and interests of most, if not all, nations. However, Gilpin refuses this claim and indicates that these rules and rights mainly reflect the interests of dominant groups and states in the system (1994, pp. 31-36). In other words, international systems and the rules governing those systems are the products of rulers and thus designed for dominant states’ best interest.

As a realist scholar, whose aim is to solve the problems faced by the existing international system, Gilpin tries to prove that order is essentiality, not change. In other words, even though he acknowledges that change is a constant in world politics, for him it always leads to order (Eralp, 2012, p. 163). In line with this argument, Gilpin’s analysis of international political change starts with a system in a condition of equilibrium. This is a state of dynamic equilibrium in which the stability of the system depends on its capacity to adapt to the demands of actors. In other words, in every system a process of equilibrium-disequilibrium-adjustment permanently takes place (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 11-13).

Gilpin states that an international system in a state of equilibrium is accepted as legitimate by its components, at least by the major powers within that system. However, this situation may change as domestic and international developments unsettle the international status quo. When that happens, the disequilibrium in the

system may alter the cost-benefit calculations of states and thus their respective places in the system. In other words, as the balance of power among states is changed and the hierarchy of prestige does not reflect the new distribution of power in the system, a state may adjust its interests in line with its new power position in the system. In such a situation, following the cost-benefit analysis of the economic theory, Gilpin argues that if a state increases its relative power vis-à-vis other states by improving its economic, military and technological capacities while the hierarchy of prestige is incompatible with that state's share of power, it may attempt to alter the existing international system because the disequilibrium in the system may increase the benefits of changing that system or decrease the cost of changing it in contrast with the previous condition of equilibrium. This process continues until a new equilibrium and thus stability is reached. Here, an important point to make is that having sufficient capabilities and resources is not enough for challenging the status quo. The state or coalition of states that are in a position to challenge must also have the will to bear the costs of changing the system. So, in order to challenge the existing system a possible net gain should be expected by these potential challengers. Expected net gains from changing the status quo can be either increasing future benefits or decreasing possible losses. Cost-benefit analyses and the decision to attempt to change the system depends both on international environment and domestic factors such as the nature of the state, the society of that state and past experiences of that society (Gilpin, 1994, pp. xi, 12-15, 50-55). In addition to the material conditions and cost-benefit analysis, conflicting sides' perceptions also matter in the process leading up to war, especially from the dominant power's point of view. In time of a crisis, the dominant power may be worried that time is working against it and hence, while it is still the stronger side, it may feel safer to settle things via a pre-emptive strike. Such a decision would imply that rather than maximizing gains the hegemonic power prefers to resolve the problem by reducing losses (Gilpin, 1994, p. 201). Hereby, through an analysis that pays regard to both cost-benefit analysis and international and domestic factors, Gilpin refuses deterministic (offensive) realist claims that states always look for opportunities to maximize their power.

According to Gilpin, as a state increases its power it pursues a policy for achieving the above mentioned three objectives of conquering new territories, increasing political influence on other states and controlling the world economy. In the initial stages, further expansion brings more and more resources and the state benefits from increasing returns to scale and gains more power. However, at one point this process comes to an end and the cost of further expansion increases relative to gains and the state faces the reality of diminishing returns. This is the point where the international system returns to a condition of equilibrium (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 106-107). The tendency of increasing costs continues in the status quo as well. As time goes by, the dominant state in charge of maintaining the status quo directs more resources to unproductive investments such as providing foreign aid to allies and increasing military expenditures and fewer resources to productive sectors of the economy. Thus, the economic costs of maintaining the condition of equilibrium tends to rise faster than the growth of the financial capacity of the state. Finally, this process results in a fiscal crisis and the eventual decline of the dominant power (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 156-158). This way a new disequilibrium-adjustment-equilibrium cycle begins, and new rivalries emerge for the domination of the system. Even though there are peaceful as well as conflictual ways of resolving the crisis in the system, throughout history the general tendency in overcoming the systemic disequilibrium has been “hegemonic war”.

Gilpin defines hegemony in relation to empires and argues that as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution hegemonic cycles replaced cycles of empires. Similar to empires, hegemons organize the political, economic and territorial aspects of international systems in line with their own interests, but unlike empires, they provide benefits to other states as well. In other words, even though the rules and rights governing the system mainly reflect the interests of hegemonic power, the hegemon, in return, provides public goods to other states that are eager to participate in and benefit from the system. This way hegemons can get the support of other states and legitimate the international system dominated by them (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 144-145).

In line with the process described above, as the contradiction between the distribution of power and the hierarchy of prestige intensifies the international political system destabilizes and goes into a crisis. The system in crisis then, creates challenges for the dominant power and opportunities for the rising potential challengers. To benefit from the opportunity created by the disequilibrium, the rising power challenges the existing system and thus the imperial or hegemonic state. In response, the dominant power tries to overcome the threat posed by the challenger. Hegemonic power may follow two possible policies for restoring stability. It may either increase the share of resources allocated to maintaining the status quo or reduce its commitments in such a way that makes no harm to its dominant position in the system. If it fails to achieve the intended outcomes, then the system becomes ripe for rivalry, conflict and crises, which will, in the end, most likely be resolved through a hegemonic war (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 186-197).

A hegemonic war can be described as the final stage in the rivalry between the challenger and the hegemon. Since these are two of the most powerful states in the system, these wars are characterized by their totality, unlimitedness and intensity. Hegemonic wars are total in that almost all states, both major and minor, actively take part in the war. In other words, these are “world” wars. Furthermore, since the aim of warring parties is to take the control of the international system, all the necessary means (economic, political, military and ideological) are used in these wars. Finally, the warfare technologies employed in these wars are state of the art technology products of their eras. Because of that hegemonic wars are characterized by their high intensity and long duration. Due to their totality, unlimitedness and intensity these wars are zero-sum games in which one’s gain is another’s loss. For that reason, albeit Pyrrhic victories in which both sides exhaust themselves, the general tendency is that the end of a hegemonic war designates the victor and hence the new rule maker of the international system. In other words, almost always the aftermath of such a war represents a new stable system based on the new international power distribution and the rules and rights that are compatible with this distribution (Gilpin, 1994, pp. 198-201).

Finally, Gilpin asks the question whether hegemonic wars will still be the main mechanism in resolving disputes among great powers in the nuclear age. In other words, is the time ripe for replacing hegemonic wars with peaceful ways? For him, “peaceful international change appears to be most feasible when it involves changes *in* an international system and to be most difficult when it involves change *of* an international system” (Gilpin, 1994, p. 208). Furthermore, following E. H. Carr, he claims that peace is not humankind’s highest desire and people have given more value to other interests. That’s why, without shared values and interests the objective of replacing hegemonic wars with peaceful mechanisms of change does not seem to be achieved, even in the nuclear age (Gilpin, 1994, p. 209).

2.1.1.2 Offensive Realism and Great Power Rivalry

Another realist contributor to the issue of hegemonic rivalry and war among great powers is John J. Mearsheimer. His book, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, focuses on hegemonic rivalry between great powers and the mechanisms and policies adopted by these powers in achieving their objectives. Unlike Gilpin, Mearsheimer is a structural realist who aims to find universal regularities and scientific ways of interpreting international politics. In other words, he has an intention to find “laws” in world politics.

Mearsheimer follows most of the main assumptions of structural realism. His primary contribution to the field of International Relations, a theory of offensive realism, is based on five bedrock assumptions, which are derived from Waltz’s static structural realism. First, the ordering principle of the international system is anarchy. Namely there is no world government to regulate the system. Second, all states and especially great powers possess offensive military capabilities and thus are potential threats to each other. Third, since no state can ever be sure that another state will never use its offensive military forces against others, states are always sceptical of other state’s intentions. Fourth, although states pursue a number of different goals, the central aim is to survive. Finally, in order to achieve the goal of survival in an anarchic system, great powers act rationally. So much so that they pay attention to behaviours and preferences of other states and act accordingly. Taken separately,

these assumptions do not necessarily enforce states to act aggressively against each other. However, when taken together, they cause great powers to design and pursue aggressive policies towards others (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 30-32, 2004, p. 1).

Since there is no watchman to maintain peace and security in the international system, states are responsible for their own security and survival. So, the anarchic structure of the existing international system causes states to fear from each other. In order to conquer fear, Mearsheimer claims, states try to maximize their power. In other words, the primary way of guaranteeing their own survival in a self-help world is to pursue policies that increase their power relative to other states. The policy of power maximization necessarily creates security dilemma between great powers. The anarchic international system is a zero-sum game where one's gain is another's loss. Therefore, once a state starts building up its military capabilities, other states fear that their relative power positions will be diminished in the future and thus respond by strengthening their own military capabilities. In the end, this process turns out to be a vicious cycle of power accumulation. However, these assumptions do not imply that states never cooperate with each other. In case of necessity states may form alliances with others, but these cooperative attitudes are interim remedies. When the necessity is over, alliances are dissolved. Hence, since cooperation is temporal states always seek for opportunities to be the most powerful state in the system (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 32-36, 2004, p. 1).

Even though all states pursue a policy of power maximization, since achieving that goal is a costly endeavour, not all states are capable of becoming the most powerful of all states. In Mearsheimer's terminology, power is defined as material capabilities possessed by states and so is not defined in relation to other states and outcomes. Moreover, even though he accepts the importance of non-material factors such as strategy, intelligence and weather conditions in winning a battle, his definition of power does not cover non-material aspects like prestige. So, only tangible assets that are possessed by countries are counted in measuring the balance of power among states. In this regard, the main material bases of power are a state's population and wealth. These are vital in building military forces, and the more a state becomes populous and acquires large amounts of wealth, the mightier its military might

become. To become a great power, a state needs to have a strong and large military. In other words, underpopulated states cannot become great powers. Although both population and wealth are important components, Mearsheimer takes only wealth in measuring power because just as a big army needs a large population, a strong economy needs a populous state (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 55-61).

At this point Mearsheimer makes a distinction between latent power and effective power. While the former represents the power potential of a state, the latter is equivalent to its existing military forces. Historical record of world politics shows that sometimes wealthy states do not acquire large and strong armies, even when they have large economies and resources to support such an army. There are three main reasons why latent power is not equated with effective power. First, each state converts a different proportion of its resources into military force. Some great powers prefer to allocate an important share of their wealth into military might whereas others do not consider building up their militaries useful just because doing so would not improve their power position in the system. Even worse, spending more on armaments, which are unproductive investments may do great harm to a state's economy and thereby, weaken its material base. Second, different levels of efficiency in converting resources to military power are also effective in achieving success in military build-ups. A great power with an advantage in latent power may not be as effective in producing a stronger military might as another great power with a weaker latent power base. Finally, great powers may acquire different kinds of military equipment. A state may possess a large army with little power projection capabilities, whereas another may have a smaller army with high levels of power projection capabilities. In short, wealth is an important indicator when assessing a state's power, but it shouldn't be equated with military power (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 75-82). For Mearsheimer, to survive a nuclear attack in the nuclear age, in addition to strong conventional military forces great powers must also acquire nuclear weapons. Today, in the realm of great powers conventional military forces have a limited deterrence capacity unless supported with nuclear weapons. In other words, in the nuclear era states without nuclear military powers are not counted as great powers (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 5).

As stated above, to feel safe great powers always try to maximize their power and become the strongest state in the international system. In Mearsheimer's words, for a great power "the ideal situation is to be the hegemon in the system" (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 34). Until hegemony is reached no state can be sure of its survival. For that reason, except for the global hegemon, all states in the international system are revisionist powers. To put it another way, until achieving global hegemony states are never satisfied with the existing balance of power in the system and always look for opportunities to change the power distribution to their advantage. To achieve hegemony, if the benefits of doing so are higher than the costs, states may even resort to force. If the price is not reasonable at a time, great powers wait for the right time to come, but never abandon their revisionist intentions. On the other hand, if the conditions are not ripe for changing the power balance, then states try to prevent others from improving their power positions and thereby, defend the existing power distribution (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 2-3; 2004, pp. 1-2; 2010, p. 387).

According to Mearsheimer, notwithstanding global hegemony being the ultimate desire for all states in the system, throughout history no state has had the capacity to dominate the globe because of the difficulty of controlling distant lands separated with large bodies of water. Today, the only possibility of achieving global hegemony is having nuclear superiority over other great powers. However, this does not seem to be a feasible option since other great powers also possess large numbers of nuclear weapons. Due to that great powers primarily seek regional hegemony. This has also been a rare phenomenon. Although there have been a number of potential regional hegemon throughout the modern history, only the US could dominate its region of the world. In other words, there has only been one regional hegemon in modern times. As the US experience suggests, regional hegemon try to prevent other great powers from dominating another key region of the globe, so that there will be no other hegemonic power to threaten a regional hegemon by causing trouble in its backyard. To that end, the best strategy for preventing rival powers from gaining regional hegemony is to support other states in that region of the world. Namely, regional hegemon prefer a balance of power among two or more great powers in another region. Therefore, only a great power that is much wealthier economically and stronger militarily than other local great powers can surpass others

and become a regional hegemon (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 140-143; 2004, p. 2; 2010, p. 388). In short, “since no state is likely to achieve global hegemony... the world is condemned to perpetual great power competition” (Mearsheimer, 2001, p 2).

In achieving the objectives of gaining regional hegemony and preventing others to become one, great powers may pursue a number of different strategies: war, blackmail, bait and bleed, bloodletting, balancing, buck-passing, appeasement and bandwagoning. These strategies can be distinguished into three categories. The first four are for gaining power, the fifth and sixth ones are for checking aggressors, and the final two are for avoiding dangerous rivals. Mearsheimer opposes the claim that the main alternative policies adopted by threatened great powers are bandwagoning and balancing. Instead, he argues that since the aggressor state gains more than the bandwagoning state, bandwagoning is not a suitable option. Therefore, in a realist world, viable alternative strategies for threatened great powers are balancing and buck-passing. Just because in balancing the threatened state needs to share at least a part of the costs of deterring an opponent, but not in buck-passing, great powers mainly prefer to buck-pass and let other great powers balance the aggressor. Regional hegemons principally act in this way and prefer local great powers to take the lead in balancing a potential hegemon. However, if local great powers cannot be successful in containing the aggressor state, then the regional hegemon may step in and take measures in balancing the challenger through either creating diplomatic channels, building a defensive alliance and supporting it as an “external balancer” or acting as an “internal balancer” by allocating additional resources (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 138-167, 237). The success of each of these measures depends on the circumstances.

Great powers sometimes succeed in preventing hegemons without resorting to war, but at other times great power war may become the only option in settling the matter. Even if the anarchic structure of the international system is an important cause of war, since it is a constant it should not be counted as the only one. Another important reason of why security competition at times results in a great power war is the power distribution between leading powers. Bipolarity, balanced multipolarity and unbalanced multipolarity are the three main ways of organizing the international

system. According to Mearsheimer, bipolarity is the least war prone structure, whereas unbalanced multipolarity is the most, and balanced multipolarity is in between. Because only two states with similar military capabilities dominate the system in bipolarity, maintaining stability is easier in such systems. Furthermore, in bipolar structures great power wars occur rarely and almost always involve only one of the great powers. Unbalanced multipolarity is the opposite of bipolarity and the most war prone structure. Here, there is an unbalanced relationship between three or more great powers with one of them having the strongest army and the greatest wealth. Since power is distributed unevenly among an aspiring hegemon and several other great powers, these powers frequently engage in long and costly system wide wars. In balanced multipolarity in which three or more great powers balance each other, occasionally non-system wide great power wars occur. Since two or at most three great powers take part in such wars, they are not as intense, costly and long as system wide wars (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 334-338).

In brief, as representatives of realism, both Gilpin and Mearsheimer follow similar assumptions of realist thinking. For them, rational states are the main actors in the self-help world where there is no overarching power to regulate the anarchic nature of the international system. Thus, states are responsible for their own survival and act accordingly. Furthermore, as followers of a problem-solving theory, both scholars value stability of the existing world order rather than change, and try to resolve problems the US, as the only (regional) hegemon in the system is faced with. Notwithstanding similarities in their ideas on the nature of the international system, these realist thinkers differ in many other respects. First, in defining power, Gilpin follows a more generic term that includes both material and non-material aspects, whereas Mearsheimer focuses only on material capabilities. Accordingly, while Gilpin considers the importance of legitimacy and takes the concept of hegemony as the leadership of a great power followed by others, Mearsheimer defines it as the dominance of one state over others. Furthermore, whilst Mearsheimer rejects the possibility of global hegemony and unipolarity, Gilpin accepts such possibility. Finally, since Gilpin refuses deterministic realist claims that states always look for opportunities to maximize their power, Mearsheimer's offensive theory, which suggests that states always look for opportunities to maximize their power, is at odds

with Gilpin. Despite these important differences among the approaches of Gilpin and Mearsheimer, they both share the belief that even in the nuclear era, the hegemonic rivalry among great powers is not over and great power wars are not far-fetched.

2.1.1.3 China's Rise in a Realist World: A Threat to the Existing System?

Despite differences in their analysis on how the world operates realist scholars mainly view the international system as a zero-sum game in which one's gain is another's loss. Therefore, they are referred to as pessimists, especially by liberal scholars. Still, there are also optimist realists who pay regard to the prospect of peaceful change in the international system (Glaser, 2011).⁶

For many (pessimist) realist thinkers, China is the primary contender state in the international system. Although some scholars regard Russia and India as other challenger powers (Ahrari, 2011; Ndkarni, 2010), since the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s China has been considered as the only aspiring (regional) hegemon with the potential capacity to challenge the existing US dominated international system. Despite China's official rhetoric of "peaceful rise/development" and "harmonious world order" realists believe that post-2008 assertive Chinese foreign policy, especially towards the East and South China Seas, is the real indicator of China's future revisionist intentions (Christensen, 2001, pp. 7-9, 2015, pp. 30-34; Friedberg, 2005, pp. 17-18; Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 372-401; Swaine, 2010, pp. 2-4; Wang, Y-K, 2001, pp. 191-209).

According to Mearsheimer, for the moment, the system in Asia is a balanced multipolarity. However, if China manages to have relatively high economic growth rates, then in the coming years this structure will be transformed into an unbalanced multipolarity, in which China will become the potential regional hegemon. Within this scope, Mearsheimer argues, in line with the arguments of offensive realism, that

⁶ In this article, which focuses on the rise of China and its relations with the US, Glaser rejects the standard deterministic claim that China's rise will end up in an intense competition and eventually lead to a war between the US and China. For him, rather than systemic pressures, the way the interaction among these two powers is managed will determine the future of their relationship.

China is going to follow the US experience and try to change the power distribution in its own region by maximizing the power gap between itself and other rivals in Asia. When the price of changing the status quo will be reasonable, it is going to attempt to alter the existing international system. To achieve that objective, Beijing will follow a two-phased strategy. First, it will strive to dominate Asia. To attain that goal, Mearsheimer claims, similar to the Japanese Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Beijing will probably declare a Chinese version of the Monroe Doctrine and try to keep the US military away from Asia. If successful, China will then challenge the US in other parts of the world (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 381, 387, 396-401; 2004, pp. 2-4; 2010, pp. 389-390).

For Mearsheimer, to prevent China from dominating Asia, since waging a preventive war against or slowing down the economic growth of China are not feasible strategies for the US, the optimal strategy is to pursue a policy of containment. Because of regional proximity, for most Asian states China is more threatening than the US. Hence, Mearsheimer predicts, China's Asian neighbours, including India, Japan and Russia, will join their forces with the US to form a balancing coalition under the leadership of the latter to contain China's rise and stop it from achieving regional hegemony. In such a case, the ideal situation for the US would be to buck-pass the costs of containing China to its neighbouring states and act as an offshore balancer. Despite the fact that both China and its rivals such as the US, Russia and India are nuclear powers, Mearsheimer does not rule out the possibility of great power war involving China and other great power(s). Due to the existence of a number of potential hotspots in Asia, the growing importance of nationalism in the region and the possibility of an unbalanced multipolarity of the system, a great power war may break out in the coming decades. In short, for him, China cannot rise peacefully, and if it is going to be successful in achieving hegemony, that process will definitely be a conflictual one (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 401-402; 2004, pp. 4-5; 2010, pp. 382, 390-391, 2014).

Many other realists follow a similar line with Mearsheimer, but with some reservations. In a 2001 article, Thomas Christensen argues that China need not become a peer competitor to challenge the US, especially in Asia. In the coming two

to three decades, China seemingly will follow a realistic strategy of increasing its military capabilities to gain control over most regional powers, to achieve peer competitor or near peer competitor status with other regional great powers and to punish US forces in case they are to involve in core issues vital to China such as Taiwan. Unlike Mearsheimer, however, Christensen asserts that perceptions matter greatly in international politics, and on core sovereignty issues, in particular, balance of interests may have a greater importance than balance of power. Because of that, if the US can reassure China that it has no intention of challenging the existing status quo and at the same time convince leaders in Beijing that it will not allow Chinese attempts to challenge the status quo, then there may be room for preventing a military clash between the two leading powers (Christensen, 2001, pp. 7-38). Still, according to Christensen, China poses two main challenges to the US: in Asia as a potential destabilizer, and in the international system, in general, as a great power to be incorporated to multilateral global governance. However, especially in the post-2008 Global Financial Crisis period, primarily because of China's aggressive behaviours, the relationship between the two states deteriorated compared to the early 2000s (Christensen, 2015, pp. 28-36).

Michael Mastanduno explains the importance of the financial crisis in changing the character of the Sino-US relationship by claiming that in the post-Cold War era the two states made a tacit agreement or a grand bargain that was in the benefit of both sides in economic and security terms. Economically, while China benefited enormously from foreign trade especially with the US, the importance of the grand bargain for the leading power was to maintain the dominant position of the US dollar and to finance the US debt. Furthermore, in order for China to continue its "peaceful development" it needed a stable environment in East Asia. The US, on the other hand, tried to overcome the dilemma of interdependency. That is to say, similar to the Japanese experience in the post-Second World War era, in order to transform China into a "responsible stakeholder", the US followed a policy of engaging China into the liberal world order. So, China could act "responsibly" and accept the leadership of the US in world affairs. However, the post-2008 crisis period revealed that China was a difficult case. Furthermore, as argued by Gilpin, prestige is an important component of hegemony and when the international

hierarchy of prestige is not compatible with the balance of power, the process of change occurs incrementally. Yet, a shock may work as a catalyst for change. Within this framework, as the Chinese reaction to the crisis seemed to work better than the recipes implemented by the US, and the Chinese economy continued its high growth performance, a number of changes occurred both in the hierarchy of prestige and the balance of power. Thus, the 2008 crisis worked as an accelerator to end the grand bargain between the US and China. In the end, the era of stability gave way to the era of dangerous transformation. However, this does not mean that an alliance to contain China and a great power war is on the way. According to Mastanduno, contra Mearsheimer's arguments, even the US' closest allies in Asia will not join a coalition to balance China. The most feasible strategy for them is "hedging" because they both welcome the US involvement in the region and want to gain from the benefits provided by China (Mastanduno, 2014, pp. 163-190). The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Belt and Road Initiative set two good examples of this issue. Even the US' closest allies, including the United Kingdom (UK), Australia and Canada, welcome China's such attempts to foster connectedness throughout Eurasia and try to get maximum benefit from the opportunities provided by China (Feigenbaum, 2017, pp. 33-38).

In short, pessimist realists believe that assertive and proactive Chinese foreign policy, especially in the post-2008 period, are indicators of China's future intention of challenging the US leadership and establishing hegemony at least in the East Asian region. Turbulent times are on the horizon in the realist world.

2.1.2 Neoliberal Institutionalism and Stability After Hegemony

Changes in the power distribution of the international system during the 1970s, especially the decrease in the relative power of the US, sparked a debate among IR scholars about the future of the existing system. As mentioned above, according to the proponents of hegemonic stability, if the US, as the stabilizer of the international system, would lose its hegemonic position, the system would destabilize, and a new round of hegemonic rivalry could begin. However, some other scholars, referred to as neoliberal institutionalists, rejected this claim and stated that due to changes in the

way the system was organized in the post-Second World War period the world entered a new era of complex interdependence in which military, economic, social and environmental relationships are interwoven. Because of this mutual interdependence, cooperation among states and thus stability and peaceful change could be maintained even after the decline of hegemony. Two of the most famous proponents of this opinion, Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, believe that liberal and realist traditions are complementary and should be integrated. In order to synthesize a number of aspects of these approaches, Keohane and Nye take several assumptions of structural realism as valid, but at the same time try to move beyond the weaknesses of it with a multidimensional approach to world politics that combines a number of analytical research programmes (Keohane, 1981, p. 191; Keohane & Nye, 2012, pp. xx-xxi).

With such an objective, this modified structural research programme is grounded on three main assumptions that are mainly derived from, but at the same time go beyond, structural realism. First, in line with realism, it accepts states as the main actors in the system, but not the only actors to place emphasis on. It also regards non-state actors, intergovernmental organizations and transnational and trans-governmental relations as important players in the system (Keohane, 1981, pp. 192-193). Second, even so the rationality assumption is kept in this modified research programme it is not taken as the idealised form of classical rationality. Although states make calculations to maximize expected gains, decisions are not taken under conditions of perfect information. Since collecting information is a costly endeavour states can make cost-benefit analysis only under limited information (Keohane, 1981, p. 194, 1984, pp. 110-112). Third, while still considering power and influence as important state interests this research programme dissents from the idea that the search for power is the overriding interest at all times. Different systemic conditions may cause states to identify their interests differently. Furthermore, not all types of power resources are suitable for achieving objectives in all different issue-areas. For example, while a state may possess powerful military forces, it may not use them in achieving a set of objectives in trade related matters. Thus, a type of power resource can be used effectively only in ‘policy-contingency frameworks’ that are suitable for it (Keohane, 1981, p. 194; Keohane & Nye, 2012, pp. 14-16). In other words,

unlike realism, no distinction is made between high and low politics, and problems are considered mainly in their own issue-areas (Keohane & Nye, 2012, p. 22).

Interdependence refers to reciprocal effects among actors that can be beneficial as well as harmful. Namely, just because interdependence restricts autonomy of actors, these relationships involve costly transactions as well. The equilibrium between costs and benefits of a relationship depends on the nature of the relationship. Furthermore, interdependent relationships lie in between situations of either evenly balanced or asymmetric mutual dependences. Since pure symmetry and pure dependence are exceptional situations, political bargaining processes that reflect power asymmetries determine the cost-benefit calculations of actors. Thus, here, power is defined in terms of asymmetrical interdependence where the less dependent actor has a power advantage relative to the more dependent side. In short, interdependencies are not always mutually beneficial relationships. Furthermore, rising interdependence among actors does not necessarily imply that cooperation will prevail over discord (Keohane & Nye, 2012, pp. xxvii, 5).

An important contribution of this research programme to the study of world politics is its emphasis on international institutions, procedures and rules, named as international regimes. Through a structural interpretation of these governing arrangements, neoliberal institutionalists aim to reveal how these regimes enable and strengthen the cooperation among self-interested, egoistic states. In analysing the likelihood of cooperation under mutual interdependence, on top of the assumption that states are not the only important actors, neoliberal institutionalists also assume that security is not always the fundamental goal, and instruments other than military force are also useful for states in achieving their objectives (Keohane & Nye, 2012, pp. xxx, 7-9). These three assumptions are closely related with the characteristics of complex interdependence: existence of multiple channels of contact between societies, absence of clear hierarchies among issues, and a minor role for military force. In the era of complex interdependence, societies are not connected only through interstate relations as in the realist world, but also through trans-governmental and transnational relations. Through these links governments have become more sensitive to policies introduced by other governments. By blurring the

distinction between domestic and external affairs and establishing more diverse foreign relations agendas for states, this increased sensitivity eliminates clear cut hierarchies among issues like security vs. others. The question of solving multiple domestic and foreign issues simultaneously creates the problem of establishing sensible and coherent foreign policies, which increases the necessity for building coalitions both within and across governments. With the absence of clear hierarchy among issues, the importance of military force relative to other power resources has decreased. Despite the direct use of military force for achieving both security and non-security related issues still being an option, in the post-Second World War period fears of attack especially among industrialized nations have declined, and at the same time due to the developments in military technology the destructive potentials of (both conventional and nuclear) military forces have increased so much that the costs of military confrontation substantially increased. Moreover, using force in non-security related issues against sovereign states may escalate tensions in other mutually beneficial relationships. Therefore, forcing other actors in achieving non-security goals may turn out to be costly (Keohane & Nye, 2012, pp. xxiii, 20-24).

In a world of complex interdependence where security matters are not dominant as in a realist world and multiple issues are closely, but imperfectly linked to each other, and trans-governmental and transnational relations create sensitivity in interactions among governments the quality, quantity and distribution of information plays an important role in managing intergovernmental relationships. In such a situation, by providing opportunities for representatives from different states to share information, ease tensions, establish norms and procedures, form coalitions and pursue linkage strategies, international institutions may play an important role in the processes of political bargaining (Keohane & Nye, 2012, pp. 29-30). In other words, by enhancing cooperation international organizations help governments to achieve their self-interests (Keohane, 1984, p. 246).

In explaining cooperation and stability in international political economic systems, Keohane and Nye focus on the concept of hegemony. As mentioned above, realist scholars conceptualize hegemony as the dominance of one great power over others.

Keohane and Nye, on the other hand, by following the definition made by Fred Hirsch and Michael Doyle, identify hegemonic leadership as a mixture of cooperation and control since such a definition incorporates coercion with consent. In his analysis of the world political economy, Keohane highlights mainly economic power rather than military power, and focuses on international regimes and organizations established under the leadership of the US, whereas Nye stresses the importance of smart power, which combines soft power (economic, cultural and ideological aspects) with military power, as the most effective use of power in achieving the intended outcomes (Keohane, 1984, pp. 135-216; Nye, 2004, 2011). Furthermore, unlike the realist thinking that military power dominates all other power resources and thus can be effective in achieving all objectives, Keohane and Nye state that high politics do not dominate low politics and changes in military power do not always explain changes in international economic relations. Thus, an issue-specific analysis is more helpful in understanding which power resource is effective in which issue-area (Keohane & Nye, 2012, p. 39).

According to Keohane, while hegemonic stability theory, differentiated by issue-area, is helpful in explaining cooperation under the leadership of hegemonic powers, it is not as useful in understanding the persistence of cooperation in a post-hegemonic era. Contrary to the hegemonic stability thinking that non-hegemonic periods are conflictual, and stability and cooperation can only be achieved under the guidance of hegemonic powers, Keohane claims that international regimes and institutions established during a hegemonic period can survive in post-hegemonic eras as well. In order to maintain a mutually beneficial environment and overcome uncertainty and prospect for discord as hegemonic powers decline, international actors may demand for the existence of international regimes. However, since international institutions reflect the distribution of power in the system, in line with the new distribution of power, these institutions can be reformed to reflect the new situation (Keohane, 1984, pp. 180-184, 215-216). Accordingly, “after hegemony, regimes may become potentially more important as means of limiting uncertainty and promoting mutually beneficial agreements” (Keohane, 1984, p. 181). In short, Keohane claims that in the initial stage of creating an order a strong hegemonic state is more successful than a non-hegemonic state. Yet, once established, international

regimes can achieve the objective of maintaining cooperation and stability even in the absence of hegemony. However, in the absence of both the likelihood of cooperation is low (Keohane, 1984, p. 240).

In brief, as a research programme that focuses on peaceful change, neoliberal institutionalism supports the claim that due to the increasing prospects for cooperation in the world political economy the possibility of peaceful change has risen in the last four or so decades. As mutual economic activities among nations increase, they integrate with the world economy more intensely and therefore focus more on reciprocal gains and common interests and less on their isolated self-interests. Hence, states that engage more actively with the outside world are more inclined to mutual interests, peaceful relationships and cooperation and less so to self-interests, power politics and conflict. Regional, international and transnational/trans-governmental institutions, regimes and organizations play an important part in enhancing cooperation among nations. These institutions help states to overcome the problem of obscurity about the intentions of other states and create a more mutually beneficial and peaceful international environment by creating rules and processes governing the interactions among nations, providing an environment for increasing contact both among states as well as among states and non-state actors. They also reduce uncertainty about other states' intentions via information sharing opportunities, and so build trust among states sceptical of each other. Another important advantage of becoming a part of these organizations for a state is to gain prestige and improve its image, thereby earning trust.

2.1.2.1 China's Rise in an Interdependent World: A Status Quo Power Emerging?

In line with the above mentioned neoliberal institutionalist thinking, most liberals can be regarded as optimists on the issue of China's rise and the likelihood of peaceful change in world politics. For these scholars, especially when compared with the revisionist Maoist China, China's creative and multilateral foreign policy implemented in the second half of the 1990s and in the 2000s shows its eagerness to

participate in the system and become a part of it as a “responsible” stakeholder or a status quo power.

Alastair I. Johnston states that it is still too early to label China as a status quo or a revisionist state. For him, such identification of China follows two assumptions: (i) the existence of an international community that (ii) shares common norms and values. He resists such identification and claims that “the orthodox rising-power-as-revisionist argument does not really help to explain the totality of China’s diplomacy” (Johnston, 2003, p. 10). Complaining about the under-theorization of concepts of “the status quo state” and “the revisionist state” in the field, Johnston identifies five indicators to define a state as status quo or revisionist. These indicators are “participation rates in international institutions”, “degree of compliance with international norms”, “behaviour towards the “rules of the game””, “revisionist preferences and the distribution of power”, and “revisionist behaviour and the distribution of power” (Johnston, 2003, pp. 8-22).

The history of China’s relations with international and regional institutions can be divided into four main phases. The first is the Maoist period when Chinese leaders were suspicious about the intentions of such institutions and thus avoided being a part of them. Back then, due to China’s isolation and lack of recognition by many states, the Communist Party of China (CPC) regarded international institutions and regimes as tools of Western imperialism that aimed at dominating the international system and undermine the communist revolution. However, initial change occurred in the early-1970s first with the Sino-US rapprochement and China’s membership of the UN, and later on with the policy of opening-up and reform. At the beginning of the 1980s, China incrementally started to participate in international institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). When compared with the previous era, since these three institutions can be regarded as the pioneers of the liberal economic order, these steps reflected a sea change in China’s attitude towards the outside world and international institutions. The third phase in the institutional engagement was the post-Tiananmen era which started in the early years of the 1990s. This period witnessed both the establishment of a number of new institutions and regimes in Asia as well as China’s integration into them. To

overcome the post-Tiananmen isolation and embargo implemented mainly by Western states, China reacted positively to the engagement policy of its neighbours in Asia and took steps towards integrating into both regional and global institutions and regimes. During this stage, especially after the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997/98, China progressively participated in and deepened its relations with regional institutions and regimes like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Plus Three and the Chiang Mai Initiative and with international and global institutions and regimes such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Zangger Committee on nuclear export control. As a result, its neighbouring states increasingly viewed China as a status quo power contributing to stability and development in the region (Andornino, 2010, pp. 95-100; He & Feng, 2012, p. 639; Johnston, 2003, pp. 12-25; Lantaigne, 2005, pp. 145-146; Shambaugh, 2004/05, pp. 63-77). Chinese attitude to regional and international institutions and regimes was so active, creative and multilateral that “During the 1990s, China became overinvolved in international organizations for its level of development” (Johnston, 2003, p. 13). As China realized the benefits of engaging with the outside world, it has started another stage of engagement in the 2000s. To improve its position, primarily in Asia but also in other parts of the world, China started establishing new regional and international organizations and initiatives such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, the BRICS grouping and the New Development Bank, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and the AIIB. These institutions can be seen as reflections of China’s material and soft powers. For Lantaigne, by improving its place in the region via its leadership position in these regimes China aims to improve its position in the region as well as in the world (2005, p. 146).

Despite increase in the number of regional institutions in Asia, it is claimed that these are “thin” and partly informal institutions that are not capable of limiting participants and creating “a more rule-governed or peaceful order” (Haggard, 2014, p. 52). This feature of East Asian institutions, termed the “ASEAN Way” of interstate relations based on consensus-building and informality (Acharya, 2001, pp. 1-8), undermines the ability of regional institutions to restrict state actions and

achieve fundamental solutions to conflicts (Johnston, 2012, pp. 63-64). However, Erik Ringmar states that such criticism reflects a Eurocentric and Westphalian view of institution building that does not pay regard to the unique characteristics of the East Asian region. In other words, the dominance of Westphalian system presentism and Eurocentrism obscures the influence of other formal international systems for policy making and implementation in different parts of the world, East Asia being one of them (Ringmar, 2012, p. 1). Hence the critiques of the “ASEAN Way” cannot explain the high-level of acceptance of the norm of non-interference in domestic affairs of other states, a waning of the role of violence and conflict, and a rise in conflict management mechanisms and thus the peaceful environment in the region in the post-Cold War era (Johnston, 2012, p. 65).

It can be argued that engagement with international institutions is a necessary, but an insufficient condition for status quo behaviour, and compliance with and acceptance of the norms and rules of these institutions is another important indicator. While it is quite hard to state that there is a coherent set of international norms and rules that speaks for the international community, Johnston states that China’s stance towards a number of norms such as sovereignty, free trade and non-proliferation and arms control can be regarded as positive and compatible with the institutions it has engaged with, especially when compared with the previous revolutionary Maoist era (Johnston, 2003, pp. 13-25). In other words, throughout the post-Cold War era, it can be claimed that in general, China played by the rules of the game.

As indicated in the previous section, numerous scholars and policy analysts claim that China has revisionist preferences to change the distribution of power in the international system to establish its hegemony in the region and that the multipolarity discourse among Chinese elites is an indicator thereof. Some even argue that China follows a policy of balancing the US in Asia and has built up its military since the mid-1990s to achieve that goal. However, it is hard to find clear cut evidence for such claims. First, Johnston argues, it is hard to find evidence of a Chinese grand strategy for creating hegemony in the region. Second, the multipolarity debate is a problematic indicator for measuring China’s revisionism since it does not necessarily call for challenging the status quo. Third, even though

China increased its military expenditures incrementally in the last 20 or so years, these increases cannot be directly regarded as a balancing behaviour against the US, especially if the huge military capability gap between these states is taken into account. Furthermore, since the Sino-Soviet split China's stance against military alliances is negative, and in the official discourse alliances are regarded as reflections of the "Cold War mentality". Finally, China is so engaged with the US and the world economy and this interdependence is so crucial for its development that it does not seem likely that China is going to challenge the existing system. This would cause major issues to its economy and therefore, to the legitimacy of the CPC (Beeson, 2013, pp. 238-239; Johnston, 2003, pp. 25-48). In short, even though no one can be quite sure that China has no intention of altering the power distribution in the region and the world, at least for the moment there is no palpable evidence of China's revisionist behaviours.

This is still the case in the post-2008 Global Financial Crisis period. Unlike the above mentioned realist claims that after the crisis China has left its status quo oriented foreign policy of the past thirty years and follows an assertive and proactive policy, especially in its immediate neighbourhood, to challenge the US leadership and interests, there is not much change in Chinese foreign policy and "there is no obvious pattern of new assertiveness" (Johnston, 2013, p. 14). Such realist claims, according to Johnston, are ahistorical and thus unconnected with the past. To overcome this weakness, a historical comparative analysis is needed (2013). Following such an analysis, Edward S. Steinfeld claims that China is not a rule maker but a rule taker:

The bottom line is that China is today growing not by writing its own rules but instead by internalizing the rules of the advanced industrial West... In essence, China today... is doing something it historically never really did before. It is playing our game (Steinfeld, 2010, p. 18).

John Ikenberry joins the fray by claiming that China does not only face with the US, but with the Western-centred international order, which is an easy to join in order. Notwithstanding the fact that China has become a part of the system since the late 1970s it still has not gained full access to the system. If one day it will choose to do so, then such integration will turn out to be a win-win situation. If not, then a rivalry

among the US, or the Western world and China may emerge. Even if China may someday surpass the US as the richest and strongest nation in the world, when compared with the Western world it does not seem possible that China will overtake the West as a whole and thus will not have the sufficient power to challenge it. However, such a refusal to full integration will have costly consequences for both sides (2008). That's why the US needs to enhance international institutions and the rules governing the system and "make it so expensive and so institutionalized that China has no choice but to become a full-fledged member of it" (2008, p. 37).

In short, unlike realist claims and fears about a conflictual hegemonic transition among China and the US, a historical analysis from a liberal perspective does not support such a claim. Furthermore, a Chinese hegemony resembling the British and US examples does not seem on the horizon either, at least in the short run (Beeson, 2009, pp. 95-112, 2013, p. 246; Beeson & Xu, 2016, pp. 171-173). Therefore, if it is going to happen, transition may happen differently from the previous times (Ikenberry, 2008).

2.2 Conclusion

Claiming that the rapidly rising status of China in the international system is the most outstanding development of the 21st century would not be an exaggeration. At a time when the mainstream US academia was quite sure about the invincibility of the US power and polity, China, with its state-centric development model and authoritarian system of government, emerged as an alternative powerhouse that could challenge the US-centred world system. As to be expected, this development sparked an intense debate in the US academia about the "phenomenon of China". In this context, this chapter, by focusing on postclassical and structural realist and neoliberal institutionalist approaches, provided an analysis on how these theories conceptualise hegemony, hegemony-building processes and the relationship between an existing hegemon and a (potential) challenger and accordingly, evaluate China-US relations. This way, it revealed both the position mainstream US IR scholars hold in the power-knowledge nexus and the Western- and even US-centric nature of their thinking.

The case of mainstream US IR knowledge production is, indeed, a paragon of the nexus among power and knowledge in the world. These theories are closely related to the relationship between the US state and academia. Therefore, the primary goal of these approaches is to produce knowledge with the intention of providing solutions for the US state in facing its problems. In other words, these theories are part of the established power and social relationships and accordingly, try to overcome the problems the existing world order faces with by enabling prevailing social and power relations to function uneventfully (Cox, 1981, p. 128). In this context, realism can be regarded as “the conservative ideology of the exercise of modern state power: it provides a terminology of international relations which dramatizes the dilemmas, legitimizes the priorities and rehearses the means of *realpolitik*” (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 30). This is also true for liberalism. Despite its claim to be an alternative view to the realist thinking in IR, in fact, neoliberal institutionalism shares almost the same assumptions and hence, occupies a similar position with realism in understanding the world. In other words, the so-called first great debate in IR was not a debate on what the world is and how to evaluate it. Therefore, idealism and realism never really broke away from each other and they differentiate only in their policies not in their epistemologies (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 29) and ontologies.

Their claim to universal validity is definitely not a valid argument, but an ideological claim. Like all past and present world orders and approaches generated to comprehend and explain these orders, realist and neoliberal approaches are historically specific. Put differently, social and political orders are historical products of human beings that change in time. Supposing social structures as ever present seems to give increased precision in explaining the way the world operates. However, this is not the case and contrarily, the belief in fixity results in an inability to explain change. That’s why claims to universality result in ahistoricism. In other words, rather than being universally valid, these are ahistorical approaches incapable of explaining historical change. This is not just a methodological problem, but also closely related to mainstream IR theories’ ideological bias (Cox, 1981, pp. 129-130; Gill, 2008, p. 16; Rosenberg, 2001, pp. 4-5, 28). Furthermore, basing on the sovereignty assumption, the universality premise reinforces the dominance of the

Western-centric knowledge and the Westphalian state system presentism in the discipline and this in return obscures the importance and legacy of previous orders that existed before or with the Westphalian system. In this way, the universality assumption hinders the ability to imagine alternative orders (Ringmar, 2012, pp. 1-2, 2019) and keep the existing order intact. In short, mainstream US theories of IR can be regarded as ideologies that reinforce the Western-centrism of knowledge production, rather than being universal facts.⁷

Third, these US theories occupy the central position in the core-periphery structure of social sciences knowledge production and hence, have intellectual hegemony in the Gramscian sense. In fact, all studies in social sciences are a part of the three-layered structure of the world system where each layer is connected to the other two: core, semi-periphery and periphery. In other words, IR as a field of social sciences do not consist of a single global discipline, but instead of various national disciplines. In this stratified structure of social sciences, the US-centred mainstream IR contributions hold a central position whereas European IR studies occupy semi-peripheral position, and non-Western IR studies, including the Chinese IR, have a place in the periphery (Kristensen, 2016, pp. 143-144; Tickner, 2013; pp. 632-635). Because of its dominance on knowledge production in the field, the majority of IR academia throughout the world consider “American IR” as “global IR”, which is the standard bearer of academic research and hence, an ideal to be emulated. Therefore, IR continues to be an “American social science”. This reinforces IR mainstream’s claim for being the sole model for scientific research with testable theories and genuine research programmes. Lacking such qualifications, for the orthodox thinking, results in non-mainstream research to be marginal and invisible in the eyes of the core of the discipline (Keohane, 1988, p. 393; Tickner, 2013, p. 634). In short, the US-centred IR theories produce knowledge according to the interests and needs of the core, namely the US, rather than being universal and sensitive to the expectations of non-core regions of the world order.

⁷ There is a debate among IR scholars on the issue of whether Kenneth Waltz, the founder of structural realism, should be regarded as a positivist or not. While Waltz (1997) himself and Ole Wæver (2009) oppose the label, Jonathan Joseph (2010) claims that Waltz should be regarded as a positivist, especially when positivism is regarded as a philosophy encapsulating methodology, epistemology and ontology.

Their dominance in the field hinders the efforts to theorize the relationship between the state and the international system as well. Here, the concepts of sovereignty and anarchy play an important role in creating the illusion of “the autonomy of the political sphere” (Morgenthau, 1973, p. 13). As a consequence of the sovereignty assumption, the state is accepted as the initiator and representative of foreign policy. Thus, domestic politics is left out of the process of national interest constitution in favour of the statesmen and the ruling elite, and foreign policy is defined only in relation to other nation-states, or internationally (Rosenberg, 2001, pp. 29-31). This is also related to the illusion of imperialism created by the Western-centric IR literature (Saurin, 2006), which replaces imperialism with the idea of international and this way, hides the imperialist nature of the existing world order.

This leads to the relationship between power holders and the academia. Mainstream IR knowledge production and intellectuals contributing to this production are closely intertwined with their respective power structures and indeed, create knowledge for the US policy-makers. Hoffmann’s definition of IR as an “American social science” was based upon the conditions provided by “the rise of the US to world power” (1977, p. 43) and the three factors of “intellectual predispositions, political circumstances, and institutional opportunities” (1977, p. 45). After more than four decades, this is still the case for social sciences in the US. Such that the primary audience of the mainstream social sciences research are the US policy-makers and academic studies for policy-making processes are financially supported by the US government. In other words, mainstream US IR have long ago accepted the common sense provided by the US state and aimed at solving problems that this common sense encounters (Hoffmann, 1977, pp. 45-50; Rosenberg, 2001, p. 32). Because IR continues to be an “American social science” and many scholars like Nye are closely related to the power structures in the US, mainstream IR continues to be an integral part of and an active contributor to the relationship between the US state and knowledge production. In other words, it continues to be primarily an instrumental knowledge that does not engage in dialogue with neither the society nor peripheral academia.

The central place mainstream US theories of IR hold in the core-periphery structure of social sciences and the power-knowledge nexus affect their perspectives on theorizing the world order. Hence, these theories conceptualise hegemony and analyse China's changing position in the international system and the China-US relations in accordance with their ideological biases, positions in the core-periphery structure and links with their respective states. First, as a result of their claim to scientific method these theories define the term hegemony mainly in material terms. As discussed above, both types of realist approaches place emphasis on material strength and accordingly, describe hegemony as the material dominance of a great power over other states. Neoliberal institutionalists, on the other hand, incorporate coercion with consent by identifying hegemonic leadership as a mixture of cooperation and control while giving weight to material capabilities. Based upon these conceptualisations, realists and liberals view China's rise as a problem that needs to be overcome for the US to maintain its security and hegemonic position. By labelling China's rise as an existential threat to the US that is to be tackled in the fastest way possible these theories securitize the "China problem" (Buzan, Wæver & Wilde, 1998, pp. 23-26). Despite similarities in their approaches to the "problem", realist and liberal thinking propose different policies for solving the issue. Realists view China as the primary contender state and a possible threat to the existing US-centred international system. Hence, the US needs to adopt strategies such as offshore balancing to prevent China from dominating the Asian region and becoming a challenge to the US hegemony. Liberals, on the other hand, view the rise of China as a problem to be solved by integrating the country to the existing system. In other words, they aim to transform China into a "responsible stakeholder" and assimilate, or "tame", it into the Western-centric international system. In short, albeit through different methods, mainstream US intellectuals aim to preserve the dominance of the US and the stability of the system by dealing with the China issue through securitization and assimilation.

Through their ideological bias towards the existing international system and its Western-centrism, mainstream US theories of IR help their ruling elite in legitimizing the established power relationships and hence, stabilising and maintaining the existing unequal system. To overcome this unequal and Western-

centric order by creating an alternative world order, the intellectual hegemony of these theories needs to be transcended by non-mainstream and peripheral IR studies. For this to be achieved, however, critical and non-Western research should move away from the periphery of social sciences and occupy a central place in knowledge production. Nevertheless, complying the core-periphery structure of social sciences would do nothing than to reinforce this structure of the world. Therefore, non-mainstream and peripheral studies indeed need to revolt against and hence, produce knowledge to dismantle this three-layered structure of the world order. Starting with two critical Western IR approaches, namely world-systems analysis and HCMT, the following three chapters provide examples from non-mainstream Western and the Chinese academia and discuss their proposals for alternative knowledge production and world orders.

CHAPTER 3

CRITICAL ANGLO-AMERICAN CONCEPTIONS OF A RISING CHINA: ALTERNATIVE VISIONS FOR A JUST WORLD ORDER

Over the last five decades mainstream theories of IR have been under challenge from different approaches with distinctive views on how the world is organized and should be analysed. Among these approaches two of the most prominent ones are world-systems analysis that was first latched onto in the 1970s and has been evolving since then and historical materialist critical theory (HMCT) that was initiated in the early 1980s and has developed thenceforward.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, mainstream US theories of IR, occupying the heights of social science theorizing, make claims to neutrality, universal validity and being value-free. Critical approaches of IR, on the other hand, object such claims and try to reveal the deep and close relationship between knowledge production processes and power structures. They, furthermore, aim to overcome the unequal spatial distribution of knowledge production that is reflected by the core-periphery structure of the world system in which the US represents the “core social sciences” and viewed by many as the apogee of knowledge production to be emulated by non-Western and the majority of European IR scholars who are, respectively, assumed to be located in the periphery and semi-periphery of social sciences (Kristensen, 2016, p. 143).

The challenge posed by world-systems analysis and HMCT against the intellectual hegemony of mainstream IR theories, their Western-centric nature and claims to universal validity has been the most prominent commonality of these two approaches. Both of them have been questioning those characteristics of the “core social sciences” from the beginning of their initiation. Immanuel Wallerstein, in his book *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power*, discloses how the dominance

of the powerful in the knowledge production has been legitimized through three forms of European universalism with the notions of “the right of those who believe they hold universal values to intervene against the barbarians; the essential particularism of Orientalism; and scientific universalism” (2006a, p. 71). He proposes the creation of a multiplicity of universalisms through historicising intellectual analyses as a feasible solution to the intellectual dominance of European universalism (2006a, pp. 82-84).

Robert W. Cox, in a similar vein, reveals the relationship between power and knowledge production, in his article “Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory”, by stating “Theory is always for someone and for some purpose. All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space” (Cox, 1981, p. 128). Thus, each and every theory, regardless of their claims for neutrality, occupy a position in time and space and reflect social relationships and institutions of that position. For Cox, the so-called neutral and universal theories, are ahistorical problem-solving theories that aim to provide solutions to the problems that the existing world order encounters. In other words, these theories are representatives of power holders of the existing structure. He, alternatively, suggests the creation of critical theories that question prevailing power structures and how they were constituted, and possible ways of transcending the current order by proposing feasible alternatives (1981, pp. 128-130). Cox, similar to Wallerstein, offers historicising intellectual analyses in creating an alternative order that grounds on multiculturalism, instead of the “one-civilisation vision” of the existing US-led order (Cox & Schechter, 2002, p. 191). Nevertheless, despite their common views on the need to overcome the barriers created by the prevailing power structures on production of knowledge, world-systems analysis and HCMT have differing perspectives on how to transcend these obstacles and how to historicise intellectual analyses.

In line with the curiosity of this thesis to comprehend and disclose the close relationship between knowledge production and power structures, the heterogeneity of knowledge and the influence of region-centricity on the knowledge produced

about China, this chapter aims to show the persistence of Western-centricity of knowledge even in the cases of critical Western IR approaches. It furthermore aims to reveal their latent link with power and how, albeit unwittingly, they help the power holders to naturalize, stabilize and eternalize the existing unjust world-system.

Within the context of this study, this chapter aims to provide an analysis on the similarities and differences both between the scholars of world-systems analysis and HCMT and between the scholars belonging to each approach on the unit of analysis, conceptualising “hegemony”, hegemony-building processes and the relationship between the existing hegemon and a (potential) challenger(s). After analysing each approach’s theoretical contribution on these issues, the chapter provides discussions on the rise of China through critical perspectives. These parts regarding the debates on the changing status of China from world-systems and HMCT perspectives include non-Western and even Chinese scholars because of their contributions to the “China rising” debate from a world-systems or a HMCT point of view. In other words, differently from the Chinese intellectuals in chapters four and five, these non-Anglo-American scholars included in this chapter ground their approaches fully on one of these two critical Western theories. This way, it discusses the commonalities and differences among two prominent critical Western IR approaches, which aim to transcend the existing order and replace it with a new system that is more egalitarian, inclusive and multi-cultural/-civilizational. It, furthermore, shows the insufficiency of these critical approaches in overcoming the Western-centric knowledge production of mainstream IR theories and their positions in the power-knowledge nexus.

3.1 World-Systems Analysis: Thinking About the Possibilities of a New Age

Unlike mainstream theories of IR, world-systems analysis is not a theory of the social world or a part of that world but rather a moral and political protest, in the widest sense, to the way social sciences has been structured since it came about in the mid-19th century (Wallerstein, 2000, p. xxii, 129). Hence, drawing on the possibilities of systemic knowledge, world-systems analysis is a perspective that

challenges the prevailing mode of scientific knowledge making. It is “a call for intellectual change, indeed for ‘unthinking’ the premises of nineteenth-century social science” (Wallerstein, 2000, p. xxii). It is a call for debating the paradigm of a new historical social science, rather than imposing one (Wallerstein, 2000, p. 148). Furthermore, by rejecting the positivistic, “value-neutral”, constrictive scientific inquiry, world-systems analysis aims to abandon the disciplinary disintegration and, on the contrary, adopts a holistic understanding of sciences. In other words, by eliminating the sharp separation among the disciplines of social sciences, it aims to melt these singular fields of knowledge in the same pot and achieve unidisciplinarity. Thus, it seeks to fill the gaps in each singular field’s understanding of the world by offering a holistic perspective and total history (Wallerstein, 2006b, pp. 18-21, 2011, p. xxx).

For a world-systems perspective, to understand today’s world-system and to propose an alternative to the prevailing mode of social scientific inquiry, intellectual analyses must be based on historical inquiry. Since the dominant knowledge production is region-centric, namely Eurocentric, an alternative perspective must reject not only Eurocentrism but also all other centrism that hinder the relationship between the world-system as a whole and the parts of it. For that reason, world-systems analysis offers a humancentric political-economic history of the world system as an alternative to the Eurocentric historiography of the core social sciences. Unlike exclusivist region-centric history writing that focuses on a culture while neglecting others, such a humancentric historiography offers an inclusivist perspective and gives “equal time” for all cultures (Frank & Gills, 1993, p. 11-12). In this way, it rejects cultural particularism (Wallerstein, 2006b, p. 21).

This results in the question of what should be the unit of analysis of a new historical social science that is based on a humancentric perspective? For Wallerstein, in order to take political and moral decisions, one must understand the social reality accurately and for an accurate understanding, the selection of the proper unit of analysis is of vital importance. With this in mind, world-systems approach takes the “world-system”, instead of the commonly used nation state, as the basic unit of analysis since it is a bigger entity and offers an effective and ongoing division of

labour compared to nation state. According to Wallerstein, time and space cannot be separated analytically from each other and world-system is a kind of TimeSpace called “structural TimeSpace”. He divides “Structural TimeSpace” into “historical systems” to show that the unit of analysis is both historical and a system. This way, he reveals that historical systems are not infinite entities but have lifespans (Wallerstein, 2000, pp. 149-150). In short, social change can only be analysed in historical social systems and since nation state is not a social system, world-systems analysis substitutes it with three types of historical systems as units of analysis: mini-systems, world-empires and world-economies (Wallerstein, 2006b, p. 16, 2011, pp. 6-7).

Human history, according to Wallerstein, can be divided into three phases in terms of historical systems. During the first phase, the period before 10000/8000 BC, the globe was most probably filled with numerous mini-systems scattered around the world. From 10000/8000 BC to 1500 AD, all three kinds of historical systems coexisted. However, none of these historical systems could move beyond the phase of “protocapitalism” (Wallerstein, 1993, p. 293) and establish the necessary institutional structure for realising endless accumulation of capital, namely capitalism. The final phase that started in 1500 AD, on the other hand, is the era of modern (capitalist) world-system, which originated during the long 16th century (1450-1640) in Western Europe. In the early stages of its development, capitalist system coexisted with other historical systems. In the following three centuries of its emergence, however, it incrementally pervaded the whole world (Wallerstein, 1993, p. 295, 2006b, p. 16). According to world-systems analysis, throughout the human history there have existed only two kinds world-systems: world-empires and world-economies. A world-empire is a large bureaucratic structure in which a single political centre and a single axial division of labour, but a number of cultures exist. A world-economy, in contrast, is characterized by the lack of such political dominance of a single political centre. It is an entity with an axial division of labour and significant flows of capital, goods and labour and characterized by the coexistence of multiple political units and cultures (Wallerstein, 2006b, p. 23, 99).

The structure of the modern world-system is based on endless accumulation of capital and this characteristic differentiates it from all previous historical systems. Despite the fact that instances of capital accumulation took place in previous systems as well, these instances were not ceaseless as in the modern world-system. For that reason, previous systems could not go beyond protocapitalism. The structural priority of the capitalist world-economy, on the other hand, has always been on ceaseless accumulation of capital (Wallerstein, 1993, p. 193). Hence, capitalism constituted a quantitatively new era in the world history and thereby, its structure should be distinguished from protocapitalist historical systems that had previously existed. Still, even though self-expansion of capital has been a distinctive feature of the capitalist system, it is not the only goal the system has, and other factors also play a role in the production process. Nevertheless, among all these goals capital accumulation has always been in a privileged position (Wallerstein, 1983, p. 14, 2006b, p. 24).

There is a reason for world-systems analysts to use hyphens for the concepts of world-economy, world-empire and world-system and it is to show that what is in question are not economies, empires and systems of or in the world but that they themselves are a world. In other words, the words “world” and “system” together form a single word and the former is not an attributive of the second one. It should also be noted that, historical structures do not necessarily cover the entire world. Indeed, the only historical system to encompass the entire globe throughout the human history has been the modern world-system, which according to Wallerstein is an aberrant situation in the human history. The main reason for the modern world-system to live such a long life, but not the previous ones, is the emergence of capitalism (Wallerstein, 1991, p. 13; 1993, pp. 294-295, 2006b, p. 16, 24). In short, even though the modern world-system is not the first world-economy to come into existence throughout the human history, it has been the first and only world-economy, even world-system, to institutionalize a capitalist mode of production and consequently, expand its boundaries to contain the entire globe. Hence, as a system that could become effective and aggressive enough to annihilate all of its contemporaries, it is unique in the world history (Wallerstein, 1995, 1993, p. 295).

Despite their insistence on the totality of the world-system, for analytical purposes, world-systems analysts divide the system into three institutional arrangements: a world-economy, an interstate system and a complex of cultures or geoculture (Wallerstein, 1991, pp. 13-14, 1995, p. 4). The capitalist world-economy has, from the beginning, worked by means of a social relationship called capital/labour, in which the owners of capital, under the protection of law, have expropriated the surplus created by direct producers. However, this process of appropriation and the distribution of the surplus-value takes place not only in between direct producers and owners of capital at the immediate production place but also at the market place among a network of beneficiaries through a process called unequal exchange between core and peripheral zones (Wallerstein, 1991, p. 15). Thus, the axial division of labour distributes the production process into core-like and peripheral production. The distinguishing factor in the core-periphery production network is the degree of profitability. While the production in core zones is controlled by quasi-monopolies and thus, highly profitable, the peripheral production is competitive and accordingly, have low profit margins (Wallerstein, 2006b, p. 28).

Recurrent patterns of core-periphery relations have been dominant in the interstate system from the start of the capitalist world-economy. The core-periphery antinomy is, on the one hand, about the monopolistic and competitive production, and thus, about high profit/wage and low profit/wage antinomy. It is, on the other hand, a spatial antinomy where high profit and high wage production networks concentrate in a couple of countries that are strong enough to protect accumulated capital and can effectively reduce transaction costs, whereas low profit and low wage production is dispersed around a great number of peripheral countries. As a result, unequal exchange enables the surplus-value created in peripheral areas to be transferred to core areas. The underlying cause of this relationship has been the political rules of the interstate structure of the world-system that allows the flow of surplus-value created in the periphery to the core by obstructing the mobilisation of labour force while incrementally removing the barriers against the mobilisation of goods and services (Wallerstein, 1991, p. 15, 1995, pp. 7-8). In other words, unlike the conventional wisdom that capitalism requires the states not to interfere in

economics, hierarchic interstate relations play an important role in facilitating the development and functioning of capitalism.

Notwithstanding their strength, no producer or state is strong enough to protect monopolistic productions forever. In time, new actors enter into monopolistic markets and as the market becomes more competitive quasi-monopolistic producers lose their advantages against newcomers and the price of previously monopolistic products fall while wages increase, which results in the fall of profitability. Since each individual producer aims to maximize its profits by increasing production, world supply expands relatively rapidly, whereas world demand stays stable in the intermediate term. This process, in the end, obstructs capital accumulation and finally, the world-economy enters into a period of economic stagnation that ends up with restructuring of production networks and their underlying social relations (Wallerstein, 1991, pp. 16-17).

Maturation of the world-economy and its transformation from a positive- to a zero-sum game is also characterized by financial expansions. During the phase of rising competition and falling profitability, capitalist enterprises tend to keep higher shares of their previously accumulated capital in money form instead of investing them in fixed assets. This, then, increases money supplies in the world-economy. Times of economic stagnation, by limiting the production and trading capacities of states and capitalist agencies and lowering their profitability, create conditions of increase in demand for money and competition in financial markets. Within the process, large sums of wealth from non-financial sectors of the economy are transferred to the holders of financial capital. Each phase of financial expansion of a dominant regime of accumulation also creates the conditions of fundamental restructuring of the regime. In other words, the new dominant accumulation regime rises from the structural crisis of the preceding one (Arrighi, 2010, pp. 219-220, 372-373). The world-economy overcomes such bottlenecks in capital accumulation by reorganizing itself through relocating formerly core-like production processes to lower wage zones and substituting this de-industrialisation in core zones with new investment opportunities that promise higher profits while intensifying class struggle to politically redistribute world surplus to core workers and to peripheral and semi-

peripheral bourgeoisie. Since each relocation of production needs a new pool of direct producers, in every round of restructuring the world-economy expands its boundaries to new areas (Wallerstein, 1991, pp. 16-17).

An important economic role in the core-periphery structure of the world-system has been played by an intermediary zone called semi-periphery. Countries in this zone are located in between core and periphery zones and carry the characteristics of both. In other words, they are home to core-like and also peripheral production. They, further, seek to be the recipients of formerly monopolistic products and thus, be a second stop in the cycle of leading products. Core, semi-periphery and periphery states not only have complex links in the economic sphere, but also in political and cultural spheres. Core countries with strong state structures seek to protect their quasi-monopolistic production processes, whereas peripheral countries, lacking such structures, have to accept passive roles because of their inability to affect the axial division of labour of the world-economy. Semi-periphery countries, on the other hand, are both under the pressure of core countries but at the same time apply pressure to peripheral countries. Hence, they are concurrently exploited and exploiters of the world-system, and the stabilizer of the system against rebellions of exploited groups. While semi-peripheral countries try to climb the ladders of hierarchy to reach the status of a core country, they always face the risk of downgrading to a peripheral position. This second situation becomes a reality for the ones that lose the competition for being a recipient of formerly leading products. Hence, the ones that succeed in attracting erstwhile monopolistic productions strengthen their positions against other semi-peripheral countries (Wallerstein, 1991, pp. 15-16, 2006b, pp. 28-30; Li, 2008, p. 94).

Over the capitalist structure of the modern world-system lies the political superstructure of a network of sovereign states. World-economies, in contrast to world-empires, are characterized by the lack of a political structure with the capacity to have an absolute dominance over the system. Indeed, historically, due to their fragmented political structures, world-economies had been quite unstable and inclined to transform into world-empires. However, being a totally different economic entity from previously existing political social systems, the modern world-

system could overcome the fragility of its predecessors by establishing an efficient division of labour (Wallerstein, 1991, p. 14, 2011, pp. 15-16).

The relationship between capitalism and the interstate system has been simultaneously harmonious and contradictory. The political structure of the world-system, on the one hand, through the agency of rules and norms, restricts sovereign nations, on the other hand, it could also be negatively influenced by interstate rivalry and the degree of violence used among the participants of this rivalry. In such a case, the costs of an armed struggle among states could exceed the costs the capitalists need to bear even under a world-empire. In the case of allocating the majority of resources for waging war and of a disruption in production and trade, the profitability of capitalists may plunge and ultimately, even set to zero. The relationship between capitalism and the interstate system is also a reflection of the contradiction between capitalist and territorialist logics of power. These two logics have resulted in different strategies of state formations. The objective of a state following the capitalist strategy is to maintain the control of mobile capital by controlling population and territory. The territorialist strategy, on the other hand, aims to control mobile capital, so as to use it in state- and war-making to achieve the goal of maintaining the control of population and territory. Notwithstanding their contradictory relationship, these two logics of power coexisted together and indeed, this conflicting relationship has played a critical role in the reorganization of the world-system by the leading power, namely the hegemon of each era, which led the formation, expansion and restructuring of the world-system in times of “systemic chaos” (Arrighi, 2010, pp. 31-37).

Wallerstein defines hegemony as the leading power with the capacity to organize the capitalist system in such a way that the interstate rivalry never reaches to the point of terminating the ceaseless accumulation of capital and thus, the capitalist system itself. In order for a state to gain such a vital position in the system, it needs to have simultaneous supremacy in three areas of economy: agro-industrial production, commerce and finance. That is to say, in the struggle for hegemony, a core country first and foremost needs to maximize its efficiency in agro-industrial production and gain leverage against its competitors. The next step is to transform productive

efficiency into commercial supremacy. For a state to benefit from its efficiency advantage in the world market, it must be able to prevent the emergence of internal and external barriers to the free functioning of the market or at least to keep these barriers to a minimum. The hegemon-to-be this way obtains the control of world trade routes after dominating world production. Once commercial supremacy has been achieved, as a final stage, control needs to be taken of financial sectors like banking and investment. In short, as the dominance of a core country in the fields of production, commerce and finance overlap, the country becomes a hegemonic power (Wallerstein, 2011b, pp. 38-39). The simultaneous supremacy in these three areas constitutes a basis for the hegemon to create the rules and norms of the system in its own interest. Although the hegemony in the world-system is predominantly based on economic power, political, military and cultural supremacy also have significant contributions in legitimizing the hegemonic rule. Such that in order to define a state as hegemon, it should be able to command the world-economy, set the rules of the interstate system for a certain period of time, maintain balance of power in the state system, achieve goals by using minimum amount of force and determine the dominant cultural language in the world (Arrighi, 2007, p. 249; Wallerstein, 2006b, p 58).

For Giovanni Arrighi, however, such a definition is insufficient in explaining the characteristics of a hegemonic power. Instead, he defines it as dominance and classifies the Wallersteinian definition of hegemony in the same category as the definitions of mainstream IR theories. Arrighi, following Antonio Gramsci, defines hegemony as a state that operates as the leading and governing power of an interstate system. In this definition, administering the system as usual is not enough. The hegemonic way of governing requires transforming the *modus operandi* of the world-system significantly. Furthermore, hegemony necessitates more than just dominance and use or threat of force. It also needs to govern through “intellectual and moral leadership”. In other words, hegemony includes both coercion and consent. Thus, hegemony is closely related with the claim of ruling elites to represent the general interest of (international) society, including subaltern classes and societies. However, getting support for such claim in the interstate system is much harder than within a state. That’s why in addition to maximizing its power as

against other states, a state must also lead a process of strengthening the coalition of rulers against their subjects. In other words, hegemony building requires the fraternity of the ruling classes vis-à-vis their subaltern classes. Furthermore, one must analyse world hegemonies as eras in which the leading state protects the world-system from systemic chaos by maintaining interstate cooperation and restructuring the world-economy under a new dominant accumulation regime. Thus, rising and declining hegemons and the world-system are not alien to each other. Quite to the contrary, they are in interaction with each other and evolve together over time (Arrighi, 2007, p. 149, 2010, pp. 28-32).

While hegemony is a way for states to rise to a dominant position in a world-economy, another other way is to build a world-empire. According to Wallerstein, two significant differences between these historical systems are political control and economic efficiency. A world-empire is a structure in which a single political authority controls the whole system. This unified structure hinders the development of capitalism. For this very reason, none of the three attempts to transform the world-economy into a world-empire since the emergence of the capitalist world-economy could be successful. When a state attempted to transform the system into a world-empire, it faced and lost against the coalition of the most important capitalists of the era. The protagonists of these attempts were Charles V in the 16th century, Napoleon Bonaparte in the early 18th century and Adolf Hitler in the 20th century. All three attempts were failed by a counter-block formed and led by the hegemon-to-be –the United Provinces, the United Kingdom and the United States respectively– as a result of what Wallerstein calls a “thirty-year world war”, which is a devastating land-war that included all of the great military forces of the era. A period of hegemony that is established as a consequence of a world war is a period of peace and stability in which no direct military clashes occur between great powers and accordingly, monopolistic leading industries and capitalist enterprises find fertile ground to flourish (Wallerstein, 1983, p. 59, 2006b, pp. 57-58).

Hegemonies are relatively short-lived entities compared to life spans of states because the advantages seized in the fields of production, commerce and finance by the hegemonic state cannot be retained for a long period of time and at a point in

time, the power balance mechanism comes into play to reduce the political advantages of the hegemonic state. According to Wallerstein, as it rises to hegemonic position a country focuses not only on production efficiency, but also on military, political and cultural elements. However, preserving supremacy in all these areas is a costly endeavour. After a while these costs become unsustainable and the period of hegemonic decline begins. In this process, hegemonic power starts losing its supremacy, at first, in sectors of the economy in the same order as it gained them during its ascendancy to hegemony. In other words, a reverse cycle is experienced during hegemonic decline. The entrance of new economic forces that can produce more efficiently to the world market increases the production costs of the hegemon compared to others, and after a certain point the superiority of the hegemonic power in the field of production ends. As other countries become more competitive, hegemon's share in world trade falls. The loss of financial superiority becomes the ultimate indicator of its economic decline (Wallerstein, 1991, p. 17, 2006b, pp. 58-59).

A partial termination of hegemony does not mean an absolute collapse of the hegemonic state but can be described as the signal crisis that can be somehow solved by the hegemon. Thus, despite losing its superiority in some parts of economy, a declining hegemon continues to be the leading power in the system. During regression, in order to maintain its position, hegemonic power continues to assume roles in cultural, military and political fields. However, due to high costs of maintaining these roles, hegemon's position constantly erodes. As other core countries start challenging the hegemonic state and as the hegemon, which politically cannot control these countries anymore, resort to military power, its terminal crisis begins, and hegemony transforms into "domination without hegemony". In the final stage, the world enters into systemic chaos, and the hegemon fully exhausts itself (Arrighi, 2007, pp. 150-151, 238; Wallerstein, 2006b, pp. 58-59).

In short, "Ideally, a theory of world politics and society must be able to account for change, as well as continuity... it must allow for learning" (Arrighi, 2007, p. 310). From this point of view, world-systems analysis aims to provide historical change

perspectives and alternatives for the future. For that reason, rather than providing straightforward answers to the question of the future world order by simply following the patterns of previously existing hegemonies, it intends to understand the differences and similarities of the contemporary order with its predecessors and offer a forecast of the possibilities of a new age.

3.1.1 China's Rise in the Modern World-System: A New Type of Hegemony on the Horizon?

Throughout the history of the capitalist world-economy, only three powers had the ability to build hegemonies; the United Provinces in the 17th century, the United Kingdom in the 19th century and the United States in the 20th century. Each of these successive hegemonic eras was characterized by a distinctive dominant accumulation regime with its own agencies and structures and in every new era, these agencies and structures of capital accumulation were politically and militarily stronger than previous ones. The complexity, scope and size of subsequent regimes were also greater than their predecessors (Arrighi, 2011, p. 222-223, 375-377). In other words, the US accumulation regime has been the most sophisticated and developed regime ever to be built in the modern world-system.

However, as all regimes the US one has a lifespan as well. According to Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein, the world revolution of 1968, which was a movement against the counter-revolution and hegemonic restructuring of the US, by challenging the US leadership and power relationships in the world-system resulted in transformations in the relations between core and periphery, dominant and subaltern classes and the state and civil society. Although the US could reconsolidate its leadership in the following decade, in the 1970s it entered into a signal crisis and thus, the beginning of its hegemonic decline (1989, pp. 97-110). The US was successful in overcoming its signal crisis through an excessive financial expansion, which has created massive indebtedness of the US economy. The debt has been financed mainly by East Asian economies; at first to a large extent by Japan and since the 2000s principally by China. The primary objective of these governments for financing the US debt has essentially been political rather than

economic. More than profiting, the aim has been to stabilize the neoliberal world economy. Notwithstanding the common goal of these countries to stabilize the system, unlike Japan, being indebted to China can be problematic for the US since China is not a vassal of and dependent on the US for its security and prosperity (Arrighi, 2007, p. 8, 192-195; Li, 2008, p. 72).

Nevertheless, in contrast with mainstream scholars like Mearsheimer that perceive a challenge to the hegemonic position of the US coming from a rising China, Arrighi claims that the primary reason of the US decline and the barrier to a non-catastrophic hegemonic transition is the US reluctance to adjustment and accommodation. In fact, the US attempt to create a world-empire through the Project for a New American Century and the Iraq War, not the Chinese challenge, underlies its terminal crisis and the transformation of its leadership into “domination without hegemony”. Additionally, the focus of US capacities on Iraq has created an opportunity for the re-location of the centre of the global economy to East Asia and the re-emergence of China as the centre of the regional and perhaps, the global economy. Such that, China has substituted the US as the primary engine of productive and commercial activities in the region and even in the world. Nevertheless, the US still possess by far the most technologically advanced and strongest military capabilities among all great powers and no other state has the power to challenge it in military terms. Still, despite its unrivalled military might, since the beginning of its terminal crisis, the US has lost its legitimacy and therefore, the ability to manage the system (Arrighi, 2007, pp. 209, 311, 2010, pp. 379-383). The question that now belies humanity is whether the world-system can survive another restructuring by a new leading hegemon as well as an environmental catastrophe.

Among the world-systems analysts that contribute to the China debate, Arrighi can be regarded as the most optimistic, albeit cautious, scholar. He speculates that the world faces three possible scenarios. The first is a joint endeavour of Western great powers for building a world-empire, the second, and the most likely scenario, is the emergence of an East Asia centred world society, and the third is a permanent systemic chaos in which no state or society will have the capability to lead the

system. If realized, this final one, as have been previous long periods of systemic chaos experienced in the world history, will definitely be a disastrous future for humanity. Although still a possibility, the failed US attempt in Iraq to transform the system into a world-empire, taken together with the re-centring of East Asia in the global economy and the dispossession of the Western world of its five hundred years long control over surplus capital, considerably undermined the likelihood of a collective Western attempt to create a global empire (2010, pp. 369-370).

The energy-consuming and environmentally damaging Western development path triumphed over all other paths by excluding the great majority of humanity from the resources and wealth of the world while at the same time compelling them to bear the costs. However, the world no longer possesses the resources necessary to continue with the Western development path as it has done in the last two centuries, especially when, with their huge populations, the exhausting potentials of China and India are taken into account. For that reason, a new world order that is more egalitarian and ecologically and socially sustainable needs to be created. Otherwise, Arrighi fears, a period of systemic chaos will prevail. For such an outcome not be realized, the Western development path needs to converge with the East Asian path which represents a different trajectory for the future that promises more equality for and mutual respect among civilizations and cultures of the world. As in the historical East Asian system, China is the most likely candidate to be the centre of an East Asia centred world-market society (Arrighi, 2007, pp. 344-387, 2010, pp. 385).

The China-led historical East Asian system, in contrast to the European system, was characterized by the rarity of “intra-systemic military competition and extra-systemic geographical expansion” (Arrighi, 2007, p. 315). These two features were closely related to two other differences. First, the power gap among actors in the East Asian system was much bigger than the European system. Such that, China was possessing a much greater power than all other states and this way could manage the system under commonly accepted norms, principles and rules. Second, power bases of East Asian states originated within the system, not outside of it as was the case for European colonial powers. These characteristics of the East Asian system, according to Arrighi, provide the basis for a fairer future world order. China, with its

emphasis on domestic market and experience in improving the living conditions of its people, provides an alternative development path to the Global South, coined the Beijing Consensus, which is distinguished by its attention to localization of development efforts, in contrast to the singular recipes of neoliberalism, and to multilateralism as opposed to the unilateralism of the US (Arrighi, 2007, pp. 314-379). That being said, today China still predominantly follows the energy-consuming Western path, but Arrighi hopes it will eventually restructure itself to a more balanced development path that will “contribute decisively to the emergence of a commonwealth of civilizations truly respectful of cultural differences” (2007, p. 389).

Other world-systems analysts, on the other hand, find the possibility of China building a new hegemony less likely. Li Minqi states that China possessed a unique dual character at the beginning of the opening up and reform era, having the features of a peripheral country with a low level of proletarianization and wages while simultaneously, thanks to Maoist industrialization efforts, having a mid-level technological capacity and economic structure. However, in time, as it gradually integrated into the world-economy and became an economic power house, China started climbing the ladder of the global economic hierarchy and now it is on the way of becoming a well-to-do semi-peripheral country. Nevertheless, a number of factors such as its energy and resource consuming development model that massively harms the environment, immense production capacity surplus and rising domestic economic and social inequality raise questions as to the sustainability of the Chinese accumulation regime. Furthermore, as China’s economic structure rapidly turns into a well-to-do semi-periphery, Chinese workers started to request higher wages and social rights compatible with their position in the economic hierarchy. Whether the Chinese accumulation regime can meet these demands will have vital consequences both for itself and the world-system as a whole. The Chinese regime’s ability to overcome these problems will determine if it is going to fall back to a peripheral status, stay a semi-peripheral state while also harming the positions of other semi-peripheral states by lowering global wage levels, or transform into a stable and secure semi-peripheral state with higher wage levels. By only becoming a well-to-do semi-periphery, Li claims, the Chinese regime can

survive domestic pressures. However, a well-off China, with its huge consuming potential, may be very harmful for the global environment (2005, pp. 429-443; 2008, pp. 88-111).

Zhang Xin, following the framework provided by Arrighi on the competing logics of territorialism and capitalism, states that China is faced with the possibility of an over-accumulation and over-production crisis, which may result in the Chinese economy to contract and stagnate. Being aware of this possibility the Chinese state in cooperation with the Chinese capital aims to combine territorial and capitalist logics of power and overcome the problems of rising labour costs, decreasing returns to capital and excess production capacity, especially in traditional industries, by geographically and spatially expanding its capital accumulation dimension. Even though this extroverted strategy was first initiated in 2000 with the “going out” policy, the introduction of the BRI in 2013 raised its qualitative scope to a new level. The BRI primarily has two goals; firstly, to promote connectivity and commercial and financial integration in the region and thereby further the profitability of the Chinese capital, and secondly to expand its territorial control over resources such as mines, oil fields etc. through its increasing control of mobile capital. Furthermore, the BRI, which brings together the capitalist and territorialist logics of power, shows the willingness of China to position itself at the centre of regional networks of infrastructure, investment and trade and to persuade its neighbouring or peripheral countries to increase their cooperation with China. On that premise, Zhang warns China of the danger of turning into a financial hegemon, instead of creating a new kind of hegemony which Arrighi dreams of (2017, pp. 311-327).

Şahan Savaş Karataşlı and Şefika Kumral focus on a neglected aspect of hegemony building, namely the support given by rising great powers to several nations for their independence in times of turmoil. Based thereupon, they claim that today’s world order is in contradiction with previous instances of hegemonic transitions. In previous transition periods, declining hegemons, as the founders of a fading order, supported the status quo in the system, while rising great powers tried to change the existing political geography. Today, however, the state that aims to preserve the

stability in the interstate system is a rising power, namely the so-called challenger China, whereas the power that challenges the international *status quo* through acts of imperialist aggression is the US, the declining hegemon. That's why, paradoxically, rather than its claim for a new and progressive order, China's support for the international stability provides the basis of its intellectual and moral leadership, and only by getting the support of a large number of states on this basis it can establish hegemony in the system. However, even though they find the possibility of China creating a hegemony quite low, Karataşlı and Kumral assert that in such a case the Chinese will not lead a new system that is more equitable and progressive, but the existing system founded by the previous hegemonic power, the US (2017, pp. 6-27).

3.2 Historical Materialist Critical Theory: Historicizing Knowledge and Change

Since the late 1970s, HMCT has made significant contributions to the development of IR by re-incorporating critical thinking and historical perspective into the field. With the aim of replacing the existing world order with a more just order, Cox and other contributors of the HMCT have aimed to overcome the dominant ahistoricism in the discipline by adapting Gramsci's historical materialist method, which was inspired by Marx, to the field of IR. Another important contribution of the HMCT to the discipline has been the adoption of a multi-actor approach, which also takes the civil society into consideration, instead of a nation state-centric perspective.

Cox indicates that there is an important distinction between two types of theories, which he terms problem-solving and critical theories. Unlike the claims of mainstream social scientists, so-called "scientific" theories are not value-free. Quite to the contrary,

Theory is always for someone and for some purpose. All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space...

Beginning with its problematic, theory can serve two distinct purposes. One is simple... to help solve the problems posed within the terms of the particular perspective which has the point of departure. The other is... to become clearly aware of the perspective which gives rise to theorising...

and to open up the possibility of choosing a different valid perspective from which the problematic becomes one of creating an alternative world. Each of these purposes gives rise to a different kind of theory (Cox, 1981, p. 128).

The first purpose, that of overcoming the problems a perspective encounters, leads to problem-solving theories, whereas the second purpose of searching for a different world leads to critical theories. Problem-solving theories, rather than questioning the world order and how it is formed, accept it as it is. Their principle aim is to come up with solutions to the problems of the world by ensuring that the existing social relations, power relations and institutions function properly. They carry out their functions of overcoming problems by dealing with specific problems in specific areas of expertise. Moreover, since problem-solving theories rely on the assumption that the current social and political environment is immutable, they claim that these theories are universally valid. However, due to the immutability assumption and their conservative attitudes towards the existing power relationships, problem-solving theories are ahistorical, value-laden and ideologically biased (Cox, 1981, pp. 128-129). Neo-realism and neo-liberalism are the most prominent examples of problem-solving theories in IR. Stephen Gill identifies the contributors of neo-realism and neo-liberalism, primarily US organic intellectuals, as “the philosophers of war and peace” and indicates that the strategies developed by these intellectuals to maintain the existing unequal relations and the “imperial common sense” that provides the legitimacy of such unequal relations must be resisted (2012, p. 506).⁸

This is precisely what HMCT aims to do. Following Gramsci’s dictum that “Man is above all else mind, consciousness – that is, he is a product of history, not of nature” (Fiori, 1990, p. 103), it primarily questions the current world order and how this order came about. Accordingly, in order to understand the processes of change, HMCT historically examines the parts as well as the whole of the social and political complex. Thus, it is a theory of history that considers historical change as a perpetual process rather than a static past. Finally, HMCT intends to overcome the dominant unjust world order and accordingly, tries to uncover possible alternatives with the ability to transform it. In this context, problem-solving theories, either

⁸ At this point, Gill refers to Gramsci’s definition of common sense. See Gramsci, 1971, pp. 323-343.

intentionally or unintentionally, serve as a guide for tactical actions aimed at protecting the existing order, whereas HMCT serve as a guide for strategic actions to create an alternative order (Cox, 1981, pp. 128-130). In short, by criticizing problem-solving theories like neo-realism and neo-liberalism, HMCT offers a non-mainstream (Leysens, 2008, p. 2) and eclectic method of analysis on how the world operates and how to reveal possible alternative orders.

Having said that, it should also be noted that following a critical approach does not mean that problem-solving theories are completely useless and must be excluded from the analysis. Being aware of their limits, problem-solving approaches, in their specialized areas, can be practically useful in discovering certain laws and continuities. Hence, they can contribute to analysing the world in a given time-space complex. However, their ideological constraints and biases must always be taken into account (Cox, 1981, p. 133; Schouten, 2009, pp. 5-6). While HMCT, for example, acknowledges some of the assumptions and arguments of mainstream IR theories such as the anarchic structure of the existing world order, it opposes the idea that these are unchanging characteristics of all world orders and instead argues that they are the features of this specific, current, world order.

Despite its critical perspective, Cox also criticizes the validity of the world-systems analysis. Even though he deems the work of Wallerstein and Andre Gunder Frank interesting, he does not consider the macro-concept of the world-systems perspective, capitalism being a world system and everything occurring in that system as internal contradictions of capitalism, a useful model for analysing how the world operates. As a historian, he thinks tools, rather than models, provide a better way of understanding the world. Tools offer more useful ways than models because they can be chosen for situations depending on their applicability to them. If a tool does not work, it can be replaced with a new tool. Models, on the other hand, provide definitions to world problems, but since a researcher needs to discover the relationship between theory and political practice, when models cannot provide proper answers to problems, they lose their validity (Garcia & Borba de Sá, 2013, p. 304, 312).

Intellectually, the contributors of HMCT were influenced by a number of thinkers from Giambattista Vico to Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci. In the context of this study, the writings of Marx and Gramsci in particular occupy a very significant place in the development of this current of thought. Gramsci was strongly influenced by Marx and also by Niccolò Machiavelli. Based upon the writings of Marx, Gramsci criticized and aimed to transcend the dominant Marxist understanding of his era on several subject matters like economic reductionism and determinism. In this context, Cox has distinguished these two currents of Marxism as structural Marxism and historical materialism. The first current makes a static analysis of the capitalist state and society and pushes historical knowledge to the background, whereas the second current aims to explain alterations in social and political relations from a historical perspective. According to Cox, this second current, namely historical materialism, is the starting point of HMCT (Cox, 1981, p. 133).

Historical materialist approach enables HMCT to transcend mainstream IR theories in four different ways. The first is dialectics with its two levels; level of logic and level of real history. The level of logic can be defined as explaining change by examining contradictions, and the level of real history, on the other hand, can be defined as realising change by developing alternative methods arising from the contradictions and conflicts between different social forces. Therefore, HMCT accepts the issue of conflict as a possibility for structural change rather than as an ongoing structure like neo-realism. Secondly, HMCT, by making imperialism an element of scrutiny, goes beyond focusing just on the horizontal dimension of the relations among great powers and focuses as well on the division of labour between core and periphery, in other words, the vertical dimension of power relations. Third, historical materialism transcends neo-realist thinking by means of Gramsci's contribution to the study of the mutual relationship between civil society and the state. Gramsci, through his consideration that there is a mutual relationship between structure and superstructure, reached to the conclusion that there is no unidirectional, but a mutual relationship between civil society and the state. This reciprocity positions the state/society complex rather than the rational "billiard-ball" state of mainstream IR theories as the main constituent of the world order in a given time and place. Finally, historical materialism focuses on the production process that

forms the basis of a particular historical form of a state-society complex. This production process involves conflicting power relationships between those who control production and those who are actual producers. The state has a key role in this power relationship. Such that the attitude of the state ensures the continuation of this conflicting relationship. Another factor that plays an important role is the concept of class which establishes the connection between economy (production) and politics (power). In short, historical materialism examines the connections between production (social forces), state (power) and international relations (world order) (Cox, 1981, pp. 133-135). Thus, instead of giving priority to the systemic order and its management as mainstream theories do, the historical materialist approach is related to motion (Gill, 2008, p. 20).

For HMCT, historical structures are the frameworks for action and they are formed by a combination of three types of social forces: first, material possibilities that can be both destructive, i.e. military power, and productive, i.e. industrial machinery, second, ideas that exist in two types as intersubjective meanings and collective images and finally, institutions as tools necessary for maintaining power relations in and for stabilizing the dominant order. While these social forces determine the dynamics of movements of individuals and groups, actions of individuals and groups also influence the historical structure and create opportunities for the emergence of alternatives. Put differently, there is no unilateral or deterministic relationship between the structure and human behaviour, but a bi-directional relationship based on mutual interaction (Cox, 1981, pp. 135-137). Therefore, it can be said that Cox rejects the structuralism of Waltz and other neo-realists like Mearsheimer (Leysens, 2008, p. 48). Furthermore, among the three categories of social forces there is a trilateral relationship in which each of the three types of social forces influence one another, while at the same time being influenced by the other two (Cox, 1981, p. 136).

Historical structures can be classified according to three fields of activity: social forces (organization of production), state forms (outputs of various state/civil society complexes) and world orders (specific configurations of social forces and states). Similar to the three-way interaction between three types of social forces that make

up historical structures, there is a trilateral relationship between these three fields of activity, and each has the capacity to influence one another. In other words, all three fields of activities can affect others and also be affected by them. Thereby, unlike the neorealist wisdom, change does not take place only in interstate relations, but also in societies. These changes in societies have consequences on states while at the same time alterations in state structures and international relations have their repercussions on societies. Furthermore, historical structures may become hegemonic. In non-hegemonic structures power relations come to the fore by pushing consent to the background. In hegemonic structures, in contrast, power relations remain in the background and consciousness/consent comes to the fore. Herein, institutions play an important role in minimizing the need for physical pressure by producing solutions to internal problems. Ideas and material forces have significant influence on the structure as well (Cox, 1981, pp. 137-138, Garcia & Borba de Sá, 2013, p. 306).

The definition of hegemony as a historical structure by Cox is grounded on Gramsci's conception of hegemony. Although Gramsci primarily used the concept at the national level, he referred to the international level as well and made a link between these two levels.⁹ Cox, on the other hand, has redefined the concept at the international/transnational level.

Gramsci, in developing his hegemony conceptualization, benefited from two sources. These were the discussions made at the Third International on how to establish the hegemony of the working class and the writings of Machiavelli. The first discussion helped Gramsci to link the concept of hegemony to the ruling bourgeoisie. This way, he could understand the governing structures of his era and determine a path to socialist transformation in Western Europe. Further, it helped him to uncover the relationship between capitalism and civil society, the two important components that create suitable conditions for bourgeois hegemony. According to him, in countries where capitalism was fully settled and civil society had the power to cope with the state, the capitalist class could possess the capacity to

⁹ For this connection, made by Gramsci, between the national and international levels see Adam David Morton, 2007.

build its own hegemony. Hereby, in addition to revealing the relationship between capitalism and civil society, Gramsci also expanded the definition of the state to include civil society in addition to political society (Cox, 1983, pp. 163-164; Gramsci, 2000, pp. 422-424).

The second source that Gramsci based his concept of hegemony on was Machiavelli's analogy of a Centaur as an image of power. Machiavelli's semi-human, semi-animal Centaur analogy meant that in order for a ruler to govern his subjects well, (s)he needs to combine two different methods of struggle. According to him, a monarch must behave both in a manner that is human-specific and follow the law but also resort to animal-intrinsic coercion (Machiavelli, 2008, pp. 279-281). Based on Machiavelli's Centaur analogy, Gramsci combined consent and coercion as the complementary elements of hegemony. These, however, do not have the same level of visibility in the case of hegemony. An order becomes hegemonic only as consent becomes prominent compared to power. In other words, hegemony requires convincing people and relatively legitimate forms of governing. It, furthermore, should encompass not only certain ideas, institutions and financial means, but also a whole lifestyle (Cox, 1983, p. 164; Gill, 2008, p. 14; Gramsci, 2000, pp. 422-424).

While searching for the possibilities of spreading the Bolshevik Revolution to Western Europe, Gramsci concluded that the conditions between the Tsarist Russia and Western European countries differed in significant ways. The main difference between the conditions at both ends of Europe was the relative size and power of the state and civil society. According to Gramsci, different levels of power of the state and civil society require different strategies for a socialist transformation. In the Tsarist Russia, despite the state's effective control on a significant part of social life, a vanguard party had managed to overthrow the existing order with a "war of manoeuvre" without facing an effective resistance from the civil society because of the Russian state's fragility and Russian civil society's immaturity. However, such a strategy could not be successful in the state-societies of Western Europe, where strong civil societies coexisted with strong state structures. Instead, in these societies, a "war of position", which is an alternative strategy of forming the social base of a new state, needed to be implemented. In order such a strategy to be

successful, development of alternative institutions and intellectual resources that can establish a bridge between the working class and other subaltern classes was of vital importance. Put differently, the working class needed to gain the support of civil society by establishing a counter-hegemony through a war of position. Although Gramsci further referred to a third alternative other than war of manoeuvre and war of position, he did not see this method, which he called the “subterranean war” or “guerrilla war”, as a viable option in developed capitalist societies (Cox, 1983, pp. 164-165; Gramsci, 2000, pp. 222-230; Van der Pijl, 2005, p. 506). In the case of China, however, this third option provided the main path for a socialist revolution.

During the time of Gramsci, some of the Western European societies were not yet under bourgeois hegemony and thus, were non-hegemonic societies. Starting from this, Gramsci made a distinction between societies such as England and France that underwent social revolutions and developed new modes of production and social relations, and others like Italy and Spain that could only import some elements of the first group without completely changing their own existing orders. Due to their inability to revolutionize, this second group of societies were caught in a “revolution-restoration trap” and no class could gain the ability to build their own hegemony. Gramsci defined such a situation as the “passive revolution”, which might end in two ways. In the first case, called “Caesarism”, a strong person could appear and intervene to dissolve the stalemate among different social forces. The second possibility was the case of *trasformismo*, which is the method used by the ruling elite to assemble different subaltern classes under a dominant coalition in Italy in the late 1800s and early 1900s. With this method, the ruling elite tried to keep “dangerous” ideas and movements, which had the potential to spread among dependent classes and create instability, under control (Cox, 1983, pp. 165-167; Gramsci, 2000, pp. 246-273).

As can be seen from his expanded state-society definition, Gramsci opposed the understanding of ignoring the superstructure (ideas) and putting emphasis only on the structure (material conditions). For him, the relationship between material powers, institutions and ideologies was interactive, and in cases when three categories of forces overlapped, historically a “historical bloc” emerged. An

important stage in the emergence of a historical bloc is the existence of a hegemonic social class among one of the subordinate classes that can build its hegemony over others. Intellectuals, who cannot exist independently of any social class, play a crucial role for the development and maintenance of the historical social class they are bound to. Accordingly, in order to ensure harmony among group members, intellectuals commit themselves to developing ideas, technologies and institutions that are in line with the interests of the class they belong to (Cox, 1983, pp. 167-168; Gill, 2008, p. 60; Gramsci, 2000, pp. 301-307).

Despite his focus on Italian politics, Gramsci was very much aware of the extent to which national politics and hegemony established at the national level were influenced by, but could also influence, the international level. In other words, he examined national politics within the context of the international: “To be sure, the line of development is towards internationalism, but the point of departure is “national” - and it is from this point of departure that one must begin. Yet the perspective is international and cannot be otherwise” (1971, p. 240). Thus, states, which are the main actors of international politics, provide the platform in which social forces interact with each other and hegemonies of social classes are established. International level hegemony, on the other hand, is realized through the exportation of the national hegemony to the international level. In this context, while Britain, France, the US and the Soviet Union succeeded in transforming themselves into powerful states by experiencing social and economic revolutions, other states were only able to import certain elements of these revolutions through passive revolutions, and therefore had to be content with subordinate positions (Cox, 1983, pp. 169-170; Gramsci, 1971, p. 240; Morton, 2007, pp. 99-101).

HMCT, to examine how the world operates from a historical perspective, applies the Gramscian, or thick, conceptualization of hegemony to the international/global level. In other words, instead of the commonly used thin definition of hegemony as the dominance of a state over other states, it follows the Gramscian definition that takes states as well as national and international/trans-national civil society into account. The first definition, which is based primarily on material power, does not describe a hegemonic order, but a non-hegemonic order that is called “dominance”. The

domination of a powerful state in the international arena is not a sufficient, albeit a necessary condition, for the construction of hegemony. Thus, to achieve hegemony a state-society complex needs to go beyond dominance (Allan, Vucetic & Hopf, 2018, p. 840; Cox, 1981, pp. 139-140, 1983, pp. 170-171).

Cox, following Gramsci, states that historically hegemonies are first built at the national level and then transferred to the international/global level. Therefore, in order for a state to establish its hegemony at the international/global level, a social and economic revolution must first be experienced within its borders. In order for the social class that gains the greatest benefit from the revolution to establish its hegemony at the national level, it needs to gain legitimacy by acquiring the consent of subaltern classes/groups. Only this way a nation can obtain the amount of productive and destructive capacities that is sufficient for it to surpass all of its competitors and to build and shape a new world order. As a result of this supremacy, the national hegemony can be moved to the international/global level with all its culture, institutions and technology. However, material supremacy is not enough and in order to establish an international/global hegemony, similar to the national level hegemony building process, the hegemon-to-be must gain the consent of other state-society complexes. While the internalization of hegemony in core states, which have similar state-society complexes with the hegemonic power, is a relatively easy process, in peripheral countries the emulation process takes the form of a passive revolution and is therefore not as dense and consistent as in the core states, especially among masses, if not among elites. Therefore, the density and influence of the hegemony differs in different parts of the world order. In short, hegemony is more than an order among states at the international level. It is an order with a dominant mode of production that penetrates into all states and integrates subaltern modes of production. Thus, it becomes a complex of international social relations that integrates social classes located in different parts of the world (Cox, 1981, pp. 139-140, Cox, 1983, pp. 171-174; Gill, 2008, p. 54).

Throughout history, hegemonies have created opposing forces that have challenged their positions in the world order. Counter-hegemonic forces have sought to delegitimize the dominant order through the construction of a new counter-society

that questions and denies the rules and principles of the hegemonic order. Put differently, to replace a hegemonic order with a new one, it is necessary for counter-hegemonic forces to create a new historical bloc through war of position. The key point for such a strategy to be successful is being fully aware of the structure and strength of the existing order. When an order is hierarchically structured and powerful, counter-society's attacks can lead to the erosion of the legitimacy of the established order but may also end up with strengthening the willingness of some elements to maintain the dominant order (Cox, 1983, pp. 173-174; Cox & Schechter, 2002, pp. xv-xvi; Gill, 2008, 37).

International organizations play an important role in the creation and maintenance of hegemony. These organizations, in majority cases founded and supported by the hegemonic power, are responsible for regulating the general principles and universal rules that help the dissemination of dominant economic and social forces and therefore, the hegemonic world order, and ensuring that states and civil society forces abide by these rules. In other words, international organizations contribute to the legitimacy of the dominant order by setting up and spreading the norms and rules of that order. In addition, by means of *trasformismo*, these organizations turn elites in peripheral countries into instruments of legitimizing the hegemonic order, who may initially be inclined to transforming that order as members of these organizations. This way, *trasformismo* allows international organizations to absorb and assimilate counter-hegemonic ideas. Starting from this point of view, Cox states that international organizations do not provide suitable channels to fight against the hegemonic order (1983, pp. 172-173). Van der Pijl, on the other hand, opposes this view and indicates that by being a member of those organizations an ideological struggle can be held both within and between international organizations and through them support can be provided to both local and international civil society and non-governmental organizations (2004, p. 201).

3.2.1 China's Rise in the Neoliberal World Order: The Old is Dying, can a New Order Be Born?

The scholars of HMCT are quite sceptical about the likelihood of China or any other state to become the next hegemonic power in a new, more egalitarian world order respectful of diverse cultures and civilizations. In that regard, notwithstanding their goal of transcending the existing order with a fairer one, they can be considered as pessimists in the sense George Sorel would describe it: “a realization of the constraints that bear upon any kind of action rather than any hopes for ideal solutions” (Garcia & Borba de Sá, 2013, p. 310).

Since, according to HMCT, changes happening in societies, states and world orders are mutually related, historical materialist critical studies, in addition to examining China's position in the interstate system, also focus on alterations taking place in the Chinese state-society complex. In this regard, there is an ongoing debate among the scholars of this approach whether China's transformation in the post-Mao era can be described as a passive revolution or not. Kevin Gray contends that the capitalist restoration taking place in China since the late 1970s have been organized and brought into force through a passive revolution from above by the Chinese state (2010). Alex Callinicos, on the other hand, opposes the view that from 1978 onwards a process of passive revolution has been taking place in China for two reasons. During the Maoist period, first, the Chinese working-class never experienced self-emancipation and self-government and second, after victory, the CPC followed a logic of capitalist accumulation, namely an autarkic state capitalism. Thus, what China has been experiencing in the last four decades should be evaluated as a transition in between two variants of capitalism, rather than a passive revolution (2010). Elaine Sio-ieng Hui enters into the debate partially on Gray's side stating that in the three decades following opening up and reform, the Chinese state-socialism converted itself into a capitalist economy through a top-down passive revolution. However, recently, the Chinese state has started to change the strategy of coercing its people in order to gain their consent. In other words, currently, it is in the process of a hegemonic transformation in which the ruling class, consisting of state elites and Chinese capitalists, is trying to get the support of

the working class in a time when there is no alternative ideology to replace the socialist ideology to underpin the Chinese government's legitimacy. Yet, this is an ongoing process of class struggles which may or may not result as a success story for the Chinese ruling class (2017).

Taking side on the claimants of a passive revolution, van der Pijl asserts that in the first one and a half decade following the initiation of opening up and reform in 1978, the Chinese state-society complex has experienced a transition from a Maoist revolutionary to a state-socialist structure under a dominant state-class led by Deng Xiaoping. This process, as a matter of course, altered previous class formations both by restructuring the state class but also with the creation of a new class, a bourgeoisie class, under the aegis of the state class. However, this transition caused anxiety among the Chinese society which resulted in the Tiananmen revolt of 1989. Since then a new round of reorientation towards a state-capitalist structure has taken place. This reorientation of the Chinese society, according to van der Pijl, has turned China into a contender state with the potential to challenge Western supremacy in the coming period (2012).

Whether through a passive revolution or as a shift among different variants of capitalism, in the last forty years, China has transformed its Maoist state-society complex into a state capitalist one and improved its position in the power hierarchy by being an important production and commerce hub in the global economy while at the same time an important source of aid for developing countries and of investment for both developed and developing countries. Notwithstanding their diverging views on the possibility of China becoming a new hegemon, followers of a historical materialist critical approach have near consensus on the productive and financial capability of China in attracting other states to follow its lead. In the ideational realm, however, for these scholars, China does not seem to provide an intellectual and moral leadership for others to follow and thus, match the ideational requirements of hegemony building.

Allan, Vucetic and Hopf claim that the Coxian conception of hegemony is a useful but, due to its ignorance of the distribution of identity among the elites and masses, an insufficient way of understanding the dynamics of hegemonic stability and

transition. Hence, an analysis also needs to include the distribution of hegemonic identity, elite level beliefs and common sense in great power states and the relationship among the two sides to see if there is conformity between the hegemonic ideology and mass and elite level perceptions of national identity in other major powers. When there is incongruence among the reigning hegemonic ideology and the distribution of identity, the likelihood of hegemonic transition is higher. However, in order for such a case to be realized, a rising great power needs to gather together a counter-hegemonic coalition under an appealing ideology. Yet, due to its non-democratic national identity, insular and propagandist discourse and other great powers' inclination towards a democratic, both at elite and mass levels, and neoliberal identity, especially at elite level, the prospect of China becoming a hegemon does not seem bright. Indeed, despite being seen as an economic miracle, China does not carry the potential to build a counter-hegemonic coalition with the support of other great powers and alter the world order either by being a full member of it and transforming it from within or by altering it with a new one as an outsider. For Allan et al., the possibility of the existing order to stay steady under the leadership of a coalition of great powers or the fall of the US hegemony without being replaced by another hegemonic power seem more likely future scenarios compared to the creation of a world order under the Chinese leadership with an overarching ideology appealing to other great powers (2017).

HMCT, especially the early writings of Cox, Gill and van der Pijl, have been criticized by several scholars due to the negligence of non-Western cultures and non-great power states (Hobson, 2007; Hobson, 2012, Chapter. 10; Hobson & Sajed, 2017). However, recently both Cox himself and some other scholars started to introduce new perspectives to the theory to overcome the great power and Western-centric inclination of HMCT and to narrow the gap between theory and practice. In this regard, through their analysis on the efficiency of the China Scholarship Council (CSC) as a Chinese foreign policy tool that enhances China's national comprehensive power and influence over both Western and non-Western beliefs, Ham Myungsik and Elaine Tolentino make an important contribution to the China debate. Distinct from Allan et al.'s argument that China's insular ideology is not attractive to great powers, Ham and Tolentino claim that China has been successful

in using the CSC as a mechanism for spreading China-centred values and ideas of development, internal stability and foreign policy doctrines, especially among developing countries. In other words, by educating (potential) elites of peripheral countries, the CSC acted as a useful channel for socialising China's soft power through its distribution of China-centred ideas and practices like the Chinese development model, political and social stability under a non-democratic system, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs and unconditional financial and technical support. Thus, in recent years, in contrast with its influence on great powers, China has been quite successful in distributing China-centred values and ideas among at least the elites of peripheral countries (Ham & Tolentino, 2018).

With the idea that the world order has changed in the last decades and a new era is on the horizon, Li Xing and Zhang Shengjun indicate that the conception of hegemony initiated by Cox needs to be updated to include new features of the world order. According to these scholars, the conventional core-semi-periphery-periphery structure of the world is no longer valid because of the changes occurring in the relations between the US and other developed countries and rising powers. Due to the increasing importance of China and other emerging powers in international politics, production, finance, investment and aid, a new era of "interdependent hegemony" has begun. In this new age, the West no longer dominates structural power sources of the system. On the contrary, it needs active contribution of rising powers in governing the system. This new era, Li and Zhang claim, is better described by the concept of interdependent hegemony because this new order is characterized by an interactive and dynamic relationship between the defenders and challengers of the current US-led order. Furthermore, this is the start of a post-hegemonic order, in which the US needs to acknowledge diversity in global political economy such as "varieties of capitalism" and the increasing interdependency between itself and other powers. Rising powers, on the other hand, should be aware of the fact that despite their increasing productive and financial capabilities and importance in world politics, there is still much progress to be made on their side on issues of cultural, intellectual and moral leadership, norm setting and global governance. They further need to realize that neither China nor others are in a

position to build hegemony and hence, develop strategies for achieving counter-hegemonic alliances to balance unilateral actions of the US. In short, in the era of interdependent hegemony, the relationship between China and other emerging powers and the US-led world order should not be viewed as a zero-sum game in which rising powers gain strength at the cost of the US. On the contrary, the transformation taking place in world politics is a success of the existing liberal world order in co-opting its challengers as active contributors of global governance (Li & Zhang, 2018).

Similar to the idea of an “interdependent hegemony”, Cox rejects the possibility of a country or society to lead the future world order. For him, the most important problem the world is facing is the death of the biosphere. Since this catastrophic end cannot be prevented by any single country or society, major powers in particular must recognize that their future is tied together and only through a collective restructuring of the world order they can save the biosphere and thus, the future of the world. In other words, great powers need to reach a consensus on a large scale and get used to the idea of multilateralism, as in the case of G20, instead of unilateralism. Similar to Arrighi, Cox looks back at the historical Chinese world order, in which China acted as a cultural leader and centre of attraction whereas neighbouring countries as voluntary adapters of its culture. He regards this historical China-led order as a very loose image of a future plural order which he thinks is the most hopeful alternative for humanity. However, today’s China, unlike the past, does not want to be seen as a world leader but rather as a responsible stakeholder that presents and advocates new ideas to the world. In the end, Cox hopes, this process may pave the way for a plural world order that, unlike the “one-civilization” vision of the US, respects and values diverse cultures, civilizations and ways of life (Cox & Schechter, 2002, p. 191; Garcia & Borba de Sá, 2013, pp. 307-311).

3.3 Conclusion

From the 1970s onwards, mainstream theories of IR have been under challenge from different approaches with distinctive views on the way the world is organized and should be analysed. Among these approaches, world-systems analysis pioneered by

Wallerstein and HMCT led by Cox have occupied important places in attempts to propose alternatives to the existing world system/order and knowledge production structures. As shown above, these two approaches diverge in important degrees from each other as well as share the common idea of overcoming the Eurocentrism of the existing international system and knowledge production and of creating a just order, which respects the multiplicity of civilizations and universalisms by historicising intellectual processes. In other words, Wallersteinian world-systems analysis and Coxian HMCT have been critical on the Eurocentric character of knowledge production in IR scholarship and hence, seek to transcend this region-centric perspective and achieve multiplicity in knowledge. However, notwithstanding their shared goal of transcending Eurocentric thinking, both scholars have been criticized by their Eurocentric attitudes in their analyses. According to John Hobson, both of the above discussed neo-Marxist IR approaches suffer from subliminal Eurocentrism while simultaneously being critical of the imperialist and capitalist nature of the West. In other words, having a critical stance against the West does not automatically make these perspectives anti-Eurocentric. These two critical approaches put the supremacy of the West in world political economy at the centre of their analyses while visualising the East as the passive victim of this supremacy. Therefore, notwithstanding their diverging approaches to the world, world-systems analysis and HMCT in fact have only minor differences in terms of their “subliminal anti-paternalist Eurocentrism” (2012, pp. 234-235).

Hobson characterizes Wallerstein’s version of world-systems perspective as “critical Eurocentrism”. While acknowledging his emphasis on the need to transcend Eurocentricity of knowledge production and hence the need to create multiplicity of universalisms, Hobson claims that Wallerstein prioritizes the West in its relations with the rest and for a number of reasons have a Eurocentric perspective. Wallerstein distinguishes the dynamic West from the “static” East, which per him, lacks the ability to self-create the necessary conditions for the emergence and maintenance of capitalism. He, moreover, privileges the West by emphasizing the endogenous characteristics of the rise of European capitalism whereas ignores the importance of exogenous factors such as the extra-European long-distance trade. Accordingly, Wallerstein emphasizes the fragmented nature of political power

among European powers and hence, the anarchic nature of the European state system, rather than the unified political structure of Eastern world-empires. At this point, he underlines the emergence of capitalism as a unique world-system that has pervaded the whole world and hence, eradicated every world-empire and mini-system in the globe. This process of imperialist expansion, according to Wallerstein, converted non-European systems into peripheral zones that are functional to capitalist exploitation and thus, created the core-periphery structure of the world-system. This way, Wallerstein de-subjectifies the East and, in general, the rest as the victimized other of the West. Through the core-periphery structure of the modern world-system, which he claims to be of vital importance for the persistence of the system, the West keeps peripheral zones under-developed. The periphery, on the other hand, bows to the inevitable and accepts its role as the exploited whereas the semi-periphery has consented to the task of acting as a buffer zone in between the exploiters and exploited (2012, pp. 236-241). Furthermore, in its analysis on the core-periphery structure of the world-system, while addressing the issues of colonialism and imperialism, world-systems analysis puts emphasis extensively on the interests and impetus of the colonizers and imperialists, rather than the colonized and the exploited (Miller, 2013, p. 2). In other words, world-systems approach neglects the colonial experiences and histories of anti-imperialist struggle of the colonized peoples.

Wallerstein's bid for multiplicity of universalisms in knowledge production has been a matter of debate as well. Michael Burawoy claims that the aim to reach pluralistic universalisms and unification of social sciences by eradicating the divisions among the disciplines is not a prudential project but indeed "a programmatic return to the ambitions of 19th century positivism – the unification of all scientific knowledge" (2007, p. 139). In the current order, disciplinary divisions among social sciences is a fact and only under a totalitarian order in which the separation among economics, politics and society is dissolved can the divisions in between the disciplines be unified. Furthermore, the current world order is under the dominance of neoliberal ideology and hence, academia and knowledge production are under the attack of the market forces and the state. Therefore, rather than factitiously and forcibly trying to unify these diverging ways of thinking about the

world, social sciences scholarship needs to establish an interdisciplinary dialogue and an alliance that shows and links the differences between regional, national and local scholarly production as well as that overcomes the hegemony of the neoliberal ideology. Moreover, instead of focusing solely on the linear historical development of social sciences as was experienced by the Western academia, as Wallerstein has done, new research must be aware of the diverging experiences of semi-peripheral and peripheral academia and reflect their distinctive approaches to social sciences. *Conditio sine qua non* of this endeavour of knowledge production is to leave the ivory towers of the academia and open the social sciences to extra-academic audience and reflexive thinking and hence, meet and talk to the public, especially the ones whose right to speak and autonomy are threatened by the neoliberal transformation that have been taking place since the 1980s (Burawoy, 2007, pp. 139-146). In other words, scholars of world-systems analysis and other approaches that stem from the Western academia need to engage in dialogue more with the public in line with their calls for creating multiplicity of universalisms and hereby, move towards creating more reflexive knowledge discussing societal goals with the people, and also open space for academic research originating from semi-periphery and periphery.

As Wallerstein, unfortunately, Cox has also fallen into the traps of Eurocentrism. Despite his late shift towards a more pluralistic perspective that aims to create a plural world order encapsulating multiple civilizations, cultures and ways of life, Cox's especially early writings suffer from subliminal anti-paternalist Eurocentric knowledge production. Such that, in this way his approach turns out to become the type of theory he works hard to de-naturalize and transcend: a problem-solving theory that legitimizes the power structures of the existing unjust world order.

Even though their conceptualizations of hegemony are distinct from each other, the Coxian conception of hegemony creates a similar problem of Eurocentrism as Wallerstein's approach does. In his studies, like mainstream IR theories and world-systems analysis, Cox's primary focus is on the Western great powers and hegemons, while non-Western states like China escape his notice. This negligence, as a matter of course, affects his definition of hegemony. If he included international

systems other than the Westphalian system, for example the historical tribute system of China, in his analysis, Cox might have come up with another conception of hegemony. As discussed above, in the Coxian approach, all hegemonic state-society complexes so far reached that status first by experiencing social revolutions and then transporting the features of its hegemonic society to the international level. In this way, the hegemonic state takes the control of the world political-economic system. Throughout the process, while some other (Western) core countries also experience social revolutions, (non-Western) peripheral countries import some features of the hegemonic society through passive revolutions. Thus, as passive agents, rather than having the capability to self-generate, non-Western societies realize change with the external influence of Western societies. Another point related with the issue of Eurocentrism is the link between the hegemon and international institutions. According to Cox, as entities created by the hegemonic state, international institutions contribute to the legitimacy of the dominant order. Furthermore, by means of the strategy of *trasformismo*, these organizations turn elites in peripheral countries into instruments of legitimizing the hegemonic order. This way, this strategy enables international organizations to absorb and assimilate counter-hegemonic ideas. Once again, such analysis positions non-Western societies as passive bearers of hegemonic structures. It, additionally, serves the interests of the power holders by discouraging potential counter-hegemonic movements. In other words, through his Eurocentric analysis, Cox inadvertently turns out to be a supporter of the interests of the US like the scholars of problem-solving mainstream IR theories (Hobson, 2012, pp. 243-246, 253).

Another commonality in their analyses is the stabilizing role attributed to the hegemon (Hobson, 2012, p. 239, 244). At this point, Cox and Wallerstein, unintentionally, share the wisdom of mainstream IR and their intellectual support for hegemonic stability. Such a preference for stability, quite paradoxically, understates imperialist policies of the hegemon and other core states in the world-system and the sufferings non-Western societies had to encounter. Such that throughout the history of the modern world-system, there is no single time when a hegemonic power managed the relationships between central and peripheral states in a fair way. Quite the contrary, since the very beginning, the rise of Europe has based on a brutal and

bloody military expansion to conquer and exploit new areas of the globe (Halperin, 2006, pp. 45-50). In other words, these two critical scholars' proposition that the hegemonic power provides stability in the anarchic state system and world economy understates the characteristics of such stability as an uneven balance in which the West has dominated the system and hence benefited from its relations with the rest of the world. Therefore, world-systems analysis and HCMT share the hegemon's perspective of stability, which has always been to maintain the existing unjust world-system. In this manner, unintentionally and paradoxically, Cox and Wallerstein naturalize the uneven relations of the system they intend to criticise and transcend. Instead of focusing only on the European world-system or Western powers in the world order, if these scholars had chosen also to analyse the history of non-Western parts of the world and hence had a world history perspective as other world systems analysts like Janet Abu-Lughod, Andre Gunder Frank and Barry Gills and as other Gramscian scholars like Adam David Morton did, Cox and Wallerstein would have come with different and in fact non-Eurocentric conceptions of hegemony (see Abu-Lughod, 1991; Frank & Gills, 1993, Chapters 3, 4 & 5; Morton, 2007).

Western-centric attitudes of world-systems analysis and HMCT are also reflected in their evaluations of China and its relations with the US. As shown above, both perspectives consider the case of China and the possibility of a future global order in terms of their Western-centric hegemony conceptions. In other words, instead of thinking about another, new type of leadership that China may propose to the world or the possibility of creating a different kind of world order, they evaluate the phenomenon of China and Sino-US relations in terms of the previous Western hegemons. Hence, with the exception of Arrighi, these critical scholars continue to ignore the historical legacy of non-Western systems and especially the traditional China-centred world-system/order. For example, Gray, Elaine S. Hui and van der Pijl examine the post-Mao era in terms of the concept of passive revolution. This way, they underestimate the self-generation potential of the Chinese state-society complex and hence, degrade it to the position of a passive bearer of Western social revolutions.

In short, contrary to their intentions to propose alternatives for the future, contributions of world-systems analysis and HMCT, albeit unwittingly, help the power holders to naturalize, stabilize and eternalize the existing unjust world-system and hence, lose their value as critical and anti-Eurocentric approaches. In line with the aim of the thesis to understand and explain the power-knowledge nexus and the persistence of Western-centric knowledge production, showing the Eurocentric attitudes of critical Western IR approaches and their links with the power structures was the intention of this chapter. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Coxian HCMT and Wallersteinian world-systems perspective should be disregarded as of no use. Above all, from the 1970s onwards, for all their problems, these approaches have led the attempts to reveal the Western dominance in the world political-economy and the Eurocentric nature of knowledge production. This way, they have broadened the horizon of critical thought and contributed to the efforts of critical scholars in proposing alternatives to overcome the existing unfair Western dominated global order. In other words, through their analyses that demonstrate the abnormality of European dominance in the world-system, these two approaches, although insufficiently, contribute to the efforts to cure the world from the malady of Eurocentrism (Wallerstein, 1993, p. 295).

An important part in this endeavour is to bring in the experiences and histories of other cultures and societies as well as to produce knowledge from a non-Western-centric perspective with diverging ontologies. This is what the next two chapters aim to do by analysing the contributions of mainstream and non-mainstream Chinese approaches to debate on the transformation and rise of China.

CHAPTER 4

MAINSTREAM CHINESE CONCEPTIONS OF A RISING CHINA: OFFERING LESSONS FOR THE PARTY ELITE

When the CPC started its reform and opening up policy in December of 1978, most probably no one, including the initiators of economic reforms, expected such an outstanding development performance as has taken place in the last four decades. The Chinese society and state transformed their country from one of the poorest to the second largest economy in the world. In due course, China became the workshop of the world, removed hundreds of millions of people from poverty, urbanized more than half of its population, furthered education campaigns started in the Maoist era and hence, transformed the lives of its people tremendously. This massive economic and societal transition, while included an immense military modernization programme, did not bring political change in the way the Western world has long expected. In other words, unlike the conventional wisdom of the theory of modernization, economic development and marketization did not bring with it a political transition towards liberal democracy. Rather, the CPC continued its dominance in the political as well as the economic and public spheres and hereby, created a distinct development and governance model from the Western models of neoliberal economy and liberal democracy. This way, specifically since the 19th Party Conference held in October 2017, China has been proposing an alternative development model to developing countries in which they can localize different development experiences while keeping their own political systems, instead of following the neoliberal model of the West. In short, the Chinese exceptional trajectory challenges the universality claim of the Western modernization experience.

A similar process has been going on for some time in the world of ideas as well. According to the ruling elite and many Chinese intellectuals, China's rise brings

with it the need to create a way of thinking in Chinese terms. A majority of Chinese people, including ordinary people, but especially governing elites and intellectuals, do not believe in the validity of universal truths and values, especially the universality of Western discourse and values such as liberal democracy. Quite the contrary, these people talk about the need to counter “the proselytising Enlightenment values largely associated with the West” (Brown, 2018, p. 84). In a 2011 speech, Hu Jintao warned Communist Party members against the intensifying hostile strategies of foreign powers to Westernize and divide China and the need to resist this plot in the cultural realm and to bring back ideology and hence, improve the status of socialism with Chinese characteristics (2012). Throughout his presidency, Xi Jinping has also emphasized the importance of ideological and political work and education a number of times and has stressed the significance of following the mainstream ideology and discourse of the country in countering false ideas and thoughts (Xi, 2013; Xinhua 2019) which can be read as Western universalism. Many Chinese intellectuals hold a similar view with the Party elite and actively contribute to the state’s new discourse generation efforts such as Hu era concepts of “peaceful development” and “harmonious world” and Xi’s “Chinese Dream”. These examples show the increased confidence in homegrown conceptions at the Chinese state and academic levels. It also reveals the ability and desire of the Chinese elites to use Western ideas only selectively and thus strategically to frame and legitimize their own governance actions and ideologies towards both domestic and international audiences.

In this context, this chapter aims to provide an analysis on the differences and similarities between two approaches of mainstream Chinese IR theories; the *Tianxia* and Tsinghua Approaches. Before debating them, however, the chapter starts with an assessment on the development of Chinese IR community since the Mao era but in particular attempts of creating a Western style Chinese School of IR. After that it focuses on the *Tianxia* Approach and its distinctive and unique Chinese perspective to the way the world is organized. Subsequently, the chapter continues with the Tsinghua Approach’s contributions to the issues of conceptualising hegemony, hegemony-building processes and the relationship between an existing hegemonic power and a (potential) challenger power(s). After evaluating the contributions of

these two approaches, the chapter provides a discussion on the rise of China from the mainstream Chinese point of view. Finally, the chapter ends with an evaluation on the relationship between the Chinese IR academia and the Party elite. This way, in line with the curiosity of the thesis to understand and show the close nexus between knowledge production and power structures, the heterogeneity of knowledge and the influence of locality on the knowledge produced about China, the chapter aims to disclose the close relationship between the CPC and the Chinese academia and hence, the similarities of the mainstream Chinese and US IR communities in their relations with their respective states.

4.1 Chinese IR Theories: Theorizing a Harmonious World, Peaceful Development and the Chinese Dream

Similar to the US-centred realist and neoliberal institutionalist problem-solving theories, the contributors of the so-called Chinese School of IR theory aim to find solutions to the problems faced by their own state. However, the emergence of such a school is a new phenomenon. The initial attempts of Chinese scholars to study IR in the Western sense date back to the early 1950s. Yet, these steps were mainly pre-theoretical action-oriented studies that aimed essentially to provide information to and serve the needs of the political leadership of the CPC (Qin, 2007, pp. 317-318, 2011, pp. 232-233). Thus, when compared with Western-centred IR theory production which has a history of at least 100 years,¹⁰ Chinese IR theory building is a relatively young endeavour. Still, it has become one of the prominent initiatives for challenging the Western- and especially the US-centred IR knowledge production, and diversifying, localizing, deepening, stratifying and decolonizing IR studies (Jones, 2006; Tickner, 2013; Yalvaç, 2014).

Attempts for creating a Chinese School of IR started thirty years ago in 1987 with the first IR conference held by Chinese scholars in Shanghai. This conference may be regarded as the origin of Chinese IR theory building attempts. However, the

¹⁰ Even though the year 1919 has been generally accepted as the year for the initiation of the IR discipline, some scholars refuse such a claim and argue for earlier dates. See Carvalho, Leira & Hobson, 2011 and Schmidt, 2002.

Chinese IR community had to grow mature for almost two decades until innovative theoretical studies were materialised. In other words, to “learn” how to research and produce knowledge in a “proper way”, Chinese IR scholars needed to pass through the theory-learning phase of importing and internalising Western and especially, mainstream US IR theories, which dominated IR knowledge accumulation and production in China, and nearly hindered the inflow of non-mainstream and critical theories to Chinese IR academia. This learning phase created awareness among the intellectuals on the difference between action- and knowledge-oriented research. Furthermore, this period witnessed three important debates among Chinese IR scholars that contributed to the development of IR studies in the country. The first concerned China’s relations with the international system. The main problematic of the debate was “should China continue its early revolutionary foreign policy and isolate itself from others or become a ‘normal state’ open to the outside world?” This was a debate mainly among Marxist and realist Chinese IR scholars, and resulted in the victory of realists. Hereby, realism emerged as the first mainstream US IR theory in the mainland academia and, as in other fields of the Chinese intellectual world, Marxism lost its attraction among Chinese scholars. The second debate revolved around the national interests of China and the ways in which to realise these interests. This time, the debating parties were primarily realists and liberals. While the former regarded the acquisition and maximization of power as the most important national interest of China, the latter laid weight on relations with and participation in international institutions and regimes. In due course, both sides agreed that both of the policy options were equally important and should be incorporated. Herewith, liberalism emerged as the second US IR theory and as an equivalent to realism (Qin, 2007, pp. 319-321, 2011, pp. 234-244).

The still ongoing third debate inquiries into what kind of a great power China currently is and will become in the years ahead: a status quo or a challenger power? This debate is closely related to and dominated by the China threat theory in the US. Main debating parties are the Chinese representatives of the three US-centred mainstream theoretical approaches of realism, liberalism and Wendtian constructivism. The two paths and identities offered by these parties to China, being peaceful or revisionist, are also rooted in the US thinking. While most Chinese

realists, similar to the US realists, claim that the relationship between a hegemon and a rising state ultimately turns out to be a conflictual one, most Chinese liberals and constructivists reject such a deterministic approach and argue that if a rising state chooses to integrate with the international system/society, both that state and the hegemon will benefit materially from such an integration. Moreover, through engaging with the international society, claim constructivists, a rising state may experience an identity shift and transform into a responsible stakeholder. In short, similar to the US IR scholars discussed in the first chapter, according to most Chinese realists, the relationship between China and the US cannot be peaceful, whereas for most Chinese liberals and constructivists if China continues its policy of openness and integration into the outside world and transform itself into a status quo power it can establish a peaceful relationship with the US and the world. As a consequence of this debate, constructivism emerged as the third US-centred IR theory on an equal footing with realism and liberalism and this way, a tripartite division has been created in the Chinese IR community (Qin, 2007, pp. 321-322, 2011, pp. 245-248; Ren, 2016, p. 35).

The ongoing third debate on the rise of China is also closely related to Chinese IR scholars' theory-building efforts. Ren Xiao claims that since the 2000s, the inability of the Chinese IR academia to create its own theoretical considerations and therefore, the necessity for them to rely on topics and considerations imported especially from the US, have witnessed change. For him, in the last 15 to 20 years, Chinese scholars have been in a struggle for producing "innovative and meaningful scholarship" to counter the US intellectual hegemony in the field. By introducing new theories, not only Chinese but also other non-US intellectuals can and should contribute to the efforts to transcend the pro-hegemonic tendencies of the US-centred IR theories and their preferences for maintaining the existing world order as it is (Ren, 2016, pp. 36-37). In other words, Ren claims that "The key to the issue lies in non-American IR communities... providing the world with alternative ways of thinking about IR and of solving the world's pressing problems" (2016, p. 37). In other words, Chinese and other non-Western IR scholars, instead of copying the knowledge produced by the Western IR community, must think independently and innovatively and create their own theoretical ideas (Ren, 2016, p. 36).

Chang Teng-chi, on the other hand, states that the central issue for the Chinese School of IR is to represent China to the world as a peaceful state and this way try to overcome the China threat theory (2016, p. 83). Hu Weixing, following the dictum of Cox that “theory is always for someone and for some purpose”, and mentioning the linkage between theory and practice, indicates that as a rising power, China is in need of theories, which are rooted in cultural and historical traditions, to intensify its relationships with and make itself understood by the outside world (2016, p. 68-80). This issue is closely related with the link between power and knowledge. In line with Ren’s accusations on the relationship among the US IR theories and the US hegemonic position in the system, Chinese scholarly works and the political discourse of Chinese officials are also closely linked to each other. Such that, according to Nele Noesselt, Chinese IR theory building efforts serve two main purposes; firstly, promoting national identity formation and stabilizing the existing CPC rule and secondly contributing to China’s positioning in the global system (2016, pp. 109-111).

Qin Yaqing, on the other hand, claims that Chinese IR theory-building efforts lack a theoretical hard core that distinguishes a research programme from other research programmes. For him, a hard core has two interrelated and interactive features: physical/material and metaphysical/ideational. While the former is related to the main assumptions and hypothesis of a theory about the material world, the latter, which especially makes a social theory distinctive, builds-up the ontological essence and the identity of a theory. Westerners neglect this second component and focus on the first one (Qin, 2007, pp. 326-327). A big idea of a theory is not only the reality out there, as accepted by the mainstream Western IR, but it is also “the present problem perceived through a particular cultural and historical lens and conceived through a particular representational system” (Qin, 2007, p. 328), which is path dependent and culture specific. This is what the Chinese IR community lacks at the moment. Historical Chinese thought had a distinct meta-theoretical hard core, but this was destroyed during the modernization period in the early twentieth century as China tried to reconstruct its identity and intellectual culture along the Western enlightenment thinking in a struggle to become a part of the modern international system (Qin, 2007, p. 329). Since this identity formation process has been one of the

most fundamental problems of China, Qin indicates that “the most likely core problematic [of Chinese IR] is the relationship between China and the international system” (Qin, 2007, p. 334).

Since the early 2000s, several scholarly works have been introduced by the Chinese IR academia. These include the *Tianxia* (All-under-heaven) Approach of Zhao Tingyang, the Tsinghua Approach or moral realism led by Yan Xuetong, the Relational Theory of World Politics¹¹ of Qin, and the Balance of Relationship Theory of Shih Chih-yu and Huang Chiung-chiu (2016). In this chapter, due to their contributions to the hegemony debate, Zhao’s *Tianxia* and Yan’s Tsinghua approach are dealt with. Even though they are both regarded as part of the Chinese School of IR, these theories are distinct in two main aspects. First, while the Tsinghua Approach is an integrative approach combining Chinese and Western styles of theory building and knowledge accumulation, Zhao’s *Tianxia* Approach rejects the ontology and epistemology of Western political thought and explicitly relies on Chinese ontology and epistemology. Second, due to their distinct approaches to knowledge, Yan seeks to establish a scientific theory that is universally valid as in the case of Waltzian realism, whereas Zhao aims to create a distinctively Chinese approach to world order.

4.1.1 Rethinking Empire: The Tianxia (All-Under-Heaven) Approach

Zhao is not a political scientist or an IR scholar but a political philosopher by training, who is working as a Great Wall Professor of Philosophy at the prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), which has the basic mission to “provide important research papers and policy suggestions to the CPC Central Committee and the State Council” (China Factfile, 2009). As a member of the state-led CASS, Zhao has been influential among Chinese policy-makers in formulating their ideas on Chinese domestic and international politics. For example, he had been supportive of and most probably intellectually contributed to the formulation of Hu Jintao’s conception of “harmonious world”, even though he was to a certain degree

¹¹ For detailed analysis of Relational Theory of World Politics see Qin, 2012 and 2016.

critical of the support Hu was giving to the current world order. For Zhao, this chaotic and anarchic global order needs to be transcended and replaced with the *Tianxia* system that promises a harmonious coexistence to all under heaven (2018).

Despite his primary focus on political philosophy, Zhao's critique of the ontology and epistemology of Western political thought and his meta-theoretical and theoretical contributions have put him in an important place in Western and Chinese IR debates. In his main theoretical contribution, the theory of All-Under-Heaven, Zhao proposes the resurrection of traditional Chinese philosophy and ancient Chinese world order to apply it to the current era to overcome the problems faced by the world governance. In other words, his *Tianxia* Approach proposes a global solution to global problems. For Zhao, the principal problem of the current world is its lack of oneness. In other words, since there is no universally accepted political institution to govern the world society, the globe is a non-world or a failed world. It is a fragmented Hobbesian chaos created by nation states and an aggregation of nation states is less than the totality of the world. For that reason, attempts to create a unified world under these conditions are useless. Without a global political philosophy, the world cannot be completed. Thus, to establish a theory of the world, world politics should be understood not under the framework of internationality, but of "world-ness" (Zhao, 2006, p. 30, 2009, p. 5).

According to Zhao, the concept of the Empire of All-Under-Heaven, which is "a supposed ideal of a perfect empire", provides such a philosophy. It must be pointed out that this Chinese *Tianxia* empire is different from the concept of empire in the Western sense. While the latter stands for an imperialistic dominance that is imposed on the world by the strong through the rule of power, the former represents a system "of and for the world, or by the world" to achieve universal wellbeing. Arguing contrary to claims of "flattening the world" (Friedman, 2005), the ongoing process of globalization cannot promote universal wellbeing and wholeness of the world, because it speaks for the interests of the nation states rather than the world as a totality (Zhao, 2009, p. 6).

Zhao belies the concept of *Tianxia* with three meanings. The first is the earth, or all lands under heaven/the sky, namely the physical world. The second is the "hearts of

all peoples”, or the “general will of the people”, namely the psychological world. Finally, the third is a world institution, or “a political system for the world with a global institution to ensure universal order”, or “a utopia of the world-as-one-family”, namely the political/institutional world. As a combination of physical, psychological and political/institutional worlds, this Chinese philosophical ideal of an institutional world is quite distinct from military empires of the Western philosophy. The former prioritises the whole world as political order, whereas the latter prioritises nation state, or parts of the world (Zhao, 2006, pp. 30-31, 2009, p. 9).

All-Under-Heaven is an inclusive philosophy in which no one and nothing is excluded from the system. One of the main principles of *Tianxia* is inclusion of all, rather than exclusion. Moreover, in the Chinese philosophy, relations are more important than individuals or things. Therefore, unlike the Western philosophy that attaches importance to individual rights and conflictual relationships among rivals, Zhao claims that politics must deal with coexistence and common happiness of the whole. As its main principle is oneness, Chinese political philosophy seeks “to turn the enemy into a friend” rather than compete for power maximization in an anarchic world of nation states (Zhao, 2006, pp. 33-34, 2009, pp. 10-11).

Since all peoples are included under-heaven, then all nations have the right to control the polity of All-Under-Heaven. However, in order to take the lead “the son of heaven” must gain people’s hearts, or the general will of the people. In other words, the consent of the people should be gained in order to have legitimate governance. Furthermore, to prove its rightness a political system or an institution has to be justified by doing better than previous rulers. Otherwise, the justification of revolution, which has a history of 4000 years in Chinese politics, may be put into practice and other candidates may claim their right to “reign” (Zhao, 2006, pp. 31-32, 2009, p. 6). In other words, material strength is not enough to control masses and hence, a leader must get the support of the people by serving them successfully. If the leader loses the consent of the masses and thus his/her legitimacy, then others may take over by necessary means, including revolution.

In Chinese political philosophy, political order mirrors family-ship, which is accepted as “the naturally given ground and resource for love, harmony and obligations... Family-ship is the minimal and irreducible location of harmony, cooperation, common interests and happiness” (Zhao, 2006, p. 32). Just as family-ship is the place of harmony and wellbeing for all members, the world-as-All-Under-Heaven is the location of universal wellbeing, harmony and oneness. It is a harmonious world-family. At this point, Zhao makes a distinction between political and ethical orders. While in providing political consistency and transitivity political order progresses from *Tianxia* to the state and to family, in providing ethical consistency and transitivity ethical order follows the opposite way, from family to the state and to *Tianxia*. Thus, a world can be put in order only under the governance of a world institution that reflects the virtue of family-ship. Otherwise, wholeness and harmony of the world breaks down and chaos prevails (Zhao, 2006, p. 33, 2009, pp. 11-12). Since traditional Chinese family structure was based on Confucian teachings that value hierarchical relationships among father and children, husband and wife, and elder and younger, Zhao’s world government that models Chinese family ties by necessity turns out to become a hierarchical order (Callahan, 2008, p. 752; Fairbank, 1966, p. 16).

For Zhao, the Chinese Empire before 221 BC represented an “ideal” type of empire, analogous to the Empire-of-All-Under-Heaven. Nearly 3000 years ago, in order to control larger tribes, the Zhou dynasty, which was a relatively small and weak tribe, established a “universal” system of *Tianxia* open to all nations. This was a tributary system that regulated the relationship among a suzerain centre, or a world government and sub-states. To become a suzerain centre, a state did not have to be the strongest of all states but had to get the support of others for its leadership. In other words, the central state ought to get the consent of other states. However, after the foundation of a world government, an institutional balance, which regulated the amount of land controlled and military capabilities possessed by each state, was established to ensure long term cooperation in the system. The world government was responsible for universal norms, institutions and order; for universal wellbeing and harmony among entities; and for the recognition of legitimacy of sub-states. While sub-states needed to gain recognition of their legitimacy from the suzerain

centre, they were independent in their internal affairs. Only when a sub-state declared war on other state(s) in the system the suzerain intervened to punish the aggressor state. There was an important check and balance institution in the system: revolution. If a suzerain turned out to become oppressive the choice to revolt was always an option for others. A final feature of the system was the right to move freely and work wheresoever. In other words, in the traditional *Tianxia* system, contrary to contemporary times, free movement of persons was the norm. Thus, unlike the *nationalistic* philosophy of Greek politics of *polis*, Chinese political order implied a *world* philosophy, comprising all under heaven (Zhao, 2006, pp. 34-35, 2009, pp. 7-9).

Zhao claims that just because this system was “too good to exist” it was dissolved by the Qin Empire that invaded and annexed all other states in the system. The limited power of the *Tianxia* world government left it vulnerable against stronger aggressive state(s). The system was institutionally reformed under the Qin Dynasty and a wider scope was put in place, at least theoretically, while the ideal of the system did not change. The main difference was the transformation of the previously legal tributary system into a voluntary tributary system. This system was open to all states on a voluntary basis. A primary feature of this system was stipulated reciprocity that was a key idea in Chinese philosophy. Unlike Western philosophy that attaches importance to the reciprocity or equal exchange of interests, Chinese philosophy puts emphasis on the reciprocity of hearts. This is closely linked to the idea of other-ness. Since relations are voluntary in Chinese thinking, dissimilar worldviews and preferences have to be respected. Thus, to establish a harmonious world, a multiplicity of things must coexist. In other words, while Western philosophy prefers sameness, Chinese philosophy favours diversity and other-ness. This is the principal distinction between cultural imperialism and cultural empire (Zhao, 2006, pp. 35-36, 2009, pp. 9, 14).

In short, by rejecting the ontology and epistemology of the Western philosophy, Zhao’s *Tianxia* Approach brings a very different perspective to the conception of world order than both realist and neoliberal institutionalist thinking. While *Tianxia* argues for the wholeness and inclusiveness of the world and universal wellbeing of

all in a harmonious world order, realism and liberalism emphasize the fragmented nature of world politics and competition for national or individual self-interest in an anarchic world. However, it should be remembered that the weak institutional design of the *Tianxia* system during the Zhou Dynasty led the system to collapse under the attack of a powerful sub-state. Furthermore, challenges that the world is facing have undergone great transformations since the Zhou Dynasty. Thus, the ancient All-Under-Heaven system must be renewed to meet the requirements of the future world of an interdependence of plural identities and civilizations. If such a world is guided by relational rationality and universal consent, instead of individual rationality and self-interest maximization, then diverse civilizations can live in a world of compatible universalism. This can be achieved, according to Zhao, by harmonising Greek and Chinese traditions (Zhao, 2009, p. 9, 17, 2018).

4.1.2 The Tsinghua Approach

In 2005, a group of scholars from the Tsinghua University,¹² led by Yan, started a research project on pre-Qin interstate relations to draw lessons for the way that the modern international system operates and to discover intellectual sources for theoretical studies. The pre-Qin period was chosen because it is perceived to have been the golden age of Chinese political philosophy. The research project consisted of three-stages. The first stage was to determine pre-Qin thinking and writings on interstate relations. Throughout this stage, while the team tried to avoid categorising pre-Qin philosophy according to modern IR schools of thought, to explain ancient Chinese political thinking they still, in some degree, had to associate with contemporary theories. After this first stage was completed in 2008, the second stage, which was to analyse and turn the thoughts of pre-Qin thinkers on interstate relations into a systematic theoretical body, started immediately. To that end, the team applied modern scientific, positivist research methodology in classifying pre-Qin thought. The third and final stage has been to implement the outcomes of the first two stages to enrich the understanding of modern international relations by

¹² Due to their emphasis on and application of “scientific method”, “influenced by a positivist understanding of social science, with an emphasis on quantitative methods” in their research project, Zhang Feng named the studies of this team the ‘Tsinghua Approach’ (2012, p. 74).

providing a systematic (core) theory, presumably moral realism, to complement or replace existing IR theories. Starting from this final stage, according to Xu Jin and Sun Xuefeng, the research project has bifurcated and for the moment follows two directions: history and theory (Xu & Sun, 2016, pp. 163-169, 175; Zhang, 2012, p. 75). Xu and Sun refer to this bifurcation as “One Approach and Two Directions” (Xu & Sun, 2016, p. 162). While both directions aim to draw parallels between ancient and contemporary times, the historical approach mainly focuses on historical relations among East Asian states and China, whereas the theoretical approach pays more attention to theory than history. This second approach, pioneered by Yan, is the focus of this study (Xu & Sun, 2016, pp. 169-170).

Contrary to above mentioned claims on the possibility of creating a distinct Chinese approach to world governance, Yan, as a proponent of positivism, argues that scientific (IR) theory is a universal endeavour and thus attempts to create ethnocentric theories are pointless. Nevertheless, it is possible to enrich political theory by studying local knowledge and traditional/historical intellectual thinking of non-Western communities, as in the case of ancient Chinese philosophy of the pre-Qin era. There are mainly two ways to learn from pre-Qin thinkers. First, through analysing how they understood interstate relations and secondly, through the concepts they used to comprehend interstate relations. By integrating traditional Chinese thought with modern IR theory, a new theory can be developed to comprehend the contemporary international system and to draw lessons for policy making, especially for the Chinese elite (Yan, 2011b, pp. 200-204, 212).

Yan is a political realist who focuses on the relationship between political leadership and national power. For him, while political leadership plays a primary role in developing national power, economic and military capabilities have only a secondary role. Through their contributions to national power, political leaders can attain the capability to shape international relations. In this process, morality is the key to political leadership. Only morally informed political leadership, backed up by military and economic might, can become powerful enough to gain a dominant position in a hierarchical world order (Bell, 2011, pp. 2-3). In his studies, Yan examines the works and thoughts of pre-Qin thinkers on state power, interstate

order, leadership among states and hegemony building and shifts of hegemonic power. Through such an analysis, his theory of moral realism, differently from mainstream Western IR theories, researches the reasons why and the ways in which a rising power replaces an existing hegemon, rather than reasons of hegemonic decline. For him, due to the fact that a rising power has a stronger political leadership than the existing hegemon, it carries the ability to replace the hegemon (Yan, 2016, pp. 1-2, 25).

For pre-Qin thinkers, comprehensive national power consisted of political, military, economic and geographic aspects. Even though each of these factors realize a different end for the state, in order for a state to gain hegemonic status it needs to combine these four aspects of power. By enlarging the amount of land kept under control, advancing the welfare of the people and ruling virtuously, a state can increase its economic, political and military power and achieve world leadership. As a resource deposit of a state and an obstacle to other states, geographical conditions of a state can also play an essential role for hegemony building. Despite the importance of other factors, the key in attaining hegemony is political power, which takes precedence over both military and economic power. In other words, political power is the principal factor in achieving hegemony rather than military, economic or geographical factors. Even though there is a general agreement among pre-Qin thinkers on the importance of politics in integrating state power, their views on the main factor constituting the political power differ from each other. Their views vary from the ruler's morality to ruling benevolently and justly, from following several different policy guidelines to employing morally worthy people, and from introducing a legal system to integrating a number of these different means. Still, it can be argued that the common ground of these different views is the importance of the ruling elite of a state. Thus, the most important determinant for a state to become politically powerful is the political capability of the ruler and chief ministers. Therefore, an intelligent leader must strengthen his rule by employing worthy and talented people. Only this way a ruler can implement a successful collective leadership and governance and achieve hegemony. In short, there is a strong link between gaining hegemony and competing for capable personnel (Yan, 2011a, pp. 52-55; Yan & Huang, 2011, pp. 109-121).

The leadership of the ruler is also important for the type of interstate leadership the leading state constructs. There are mainly two types of interstate leadership: humane authority and hegemonic authority. Pre-Qin masters treat these two kinds differently. While some neglect any difference between humane and hegemonic authorities, the ones who distinguish them provide a number of different reasons. Guanzi argues that the main difference between these two authorities is the existence or lack of moral ability. For him, albeit both types of authorities maintain powerful material capabilities, humane authority possesses the capacity to correct other states' mistakes and has a high moral prestige, whereas hegemonic authority lacks such a high moral prestige. Because of that, hegemonic authority lacks the potential to lead and attract a majority of states in the system. Mencius makes a similar argument in saying that in restoring interstate order humane authority relies on morality, whereas hegemonic authority on strength. Furthermore, while humane authority follows a policy of benevolence and justice, hegemonic authority uses the jargon of benevolence and justice to improve its power. Finally, Xunzi argues that both authorities possess power and morality, but with different degrees. Hegemonic authority relies more on the power factor, whereas humane authority more on morality. So, while both authorities must rely on some material strength, they must have some political credibility as well. Only with such reliability a state can convince others to follow its leadership. Despite their negligence of a distinction between these two kinds of authorities, Confucius and Laozi also mention the importance of morality and prestige in achieving and maintaining benevolent hegemony or humane authority (Yan, 2011a, pp. 47-52; Yan & Huang, 2011, p. 118). In other words, humane authority represents "a comparatively harmonious international system" (Yan, 2011b, p. 204) that is quite different from a hegemonic order which relies mainly on the military power of the leading hegemonic state(s). Hereby, it can be claimed that there is a near consensus among pre-Qin thinkers that in order a state to lead legitimately it should not rely only on military force and coercion, but also gain the consent of other states. Interestingly, such an approach to interstate relations and legitimate leadership bears similarities with Gramsci's conception of hegemony that was conceptualised thousands of years later with a very different philosophical background in a very different societal setting.

According to some pre-Qin masters, international norms constitute the basis of a legitimate hegemonic order. So, in order to get the consent of others and achieve hegemony, a state needs to respect interstate norms. Through relying on interstate norms, the hegemonic state can find legitimate grounds for military intervention. Otherwise, it may harm and even lose its legitimacy. There are mainly three justifications for the hegemon to use military force: punishing an evil state, attacking a civilization of a lower level and the justness of the aim of a military campaign. An important aspect in creating a new hegemonic order is to establish new interstate norms that suit the changing needs of the society. Thus, the hegemonic state has to constitute new norms by altering the pre-existing norms and harmonise them with the changing dynamics of the society. However, this is a hazardous process because altering the pre-existing order may create problems for the relationship among states. For that reason, a trial period may be required to overcome the problems the transition process may cause (Yan & Huang, 2011, pp. 122-127).

Practicing the right strategy also plays an important role in hegemony construction. Pre-Qin thinkers, in the book *The Stratagems of the Warring States*, indicate two basic and mutually supportive strategies for attaining hegemony: annexation and alliance. For the politicians of the Warring States era, the strategy of annexation, which was accepted as the main strategy, was effective if applied thoroughly. In other words, in order to become successful not only the land but also the population must be occupied. This way the annexed people could be transformed and assimilated. However, since the end of the Second World War, with the establishment of the United Nations (UN) Charter, territorial integrity of a sovereign state has become an international norm. Therefore, the strategy of annexation is ill-suited for the existing international system. Since then, Yan and Yuxing Huang argue, the strategy of alliance formation has been substituted as the basic strategy for hegemony building. According to the principal of alliances, states function under an interstate system of mutual alliances where one or more alliances exist. When a strong state constructs and leads a bloc by establishing alliances with other states, as the leader of the bloc that state becomes a hegemon. If the bloc becomes the strongest among other blocs, then the leading state becomes the strongest hegemonic state. Finally, if the bloc is the sole bloc within the system, then the leading state

becomes the sole hegemonic state. For Su Qin, a pre-Qin political strategist, mutual trust and solidarity among allied states are the key to the strategy of alliance formation. In the absence of mutual trust and solidarity, collective action would become impossible and the alliance would fall apart. For the strategists of the Warring States period, the principal strategy is annexation, whereas alliance formation is of secondary importance. Therefore, the members of the alliance must be determined according to the needs of annexation. Since both strategies rely on military strength and superiority, timing of waging war occupies an important place to succeed. Most of the strategists in the book suggest that responding to an attack, rather than being the first one to strike provides advantages in winning hegemony (Yan & Huang, 2011, pp. 128-135).

Yan believes that contributions of pre-Qin thinkers on political thought can be helpful for students of IR in clarifying and evaluating today's world. Following traditional Chinese thinking, contemporary IR theories can be enriched by studying the beliefs and structures of leaderships, the relationships between leadership and political power, leadership and foreign policy-making, and leadership and international mobilization capability. Furthermore, since changes in hegemonic orders are results of human activity and strategy, hegemonic shifts are not natural successions as some systemic theories suggest. Therefore, through combining the pre-Qin Chinese thought and contemporary approaches, a better understanding of the objective factors that cause the rise and fall of leaderships and hegemonies can be revealed (Yan & Huang, 2011, pp. 139-140).

As discussed above, historical international norms form the basis of international orders, and as societies change in time international norms vary across different ages. Traditional Chinese social order was hierarchical and relied on hierarchical norms. However, as times have changed so have the norms underlying new social orders. Equality, rather than hierarchy, is seen to have become the norm within the Westphalian states system. According to contemporary (mainstream) IR theory, while domestic society has a hierarchic structure, international society is an anarchic system where actors function under the principle of equality. Still, according to Yan, despite the prevalent discourse on formal equality, there is an informal hierarchy

among nations. This hierarchic structure of the system is explicit in the power relations between members of international organizations such as the UN, the IMF and the WB. Thus, in order to reflect the facts of the current international order, international norms should integrate the principles of hierarchy and equality. In such a case, relations among actors in the international society can be structured under the norm of loose hierarchy (Yan, 2011b, pp. 212-213; Yan & Huang, 2011, p. 140).

Yan argues that traditional Chinese thinking underlines the importance of the leading state for the effective functioning of interstate norms, whereas contemporary IR theories emphasize the role of the system (Yan, 2011b, p. 214). For an explicit understanding of world affairs, these two thoughts must be combined. This way “we can work from the nature of the leading state to understand the process of socialization, institutionalization, and internalization of international norms” (Yan, 2011b, p. 214). As discussed above, what distinguishes humane authority from hegemony is its ability to lead other states in constituting, practicing and upholding international norms. By implementing and upholding norms, the leading state can ensure the internalization of these norms by other states. For pre-Qin thinkers, political power is the basic element in hegemony. Therefore, in the process of internalization the leadership of the leading state plays a decisive role. While a leader like Bill Clinton may have a positive influence in the internalization process, another like George W. Bush may have a negative influence. This is the reason why, according to Yan, political power, rather than material factors, should be taken as the core determinant in attaining hegemony. For a state to gain hegemony, it has to convert political power into economic and military power (Yan, 2011b, pp. 214-215). In this way, by using its power position and ideology, the hegemonic state may create new international norms that generate legitimacy even for the use of military force in external affairs (Yan & Huang, 2011, pp. 139-140). Through such an analysis, “we can establish a pyramidal framework for hegemonic theory in which hegemony is based on hard power, and hard power on political power” (Yan, 2011b, p. 215).

4.1.3 China Rising: Building A Harmonious World via National Rejuvenation

Notwithstanding their distinct approaches to theory building and knowledge accumulation, the writings of many mainstream Chinese scholars are related to the power structures of their country. In other words, their studies are linked with and hence, contribute to foreign policy making processes of the CPC. Yan, especially, represents a case in point.

His theory of moral realism is based on three core realist assumptions of anarchy and security dilemma, the linkage between international power position or status of a state and its national interests, and the zero-sum nature of the competition for power. Basing on these assumptions, moral realism argues that structural conflicts among an existing hegemon and a rising power are inevitable. Since the strategy of annexation is illegal according to the UN Charter, the strategic competition between rising and leading powers is based on getting more international support by attracting more allies. To get support from other states, the rising power needs to create a favourable environment for its rise by increasing its credibility (Yan, 2014a, pp. 159-160). Therefore, in order to win a strategic competition for international leadership, Yan argues, China needs to adopt a strategy of humane authority. Through such a strategy, it can gain international strategic credibility, which is the basis of international authority (Yan, 2014a, pp. 161-163). International strategic credibility is very important for altering the existing international configuration by gaining international support and allies, for reforming the existing and establishing new international norms, for building a new international order by changing the international power distribution and for maintaining that new order (Yan, 2016, pp. 21-23).

Yan and Qi Haixia define the relationship between China and the US as “superficial friendship”, which is by its nature a highly unstable relationship with frequent fluctuations. Unlike pessimist scholars who evaluate Sino-US relations as entering a new Cold War era and optimist scholars who argue that these two powers can avoid a conflictual relationship, Yan and Qi claim that despite the fact that Sino-US relations seem to turn more competitive and conflictual, in the foreseeable future

they do not appear to transform into a new Cold War. In other words, unless China and/or the US do not abandon the strategy of superficial friendship, a new Cold War will not emerge. However, this does not mean that their relation will stay as it is. As the power gap among China and the US narrows, especially as comprehensive national power of the latter decreases, the US will have to focus its strategic resources on areas of vital importance to its interests as in the case of the Pivot to Asia. In such instances, the strategic competition among these powers will intensify (Yan, 2010, pp. 266-269, 280-284; Yan & Qi, 2012, pp. 106-108, 124-125).

Even though Yan agrees with the theoretical assumptions Mearsheimer proposes, he rejects Mearsheimer's predictions on the Sino-US relations. According to Yan, China does not have to take the paths followed by previous great powers for international leadership. Contrarily it has to find out new strategies (Yan, 2014b, pp. 46-47). To succeed in such an increasingly conflictual relationship China must follow a creative grand strategy. Thus, to achieve the political goal of humane authority or at least hegemonic leadership, instead of copying a model followed in the past, China must be creative in constituting and implementing a grand strategy suitable for its rise, as Deng did from the late 1970s by implementing the grand strategy of modernising Chinese socialism. For Yan and Huang, such a strategy should include abandoning the non-alliance principle. Only by establishing alliances can China gain strategic international credibility and support (Yan & Huang, 2011, pp. 141-142). According to Yan, "China cannot win the strategic competition for international leadership with the United States unless it adopts a humane authority strategy" (Yan, 2014a, p. 162). To achieve that goal, it must change its long-standing strategy of keeping a low profile (KLP) that was put into effect by Deng in 1990/1 and followed by his successors Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. This is, Yan claims, what Xi Jinping has been doing since 2013.

From October 2013, China's main guiding foreign policy strategy has become the strategy of "striving for achievement" (SFA). SFA, Yan argues, is a creative strategy suitable for attracting allies by gaining strategic credibility and international morality. Unlike the KLP that is based on the non-alliance principle and maximization of economic benefits and development of China, the SFA aims to

achieve national rejuvenation by increasing comprehensive political power and gaining international morality. In an era when the strategic competition between China and the US seems to intensify, one of the main strategies in this rivalry will be to build more strategic alliances. In constructing alliances morality plays a vital role because international morality creates the basis for the legitimation of a state's actions by increasing the number of friends a state has and the international support it gets. In other words, making friends rather than making money creates the favourable environment necessary for national rejuvenation and international leadership. For these reasons, Yan claims, the SFA serves China's top goal of national rejuvenation much better than the KLP (Yan, 2014a, pp. 160-170).

In line with the goal of making friends, an important aspect of the SFA is to build communities of common destinies with neighbouring states. During the KLP period, the main attitude towards other states was that of being neither friends nor enemies. In other words, China was a neutral power treating almost all other states as components in upgrading the necessary regional and international environment for China's own economic development. However, since Xi's presidency, China has started to distinguish its friends from its enemies through a policy of rewarding states that are eager to contribute to its rise by linking their development trajectories with its own, whereas punishing the ones that are regarded as harmful with several means, including isolation and sanctions. Yan claims that constructing communities of common destinies is an extensive policy that covers a large spectrum of strategic elements ranging from economic interests to political benefits and security guarantees, and covers three strategically important focal areas: the Belt and Road regions of Central Asia and Southeast Asia, and the three South Asian nations of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh as parts of the economic corridor. By building communities of common destinies with nations in these regions, China will remove the option of regional dominance through military conquest, and unlike the predictions of Mearsheimer, will not follow the path taken by the US in the 19th century (Yan, 2014a, pp. 167-170, 2014b, pp. 47-48). In other words, China will not base its policy of hegemony building on only coercion but will also try to gain the consent of other states, as was suggested by pre-Qin masters. However, despite these positive signs that the SFA provides, Yan still thinks that if China keeps insisting on

its long-term non-alliance principle, it will be very hard for China to increase its international strategic credibility and hence, to gain international support for its revival and for international leadership (Yan, 2016, p. 26).

An important aspect of international leadership is international norms provision. As discussed above, international norms constitute the basis of a legitimate international order. Thus, in addition to achieving superiority in the international power structure, renewing and respecting international norms is mandatory in order for a state to gain consent of other states and establish leadership. In this context, Yan argues, pre-Qin thought provides two paths for China to follow: achieving either humane authority, or hegemonic leadership. In other words, China may either create a new type of international order which is relatively harmonious or establish a hegemonic order similar to the US-centred one (Yan, 2011b, p. 204). For China to demand reform in existing international norms or creating new ones, high strategic credibility and international support play a very important role. Only through alliance formation it might have the ability to change the power distribution in the existing order and hence create a new international order (Yan, 2016, p. 26).

In short, moral realism claims that an emerging power has to create favourable international conditions for its rise. Otherwise, due to the anarchic nature of the international system no one will serve it such an environment on a silver platter. That's why, Yan argues, the SFA, with its policy of establishing communities of common destinies, provides a suitable strategy for gaining international support and achieving humane authority. However, to be successful in its competition with the US, China also needs to abandon its long-term non-alliance principle and gain the support of other states. While the idea that a new Cold War is on the horizon is a misleading proposition, the era of unipolarity is over and the international system is once again transforming into a bipolar structure. However, such a structural transformation is the result of China's economic development and hence, the narrowing material gap among the two economies as much as the leadership vacuum provided by the US under President Donald Trump. Nevertheless, despite the high possibility that such a transition will be a turbulent one, it is less clear how China will try to fill in the gap left by the US and how Washington will react to the

policies of Beijing. Nevertheless, Yan indicates, China's desires for the coming ten years are less assertive than many Western analysts' expectations. Its primary goal, contrary to the claims of Mearsheimer and other US IR scholars, is to maintain the peaceful environment and to sustain the liberal economic order necessary for it to continue its economic development while avoiding a military confrontation with the US. Therefore, rather than competing for world leadership, these two states will primarily rival for economic and technological supremacy. Nevertheless, in the near future, it does not seem possible that either of the sides will have the capacity to challenge the other directly and thus, the rivalry among them will not turn into an all-out war to create a global chaos. They will somehow learn to live together, but this will be an "uneasy peace" (Yan, 2019). To put it differently, Yan does not think that China and the US are "destined for war".

Despite Yan's claims on establishing the ambitious goal of humane authority, Chang Liao Nien-chung states that China's efforts to change international rules, standards and norms do not mean a replacement of the Western world order with a completely new China-centred order or the removal of the US from the global leadership position. On the contrary, since China places emphasis primarily on peripheral diplomacy and creates regional institutions to uphold its relations with surrounding states, its efforts to reshape international norms are mainly for restructuring Asian regional order. In other words, China's primary focus area is not the world governance, but Asian governance, and for the moment, its main drive is towards regional leadership, not global leadership. However, such a policy may not result in humane authority as expected by Yan, but a hierarchic regional order. China's aspirations for regional leadership and efforts to retaylor regional governance may cause a demarcation between China and its neighbours and the emergence of a core-periphery structure in which China constitutes the core and other Asian states constitute the periphery. In such a case, China will play the role of a rule-maker, especially as a financier and aider, whereas surrounding countries will turn out to become rule-takers and dependents on China. Thus, in the end, a hegemonic regional order, resembling the historic Chinese order, may revive in Asia. If successful, such an order may either be a benign one as argued by several Chinese

leaders or turn out to be an oppressive one as argued by critics (Chang Liao, 2016, pp. 86-87).

Chang Liao argues that due to an important gap between China's ambitions and capabilities, regional, let alone global, leadership is a hard to accomplish goal for China, especially at a time when its economic growth is slowing significantly. Thereby, in order to achieve the goal of national rejuvenation and link the China Dream with its periphery, the country should support the international norms and governance that it had benefited enormously in the last three decades. Therefore, China's goal of national rejuvenation should not be the ultimate aim, but an instrument for an end. Furthermore, he claims that, unlike Yan's calls for ending the non-alliance principle, China has no intention of creating alliances that would be regarded as a threat to the US alliance system in Asia. Even though it is loosening its long-held principle of non-alliance by following a policy of increasing and strengthening partnerships, its main policy on alliances is to avoid its neighbours from becoming a part of a US containment policy against China (Chang Liao, 2016, pp. 87-88). In short, rather than creating a humane authority by gaining international support and making friends, Chang Liao argues, Chinese attempts to achieve regional leadership may result in a hierarchical order akin to the historical Chinese "world" order.

On the other hand, Wang Yuan-kang, who is a structural realist, argues that despite claims on Confucian pacifism, throughout history China has acted on the logic of balance of power and rational cost-benefit calculations and hence been a practitioner of realpolitik. That's why, in line with its power position relative to the US, China follows a policy of defensive grand strategy that aims to reduce the power gap between itself and the US. As can be inferred from its post-Cold War national security strategies the main aim of the US, on the other hand, is to sustain its global dominance and prevent another state from dominating Asia by maintaining the existing balance of power in the region. Contradictory goals of these two states create a security dilemma in which both sides view the actions of the other side as a threat. Because of the unipolar structure of world politics, Wang states, China tries to keep the US attention away from itself while narrowing the power gap with the

US through a two-way strategy of internal and external balancing. This is a strategy of modernizing its economy and military in a stable external environment. The official discourse of this strategy is “peaceful development”, which is a “strategy of smart balancing” (Wang, Y-K, 2011, p. 197) because it aims to strengthen China while simultaneously discrediting the China threat theory. However, according to Wang, Chinese history and structural realism suggests that this is an interim strategy and when the power gap between the two states will diminish, in order to fulfil its national interests, China will alter its defensive strategy with an offensive one to follow an assertive regional and global policy. This, in turn, will result in an intensified security competition among the US and China. Therefore, the main task of the 21st century will be to sustain this competition properly (Wang, Y-K, 2011, pp. 181-209).

4.2 Conclusion

China’s post-Mao era rapid economic development and ascent in the hierarchy of the international order has created a desire to contribute to global knowledge production among the Chinese elite and intellectuals. In other words, as China’s role in the global economy and politics has increased, the Chinese intelligentsia felt the need to put a Chinese voice to the discussions in social sciences and humanities and this way to challenge the hegemony of Western-centric understanding of the world. Due to the Chinese state’s dominance in the public sphere, this process was not free from the state since the CPC wanted to control the discourse produced at home, especially the mainstream knowledge production. Needless to say, since the late 1980s, while being supportive of the new research on IR, the Party also tried to guide the development of the Chinese IR community and benefit from it by integrating mainstream IR scholars to policy-making structures.

Similar to mainstream US IR theories, mainstream Chinese theories have become deeply involved in the relationship between the state and knowledge production as well. Their Mao era roles of servants of the state supplying policy-oriented studies, however, significantly changed since the late-1980s as they have transformed their research into a Western style to also include theoretical studies. Furthermore, in the

last decade or so, to produce new theoretical knowledge rooted in China, Chinese mainstream IR scholars are still closely related to and taking part in the policy making processes of the ruling elite. As shown above, mainstream Chinese scholars like Zhao and Yan aim to give intellectual support to and offer policy options for the Party in its desire for rejuvenating the nation and navigating China's relations with the outside world, especially with its neighbours and the US. In other words, these scholars are part of the established power and social relationships in their country and accordingly, try to offer ways of overcoming the problems the Chinese state is confronted with in its ambition of achieving a superpower status in the international system.

Second, comparable to realist and neoliberal theories, these two mainstream Chinese approaches claim to be universally valid as well. However, just as for mainstream US IR approaches, their claim for universality is also problematic and invalid. As a positivist, Yan openly endorses the universal character of knowledge production, yet this is not the case for Zhao. Similar to realist and neoliberal institutionalist approaches, Yan's moral realism enunciates its claim for universality by favouring the Westphalian system. Furthermore, rather than questioning the validity of Western assumptions, concepts and theories developed by the Western academia, Yan fully benefits from them in his intellectual endeavour of developing the theory of moral realism and evaluating world affairs. Accordingly, he treats China's local knowledge only as a supplement to the knowledge produced in the core. Therefore, the critique of mainstream US theories' claim for universality also holds true for moral realism.

Zhao, on the other hand, rejects the Westphalian universality and instead supports the idea that in the current international order there is no global political philosophy and no universally accepted political institution to govern the world society. To overcome this problem of incompleteness, he states, state-centrism must be transcended and the ancient *Tianxia* system needs to be adapted to the modern world. In other words, with the initiation of a world government resembling the traditional Chinese governance, plural identities and civilizations can live in a world of compatible universalism. Hence, by representing his approach as a cosmopolitan

approach that challenges the exclusionist universalistic premises of the Western philosophy, Zhao tries to obscure his own nationalist and exclusionist attitude. His distinctively Chinese approach to world governance is indeed another variant of a state-centric nationalist, or Chinese, solution to the problems the world faces. What he is suggesting is a Chinese version cosmopolitanism. In that sense, Zhao's approach is only different from the Western-centric approach by proposing a Chinese-centric perspective. As he labels the West and non-Chinese people as the other, Zhao's non-Western critique of the Western-centric worldview is in fact recreating the self/other dichotomy, but to the benefit of China. In other words, he is substituting the Western and in particular the US exceptionalism with the Chinese exceptionalism. In this way, he further reinforces and legitimizes the dominance of the strong by advocating the inclusion of others through conversion, which is a hierarchical way of implementing the Chinese philosophy of "turn[ing] the enemy into a friend" (Callahan, 2008, pp. 753-756).

Zhao's approach as well as Yan's, moreover, seek to contribute to the goal of relocating Chinese knowledge production from a peripheral to a central position in the core-periphery structure of social sciences. Being aware of the fact that the intellectual hegemony of the US still persists, Chinese scholars work hard to create "innovative" studies and transcend US hegemony in social sciences. Accordingly, mainstream Chinese scholars produce theoretical and practical knowledge and evaluate China-US relations based on their positions in this core-periphery structure of social sciences and with the intention of moving towards the centre. Therefore, rather than offering universally valid approaches, both Yan and Zhao produce historically specific, culturally limited and socially constructed knowledge with the intent of ensuring a stable pathway to China's rejuvenation.

In other words, mainstream Chinese IR knowledge production is closely intertwined with China's power structures. Yan and Zhao's contributions as well as research by other mainstream IR scholars serve the Party's domestic political rule and foreign policy needs and hence, international positioning of the country. Furthermore, since the Chinese IR community gives support to the policy-making processes of the CPC on China's relations with the outside world, its efforts are supported but also closely

scrutinized by the government. In other words, Chinese IR academia is, directly or indirectly, linked to the Chinese government. This situation can be clearly seen in the close link between the political discourses of the CPC elite and Chinese scholarly debates (Chang, 2016, p. 83; Noesselt, 2016, p. 110; Thuy, 2015, p. 25). Zhao's *Tianxia* approach is closely correlated with Hu's idea of "Building a Harmonious World". Furthermore, as stated above, Zhao is a member of CASS, which is directly associated with the top brass of the CPC and "represents the classical and conservative component of Chinese IR" (Thuy, 2015, p. 23). Similarly, recent studies of Yan are closely related to President Xi's idea of the "Chinese Dream". He even indicates that one of his aims of studying IR is to draw lessons and provide policy recommendations for China. In other words, policy relevance is of vital importance for Yan (2011b, p. 200). Therefore, it is fair to say that the mainstream Chinese IR academia is deeply linked to the power structures in China.

The respective places of these approaches in the core-periphery structure of social sciences and their links with power holders naturally affect their perspectives on theorizing the world order. Mainstream Chinese IR scholars conceptualise hegemony and analyse China's rise or "return" back to the centre of world politics (Hobson, 2011, p. 240) and the China-US relations in accordance with their ideological biases, positions in the core-periphery structure and links with their respective states. These scholars share a common goal of overcoming the dominant "China threat" discourse and ensuring the building up of the strength of their own state. Contra their US counterparts, in their definitions of hegemony Chinese scholars give only a secondary role to material power but attach primary importance to political power and morality. Under a benevolent rule, they claim, China can establish a just and harmonious world order through a policy of gaining international support and achieving humane authority. This way China can transcend the deficiencies and problems of the US hegemony. Therefore, it can be claimed that the mainstream Chinese approach to world affairs is an attempt to create favourable conditions for China in its rivalry with the US for world leadership. To put it differently, these scholars do not vision a just world where no power dominates others, but an international order that is dominated by China. In other words, mainstream Chinese scholars do not oppose hegemony but the US or in general

Western hegemony and hence, endeavour to provide the intellectual background of a future Chinese “humane authority”. In line with this thinking, Yan and his team substitute the debates on hegemonic decline in the West with the debates about hegemonic rise and transition that fit the current situation of a rising China.

To sum up, through its analysis of the attempts for developing a Chinese School of IR and the *Tianxia* and Tsinghua approaches, this chapter shows the locality of knowledge production in the Chinese academia as well as the relationship between knowledge production and the Chinese state. Furthermore, it claims that mainstream Chinese IR studies, similar to their US counterparts, are region-centric, non-inclusive, ideologically biased and value-laden. Since they are used in legitimizing the established power relationships and thus, ideologically biased towards the existing world order, mainstream Chinese theories seek for stability in the order and this way, ensuring the rejuvenation of their nation. Thereby, in their contributions to the attempts to establish a so-called Chinese School of IR, rather than diversifying IR knowledge production, transcending Western-centrism and hence, decolonizing IR, the *Tianxia* and Tsinghua approaches so far have fallen into traps of either Chinese exceptionalism or continued Western universalism.

The next chapter on Chinese critical and neo-conservative intellectual contributions to the debate about the transformation and rise of China provides alternative points of view on the power-knowledge nexus and the region-centricity of knowledge in the context of non-mainstream Chinese academia.

CHAPTER 5

CRITICAL AND NEO-CONSERVATIVE CHINESE CONCEPTIONS OF A RISING CHINA: ALTERNATIVE VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In all the practical work of our Party, all correct leadership is necessarily "from the masses, to the masses". This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge (Mao Zedong, 1965, p. 119).

In the post-Mao era, and especially during the 1990s following the political turmoil in 1989, like the mainstream approaches, critical Chinese approaches have also experienced a renaissance. Streams of new thought blossomed among the Chinese intelligentsia. In the time of Mao's China, intellectuals were closely associated with the CPC and contributed to knowledge generation primarily at the state's pleasure. With the relatively moderate environment of the reform and opening up period and the trauma created by the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, however, many intellectuals' apprehensions towards Chinese politics and transformations the country has been experiencing changed significantly. Discussions in the Chinese intellectual sphere flourished with contributions from newly emerging liberal, leftist and Confucian thought. A new era in Chinese politics has necessitated new ways of thinking on how to understand a rapidly altering and rising China. On that premise Chinese intellectuals with different ideological backgrounds have competed with each other

in China's journey to re-build a new identity for their country in the post-socialist/Maoist period.

In line with the curiosity of this thesis to understand and show the close nexus between knowledge production and power structures, the heterogeneity of knowledge and the influence of region-centricity on the knowledge produced about China, this chapter aims to reveal the influence of the Chinese state as well as differing world views on the multiplicity of knowledge produced in China. Hence, through its discussion on non-mainstream Chinese approaches to the issue of a rising China, it aims to contribute to the efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge over China.

In this regard, the chapter treats the critical and neo-conservative Chinese approaches, or the so-called New Left and New Confucianism and includes the ideas and contributions of a number of intellectuals from these two streams of thought. Hence, differently from previous chapters, each approach is not represented by a single leading scholar but by several scholars. The reason for this is that neither the New Left nor the New Confucian intellectuals, despite the existence of a number of noticeable scholars, can be classified under dominant intellectual leaders who monopolize knowledge production processes in these philosophical movements. In other words, while offensive realism is identified with Mearsheimer, neoliberal institutionalism with Keohane and Nye, world-systems analysis with Wallerstein and HMCT with Cox, or moral realism with Yan and the *Tianxia* approach with Zhao, critical Chinese approaches do not have "paramount leaders", despite the existence of several prominent names such as Wang Hui and Wang Shaoguang among the New Leftists and Jiang Qing and to a certain extent Chen Ming among the Mainland New Confucians.

A thorough analysis on Chinese intellectuals, especially on non-mainstream intellectual contributions by critical and New Confucian intellectuals, is not yet covered by the literature. There are some studies about the Chinese intelligentsia during the Mao era as well as on the changing intellectual life in the post-Mao era. These studies, for the most part, either focus on establishment intellectuals and the relationship between the state and intellectuals in a historical context or analyse each

category of intellectuals in isolation from other intellectuals. By analysing a number of contributions from newly-emerging socialist and Confucian intellectual movements, this chapter provides an analysis on the differences and similarities between the New Leftist and New Confucian approaches to the issues of the state, modernity, neoliberal hegemony, sources of legitimacy and democracy. The two perspectives dissociate on some issues, like the legacy and validity of Mao era policies and the socialist party-state. However, in their opposition to liberal political ideas and neoliberal economic policies and in emphasizing the need to find ways of dealing with the challenge posed by the Western modernity and globalization, they are in accord with each other.

The case of Chinese liberalism, on the other hand, is quite different. First of all, despite its opposition to the state, especially since the mid-1980s, Chinese liberalism has been guiding the economic policies of the CPC and the neoliberal transformation of the Chinese state. Even though their influence on state economic policies has waned in the last decade or so, liberal Chinese intellectuals, specifically economists, have actively contributed to the policy formation processes of the reform era under the leaderships of Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin. Secondly, their intellectual position is a reflection of Western liberalism and thus, closely related with the Western-centric knowledge production. Thence, Chinese liberalism's political challenge to the state and demands for a political reform towards a Western-style representative democracy makes it a product of Western-centric knowledge and reduces its value as a non-Western critical approach. In other words, liberal approaches lack a "Chinese voice" or "Chinese characteristics". For these reasons, in this study, notwithstanding its critical attitude towards the Chinese state, Chinese liberalism or the "New Right", as their critics name it, is not included among the critical, non-mainstream Chinese approaches. Nevertheless, they still occupy an important place in Chinese intellectual circles and for that reason require attention. Therefore, this chapter begins with a brief examination of intellectual discussions in the post-Mao China with a relative focus on the ideas of Chinese liberals. After, it moves on with the contributions of New Left intellectuals about modernity, democracy, neoliberal hegemony and the model China proposes to the world. Later,

the chapter analyses New Confucian proposals on transforming the socialist China into a Confucian China. Finally, it ends with a discussion on these approaches.

Critical Chinese intellectuals' primary focus is on the domestic problems their country faces and they believe that once these problems are overcome and stability or harmony in Chinese politics and society is achieved, China will contribute to a more democratic and harmonious world order. For that reason, they do not lay much emphasis on foreign policy matters but just touch upon them. Even so, it must be kept in mind that most of these intellectuals position their approaches in opposition to the Western ways of thinking and hence, take part in the discursive battle among the liberal, socialist and Confucian thinking to dominate public discourse and influence the Chinese governing elite. Furthermore, through their discussions on alternative ways of organizing the Chinese society, economy and politics, they provide alternative, non-Western ideas and visions for the future of the world.

5.1 Intellectual Debates in the post-Mao China

Under Chairman Mao and during the first decade following his death, the public sphere as well as knowledge production was monopolized by the propaganda and education machine of the one-party state. Under a strictly controlled environment, intellectuals acted primarily as servants of the state and contributed to knowledge accordingly (Cheek, Ownby & Fogel, 2018, p. 109). Nevertheless, even in the Maoist period, the state and the CPC were not monolithic entities but composed of different factions. Thereby, according to Wang Hui, theoretical debates and the relationship between theory and practice played an important role in shaping and adjusting policies implemented by the CPC and the state (2010). Therefore, intellectuals, though to a limited extent, could produce alternative ideas to the prevalent thinking and contribute to theoretical debates in the Party. Still, despite the existence of factional debates, knowledge production processes, as all parts of the country's public as well as most parts of private life, were tightly controlled by the party-state. In the post-Mao era, things began to change, and multiplicity rather than unicity started to gradually become the norm in knowledge production. Since the late 1970s but especially after the 1989 Tiananmen incident, China has

incrementally experienced a flourishing of debates between Chinese scholars on many issues from economic reform to rising social inequality and from the legitimacy of the one-party system to the necessity of political reform and democratization. In line with these debates, primarily due to the liberalisation of the socialist economy, but also again because of the trauma created by the brutal crackdown on the Tiananmen protestors by the People's Liberation Army on June 4, 1989 this era has witnessed the decline of the socialist ideology as a source of legitimacy for the CPC rule. This is accompanied by a degree of loss of dominant moral values and a resulting revival of new ideological and philosophical discussions among liberal, nationalist, leftist and Confucian intellectuals to fill the gap left by Maoism (Cheek, 2014; Cheek, Ownby & Fogel, 2018, p. 109).

This new era in the Chinese public sphere has also changed the relationship between the state and intellectuals. Unlike the establishment intellectuals of the early years, the post-1989 era Chinese scholars are composed of both “establishment intellectuals” of the party-state and “disestablished intellectuals” (Cheek, 2014, p. 921) who have, albeit to varying degrees, critical attitudes towards matters like the state, modernization and marketization. Furthermore, a wide range of public intellectuals from journalists, business people and academics to artists and social activists actively contribute to discussions. William Callahan defines these wide range of contributors as “citizen intellectuals” with various ideological backgrounds from dissident liberals like Ai Weiwei to conservative New Leftists like Pan Wei. Citizen intellectuals differ from the public intellectuals of liberal societies in their ability to exist under party-state censorship while also being shaped by it. In this conceptualisation, the adjective “citizen” does not refer to legality as being a member of a state but to the ambition to think and talk about the desired future of China. Callahan's definition includes non-dissident intellectuals in that they have chosen to think about and speak with the Chinese public despite being aware of the censorship mechanism. Furthermore, it should be noted that the state does not have a strict guideline and clear boundary on “sensitive” issues and when to stigmatize an intellectual as dissident. For that reason, in the course of time, Chinese intellectuals may oscillate between being an official, a citizen intellectual and a dissident (2013, pp. 35-40) as the case of the critical intellectual Wang Hui presents. Timothy Cheek,

on the other hand, names these intellectuals as “public intellectuals with Chinese characteristics” who “are shaped by politics and history” rather than by culture or nationality (2014, p. 922).

Today, differently from Maoist times, the CPC does not dominate contemporary public sphere anymore but instead manages it through its propaganda machine and other means such as government (or party) organized non-government organizations. Similar to the way the state directs the economy, it carefully directs the Chinese civil society and public discussion as well (Callahan, 2013, p. 35; Cheek, 2010). Especially since Xi Jinping became the head of the state, the Party tries to control knowledge production more tightly. Xi continuously emphasizes the importance of propaganda and ideological work as one of the main tasks of the CPC (Xi, 2013). Therefore, despite their improved room for manoeuvre compared to the Mao years and early 1980s, this does not mean that Chinese intellectuals are free from censorship. They need to be careful in wording their criticisms against the state and the social problems facing the Chinese people (Cheek, 2010).

Today, the Chinese intellectual sphere is divided mainly into three groups of scholars belonging to liberalism (New Right), new critical intellectuals (New Left) and neo-conservatives (New Confucianism). It is important to note that the labels of “right”, “left” and “conservative” are contradictive in the Chinese case because of the historical meanings they hold. While in the 1980s and the immediate post-1989 period the term “conservative” was used for the Party elders who opposed the liberal reforms and intellectuals who were outside of the mainstream, today it is mainly used for the group of intellectuals who aim to revive traditional Chinese thought and political practices. On the other hand, the label “New Left” is used by Chinese liberals to stigmatize socialist intellectuals to make them look like supporters of Mao era policies, especially infamous practices like the Cultural Revolution. For that reason, socialist scholars reject the label “New Left” and instead define themselves as “critical intellectuals” (Wang, 2003a, pp. 61-62, 2006, p. 685). A similar point can also be made for Chinese liberals in that they have been labelled as the “New Right” by their critics but prefer to be called liberals instead of rightists.

No matter what their intellectual positions are, all three streams of thought have been influenced by or took positions related to Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History* and Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*. Chinese liberals took side with Fukuyama and believed that the humanity was on the way towards a world dominated by the liberal ideology and regimes. For that reason, the process of marketization and privatization of public assets must be completed. Furthermore, they also demand political reforms towards Western-style liberal democracy. Critical intellectuals, on the other hand, have a critical attitude towards both of the theses. Having a socialist background, they criticise the rising social inequality created by the neoliberal transformation and demand for more state intervention in the economy and egalitarian policies responsive to the needs of the people while not challenging the one-party state directly. New Confucians, getting their inspirations from traditional Chinese philosophy, find common ground in the thesis claimed by Huntington while opposing the idea of the world moving towards the "end of history". They question the high inequality and massive transformations in the society and the dominance of secularized politics and in reaction ask for a social-political order based on Confucian religion. Even so, it must be noted that, such classifications are quite simplistic and each of these three strands of thought includes lively debates in between their members.

As the following two parts of the chapter thoroughly analyses the contributions of New Leftist and New Confucian thinkers, the rest of this part briefly evaluates the thoughts of liberal Chinese intellectuals on economic reforms, liberal democracy, the state and the legacy of Mao. The reason for herewith including main debates among the Chinese liberals is that the intellectual positions held by critical and neo-conservative intellectuals are primarily positioned against the ideas proposed by Chinese liberals who dominated knowledge production during the first two decades of the reform era. Such that "In the 1980s", in the words of Gan Yang, a public intellectual who aims to bridge the leftist and Confucian perspectives, "we were all reformists. We criticized old-style Maoist goals and practices. We looked at our circumstances through the ideas of the West" (Leonard, 2008, p. 19). By the West, what he principally meant is the US. Many of the liberal minded intellectuals in the early years of the reform period were closely connected to and actively participated

in policy formulations in the reformist administrations led by Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, General Secretaries of the CPC in the 1980s. In other words, these intellectuals were on the front lines of the early years of the reform era. However, after the purge of Zhao from his post as the General Secretary of the CPC in June 1989 and the return of the “conservative” Party elders, these previously establishment intellectuals were removed from their government posts and started new careers in the academia, business sector and publishing industry. Furthermore, after 1989, Chinese intellectuals in general lost their homogeneity as a group and their reactions to the post-Tiananmen era diversified in important degrees (Cheek, 2014, p. 921; Leonard, 2008, p. 19-28; Wang, 1998, p. 11). In other words, since Tiananmen not all are reformists anymore.

Chinese liberal intellectuals’ ideas for building a liberal China revolve around four major themes of problematizing Mao’s legacy, the troubles created by the bureaucratic capitalism, providing a liberal discourse against the rising tide of nationalist and statist ideologies and championing pluralism against Chinese exceptionalism. Liberal intellectuals indicate that China’s political reform must include a critical approach towards the extremism of Mao era political campaigns such as the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. According to liberal scholars like Mao Yushi, Xu Youyu and Wu Jinglian, China’s revolutionary past created a loss of morality that can be overcome only with the creation of a liberal discourse and the fulfilment of market-oriented reforms. Unlike the claims of the New Left, the rising inequality in the society is not the result of neoliberal reforms but of the policies implemented by the bureaucratic-capitalist elite who distort the market mechanism and prevent the provision of equal opportunities to all Chinese citizens. Other liberal intellectuals like Sun Liping, Yu Jianrong and Qin Hui, on the other hand, claim that the ruling elite’s corruptness and indifference to the problems and needs of the common people create a contradiction among ordinary citizens and the ruling elite. In order to overcome such disputes, a civil society that can act as a balancing mechanism against the political power of the ruling class and their industrial and commercial interests needs to be established. However, it is very hard to build a civil society under an authoritarian one-party rule. To accomplish such a goal, a number of liberal reforms, including independent judiciary, democratic

elections and oversight over government power, need be implemented. But, due to the authoritarian nature of the Chinese government, only a social movement, a grass-roots politics can achieve such an aim (Tang & McConaghy, 2018, pp. 123-128).

Xu Jilin, a prominent liberal scholar, argues that the deepest problem of present-day China is the lack of a soul, common values and an ethical foundation. In the past, Confucian values played such a role but since their rejection by the Chinese revolutionaries, China lost its identity. Thereafter, to counter the imperialist aggression, the state and the nation substituted for traditional values. The short period following Mao's death witnessed the re-emergence of "universal" enlightenment values that were excluded from the intellectual sphere after the socialist revolution. However, this revival came to a halt with the brutal crackdown of the Tiananmen protests. In the conservative atmosphere of the post-1989, enlightenment ideas were severely attacked and, in the end, lost their prominence. Under such an atmosphere, nihilist values surrounded Chinese intellectuals and statism emerged as the new identity by offering so-called solutions to the problems faced by the post-Tiananmen China (2018, pp. 56-57). However, Xu claims, "Statism is a depoliticized politics, a devaluized [*sic.*] value system, a de-ideologized ideology" (2018, p. 57). Therefore, it cannot contribute to the needs of the Chinese society. With such a background, Xu criticizes New Left scholars such as Wang Shaoguang and Pan Wei for their statism and refusal of Western-style democracy and their close but hidden relationship with the system. He, furthermore, criticizes Pan's ideas on "The China Model" and the New Left thinkers' ideas on democracy for being historicist and essentialist (2018, pp. 26-33). For him, such an understanding lacks historical validity and is non-historical. Contrary to essentialist, particularistic ideas of culture, for China to emerge as a great power with global influence, it needs to build a universal, not an isolated, civilisation that is beneficial for the whole of humanity (Tang & McConaghy, 2018, p. 131).

Notwithstanding lively debates going on both among Chinese liberals and with their New Left and New Confucian counterparts, since the Hu-Wen administration and especially since the beginning of Xi's Presidency, liberalism and liberals in China have been losing ground compared to the first decades of the reform era. Differently

from the “To get rich is glorious” discourse of the Deng era and Jiang’s policies that prioritized marketization and economic growth at all costs, the Hu-Wen administration shifted the helm towards the left as they incrementally abandoned the previously implemented uncompromising liberalisation policies and got closer to the New Left’s ideas on the need to improve social equality and tackle environmental problems. This transformation continued with the Xi Presidency as well. In addition to his emphasis on social equality, fight against poverty and green development, Xi has also been known for his staunch ideological support for Marxism and for his references to traditional Chinese philosophers, Confucians being in the first place (Xi, 2014, 2018). Aside from these policy shifts, the growing self-confidence and the rapidly increasing material wealth of the Chinese people and the problems emanating from the Western world such as the 2003 Iraq War and the 2008 financial crisis, further reinforced the declining interest in liberalism among the Chinese public (Tang & McConaghy, 2018, p. 122). Furthermore, the increasing suppression of free thinking under Xi affects liberal thinkers in China who criticize the one-party system and the rising authoritarianism, as the case of Xu Zhangrun, a Tsinghua University liberal scholar, has shown (Lau & Mai, 2019). This rapidly deteriorating position of Chinese liberals, naturally, has benefited the competing intellectual thoughts of the New Left and the New Confucianism.

5.2 China’s New Critical Intellectuals: The New Left

The Chinese New Left entered the intellectual stage in the early 1990s as a reaction to the neoliberal transformation that has been going on since the mid-1980s which destroyed the egalitarian society of the Mao era and produced high inequality among the different segments of the society. Critical Chinese intellectuals have criticised global capitalism on the grounds that it is an exploitative system which creates uneven development among different regions of the world and different parts of each society. However, while this movement of thought is critical of capitalism and neoliberalism it does not champion the idea of returning back to pre-reform socialist practices. Instead, these intellectuals aim to convince the Chinese state to be in control of and manage the economic life and ensure social equality by being

responsive to and protecting the interests of the less powerful classes and groups of the society (Ownby, 2010; Wang & Lu, 2012, p. xiii).

The New Left's resistance to neoliberalism is also an opposition to depoliticization and the Occidentalist understanding of China and its claim for universal validity. The market ideology of neoliberalism has been based on an imagined distinction between economy and politics that leads to depoliticised politics. By re-evaluating revolutionary, or Maoist discourse and contending with depoliticized politics of neoliberalism, critical intellectuals fight a discursive battle against "sinological orientalism" that is rooted in decades old colonial, Cold War discourse on China. Through this battle for knowledge production that is fought both in and out of the Mainland, the New Left aims to overcome the West's orientalist, dedifferentiating understanding of China by re-writing the phenomenon of China with its distinctive features. These intellectuals, furthermore, struggle against the depoliticized politics of the reform era by re-politicizing the Chinese politics and society (Vukovic, 2012, pp. 64-65).

An important difference between Chinese critical and liberal intellectuals is their contradictory views on the state. The Chinese New Left, contrary to liberals, do not view the state as their enemy and in fact, engage in knowledge production with the aim of influencing decision-making processes of the party-state (Vukovic, 2012, p. 62, 2019, p. 48). Therefore, in times of a legitimacy crisis faced by the socialist ideology in China, the primary goal of the New Left has been to re-establish the efficiency and with it the legitimacy of Chinese socialism. This objective requires the renewal of orthodox Marxist and Maoist understandings of class contradictions and the acceptance of market economy while taming the inequality created by neoliberal economic policies implemented in the early period of the reform era. However, it does not mean a total rejection of Maoist and socialist ideals and a total acceptance of Western modernity, globalization and neoliberal transformation. Instead, with their diversifying approaches to capitalist modernity and globalization, New Left scholars aim to propose a Chinese solution to the problems resulting from the Western society and China's integration into the Western-led international system by referring to the socialist experience of China. Some members of the New

Left have also been influenced by the Confucian revival since the 2000s. Such that these intellectuals' contributions can be regarded as attempts of bridging the socialist and Confucian traditions in Chinese thinking and finding a unique Chinese way of governance. To reflect this diversity in the New Leftist thinking, this part of the chapter includes both the contributions of Wang Hui and Wang Shaoguang from the left wing and the contributions of Gan Yang and Pan Wei from the more conservative wing of the New Left.

5.2.1 Anti-Modern Modernity: China's Unique Modernization Experience

Wang Hui, the most prominent critical intellectual in China, in the last three decades has been writing on matter of the Chinese modernity, problems created by the neoliberal transformation, the critical role played by the state, especially in the aftermath of 1989, in speeding up the marketization and commercialization of the economy, the deteriorating legitimacy of political parties both in the world and in China and the ways of overcoming the neoliberal hegemony. In his writings, Wang integrates ideas proposed by Western thinkers like Gramsci and by Chinese thinkers, while attaching special importance to Mao Zedong and his legacy for critical thinking. For him, instead of demonizing Mao, Chinese intellectuals should benefit from his legacy, which is one of the most important legacies in China and in fact, the most important one in terms of relations with the West and the Global South (2016, p. 268).

As a matter of his critical stance, since the late 1980s, Wang has had a tense and undulate relationship with the party-state. As other intellectuals of his generation, during the Cultural Revolution he spent some of his early years working in remote villages where he could experience rural life. In the mid-1980s, as part of his doctoral studies, he moved to Beijing where he became a member of the intelligentsia as a fellow at the prestigious CASS. However, due to his active participation to the 1989 protests, in which he saw democratic potential, Wang was sent to Shaanxi, one of the poorest provinces of China, for "re-education". Thanks to this experience, he witnessed the huge difference between privileged coastal regions and the poor countryside and hence, built his critical intellectual position before

returning back to the academic life in Beijing (Mishra, 2006). In the recent past, however, as China climbed the steps of the global political economy and especially since Xi's presidency, Wang has taken a position closer to the Party, where he might find an opportunity to contribute in realising the China Dream (Ownby, 2010).

Wang has a unique approach to Chinese modernity. He divides the timespan since the 1911 Chinese Revolution into two periods as the short century of Chinese revolution (1911-1976) and de-revolutionary or post-revolutionary (post-1976) period and claims that despite their differing characteristics these two periods possess internal continuity and help express the uniqueness of Chinese socialism. He identifies the Chinese socialist revolution as an "anti-modern modernization" effort which was an ideology of modernization rooted in the French and Soviet revolutions while at the same time a critique of capitalist modernization. In other words, unlike the Western modernization theory, Chinese discourse does not equate modernization with capitalist transition from an agrarian society to an industrial society and reconceptualises modernity according to its own historical experience and needs. Thus, Chinese modernization bears more meaning than just setting up a nation-state with a modern bureaucracy and economy and further involves values emanating from China's hundred years of anti-imperialist struggle. In that sense, socialist modernization is related to Chinese thinking since the final years of the Qing Empire and hence, it is the last phase of Chinese nationalisation efforts started by Sun Yat-sen and other Chinese intellectuals of the era. In short, the long period of Chinese anti-modern modernization had paradoxical aims of trying to achieve modernity by constructing a modern economy, military and government while at the same time voicing criticism against capitalism and imperialism (1998, pp. 13-15, 2006, p. 683, 2016, p. 260).

In the post-1978 period, however, with the initiation of the socialist reform movement, Chinese modernization lost its anti-modern characteristics and transformed into a modernist and functionalist effort of adopting the dominant neoliberal ideology of economic marketization and China's full integration into the capitalist system. Abandoning Maoism's egalitarianism for the sake of socialist reform's pragmatist goal of increased efficiency has resulted in high levels of social

inequality and hence, inhibited the possibility of political democratization and resulted in a legitimacy crisis. The 1989 social movement and the Chinese state's economic policies in the following period has altered the relationship between the state, the market and the society. Unlike the claim that 1989 was a movement for demanding liberal democracy, according to Wang, it was indeed a protest against the rising social inequality stemming from the neoliberal experiments of the 1980s and thus, a call for a substantive democracy responsive to the demands of the people. In other words, the people gathered together on the Tiananmen Square to reject the experimentalist marketization reforms of Zhao Ziyang and to ask for comprehensive political reform and economic justice and social equality. Hence, for protestors, democracy was more than a political form and legal framework. It was an extensive moral value. However, after the armed crackdown of the protests, the Chinese society has lost its ability to debate and resist against sensitive political and economic issues and this way, all out marketization could be implemented by the state with a heavy hand. This way, the Chinese state substituted the market for the Chinese society as its source of legitimacy and took side with the capital in its struggle with the proletariat and hence, became the protector of market mechanisms, rather than of the people (Wang, 1998, pp. 15-16, 2003a, pp. 64-65, 2003b, pp. 117-119, 2010, Wang & Khong 2014).

The inability to develop political democracy in the country has been closely related to the problem of depoliticization that China has been experiencing since the late 1970s. The solution to the lack of democracy and legitimacy, according to Wang, is not to import Western style liberal democracy nor to return back to the traditional socialist model. Adopting liberal democracy should be out of the question because a system based on the market logic is definitely not a democratic system. Furthermore, as the Chinese party-state system liberal democracy is also facing a serious legitimacy crisis. Traditional socialist model, on the other hand, cannot be a solution because China has already integrated into the international and global hegemonic structures and hence, a strategy based on the nation-state cannot meet the needs of a globalized world order. However, due to its harms to the environment and to social equality, continuing with the developmentalist model that focuses only on efficiency and GDP growth should not be an option either. Therefore, to transcend neoliberal

hegemony China needs to find new kinds of politics and democracy, inclusive of mass participation and policies responsive to the public needs, and establish critical internationalism that links national, international and transnational spheres. To achieve this, first of all it needs to overcome de-politicized politics by re-politicizing the Party and politics. However, finding the path to re-politicization requires an in-depth analysis of the Cultural Revolution, de-politicized politics and the supporting de-ideologized ideology of the market originating from the US hegemony (Wang, 2003a, p. 84, 2006, pp. 695-700, 2010).

In the thirty-year period after the founding of the People's Republic, the CPC could create a relatively independent and sovereign model in its struggle against imperialism and discussions and break with the Soviet Union. However, despite its significant achievements, the CPC under Mao also made dire mistakes. However, to fix these mistakes it resorted to open theoretical debates and thereby, could adjust its policies. Such that the link between theoretical debate and practice was one of the decisive features of the Chinese revolution and thus, the Mao era can be characterised with politicised revolutionary politics that sustained dynamism in party politics. However, this period involved strong de-politicization tendencies as well. In the 1950s and 1960s, bureaucratization and internal power struggles within the Party threatened to erode revolutionary politics by ending political subjectivity and discursive freedom, which were critical for self-adjustment policies. It is for that reason that Mao felt obliged to combat against de-politicization and staticization of the Party, which led to the Cultural Revolution. The 1960s were also a time of crisis for political party systems in both Western and socialist countries and the Chinese party-state was influenced by this tendency as well. The Cultural Revolution then was a time of intense politicization through factional struggles and violence within the Party. However, political violence led to the disintegration of the political debate culture in the Party. Herewith, the Cultural Revolution, quite paradoxically, initiated the process of staticization and de-politicization of the CPC (Wang, 2006, pp. 684-687, 2010).

In the immediate post-Mao era, the victims of the Cultural Revolution were rehabilitated and immediately started a process of negation of the 1960s and 1970s.

Furthermore, for the sake of preventing factional struggles and hence, unifying the will of the CPC, the new leadership silenced political debates in the Party, which hindered the possibility of democratising party politics. This has also led to the unification of the CPC and the state, during which the Party was transformed into an administrative tool of the state and hence, de-politicized and stripped off its political values. This led the party to lose its ability to represent the interests of the people and the class it was meant to represent, which in the end prompted a legitimacy crisis. However, this process of de-politicized politics is not unique to China and in fact a problem faced by all party systems in the world, be it a multiparty or a single party system. Accordingly, nation states are experiencing a shift from a party-state system to state-party system in which political parties are absorbed by the state and thus, do not have political organizational forms independent from the state structure (Wang, 2006, pp. 687-688, 2010).

This worldwide de-politicization tendency has been supported by an anti-political political ideology that is rooted in the US hegemony. Here, the myth of the separation of politics and economy plays an important role. By analytically distinguishing the economy from politics, the de-politicized market ideology aims to build a market economy isolated from political interference and in this way, to create a neutral state freed from its duties to represent the interests of the people. In the meantime, political democracy was stripped of its class relations and hereby, transformed into a programmatic or formal democracy. Throughout the de-politicization process, as Chinese elites marketized the economy and altered property relationships through neoliberal policies, they sided with and became the representatives of newly emerged special interest groups linked to the national and transnational capital. In short, under the guidance of the de-politicized political ideology, Chinese elites naturalized inequality in the society. However, since the early 2000s, with the Presidencies of Hu Jintao and now Xi Jinping, the Chinese state has changed course and is more sensitive towards protecting the rights of the people and environmental issues (Wang, 2006, pp. 690-695, 2010).

A critique of and struggle against social inequality should be based on re-politicization and an examination of the current hegemonic structure. In this

endeavour, Wang bases his analysis on contemporary hegemony on the works of Gramsci and defines three spheres of hegemony, namely national, international and supra- or transnational levels, which are mutually penetrated. In line with Gramsci's conceptualisation, he defines hegemony as a combination of force and consent and places importance on cultural, intellectual and moral authority as well as material domination. Before the 2000s, per Wang, the US had a stand as a model of marketization, modernization and de-politicization to be emulated by others but since the 2003 Iraq war and the 2008 economic crisis, it has been faced with a leadership crisis and lost its previous appeal, which resulted in a process of "de-Americanization". In the aftermath of the economic crisis, with the neoliberal model in decline, the Global South is searching for new models of development and at this point, China can propose an alternative model based on the internationalist tradition of the Maoist era. This way, it can challenge the existing power relations and initiate a change towards a multi-polar world order. Thus, just as the hegemony also needs to be constructed in national, international and transnational spheres, a counter-hegemonic movement needs to be formed in these three spheres. Therefore, unlike nationalist modes of thinking, critical intellectuals should strive to redefine political boundaries and build critical internationalism that is founded on political values and connects national, international and transnational levels. Only this way can the hegemony of the US and neoliberalism be transcended, and global economic relations be transformed into a more egalitarian structure that reflects the interests of the Global South as well (2006, pp. 695-700, 2010, 2016, p. 262).

5.2.2 Representational Democracy: A Chinese Theory of Democracy

Another important New Left intellectual producing scholarly work on a Chinese understanding of democracy and governance is Wang Shaoguang, an Emeritus Professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a Schwarzman Scholar at Tsinghua University, who spent his Cultural Revolution years as a teacher in Wuhan. After the opening up, to continue his academic studies Wang moved to the US. He received his PhD from Cornell University and afterwards taught at Yale University before settling in Hong Kong. His works can be identified as an important challenge both to the orthodox Western conceptualization of democracy

as well as the mainstream Party historiography of modern Chinese history. In other words, his thoughts on the concept of democracy, the need to improve state capacity and the periodization of the modern Chinese political experience have distinctive features, and indeed, in a sense, can be identified as revisionist.

In his studies, Wang tries to answer the question “why China works” and accordingly, starts his discussion based on the question of why the Chinese experience has been successful. He does so by dividing the last 200 years of Chinese state management into three periods that differ from the mainstream historiography of the CPC, in order to explain his understanding of the China “model” in a long-term framework. During the first period, which covers the years from 1800 to 1956, the major problem of the country was “governability”. Such that, for one and half century, there was no political authority capable of governing China. Thus, the major issue in this first period was the creation of a political power to unite and govern the country and finally, the CPC emerged as the sole authority to unite the Mainland and overcome the 150 years-long governability problem. However, the founding of the People’s Republic was not sufficient to end the governability problem and hence, this goal could only be achieved in 1956 after the unification of the administration, economy and military. This process has resulted in an over-centralization and high-concentration of power in the hands of the central government. The reason for this outcome was the inability of Chinese governments to govern the country in the previous 150 years. From the *Guomindang* (National Party) era thenceforward, the leaders of the country concluded that a country as big and populous as China needed a highly centralized government, and, in the end, the socialist ruling elite could achieve this by merging the party and the state. Thus, the emergence of the party-state model of China had grown out of historical necessities, not solely as a product the socialist ideology and indeed, successfully solved the governability problem of the country (Wang, 2012).

As a former anarchist, however, Mao was not in favour of high-level centralization and therefore, in 1956 initiated a process of decentralization, which resulted in the decentralization of political and economic power into the hands of local governments to an important degree. The post-1956 years were also the period of

socialist transformation and construction of the economy, which lasted until the mid-1980s. Wang relates this thirty-year time period with the term “government” because from the mid-1950s to mid-1980s, the relations of production were altered altogether and the economy, politics and culture of the country was unified under the leadership of the party-state. This era of planned economy, in addition to ideological motivation, once again emerged from the exigencies of the country. China was, during that time, a very poor country and the society did not have the ability to pool the necessary amount of financial, physical and human resources for building an economic base under market mechanisms. Thus, in that period, under the leadership of the government, China could construct the industrial, agricultural and human capital capacity that was crucial for the reform and opening up policies to be implemented successfully in the following period (2012).

The final era of China’s modern history started in 1986 with the initiation of the “contractualization of labour” reform and other related neoliberal policies. Since then the key word describing this period has been “governance”. The neoliberal transformation and the idea of governance is a global phenomenon experienced by almost all societies throughout the world since the 1980s. According to the proponents of “governance”, or neoliberals, the government should get out of the economy by privatizing its assets and let the market forces, namely the civil society and private sector, to become the major drivers of the economy. Unlike many developing countries, however, China experienced this transition under the strict guidance of the CPC. The existence of a strong political power, on the one hand, smoothened the process of marketization and, on the other hand, helped China to make the necessary policy changes and overcome the significant problems caused by the over-decentralization of the 1980s and 1990s. As the state abandoned some of its economic duties and left important segments of the economy to the private sector, in the first two decades of the reform period, its capacity eroded to a significant degree, which created the need for equilibrating the balance between decentralization and state capacity. Since then the Chinese state has retrieved some of its capacity and used it to positively respond to the demands of the society. Hence, the end result of rebalancing has been the development of a welfare system

that covers urban as well as rural China. Without the existence of strong political power, this would not be possible (Wang 2012).

The achievements of the Chinese way, according to him, show the success of China's unique democracy in responding to the demands and fulfilling the needs of the people. Wang is aware of the fact that his thoughts on Chinese democracy are outside of the mainstream and that since the Republican era China has been described as an authoritarian state rather than a democracy by the ideologues of mainstream understanding of representative democracy, who claim that the legitimacy of a government can only be provided through competitive elections. However, for Wang, China offers an alternative theory of democracy, the theory of representational democracy, which is distinct from and indeed, superior to the Western representative democracy model. He further states that, unlike the conventional wisdom of Western ideologues, throughout the years, the Chinese system has been supported by the vast majority of its people and therefore, does not have a legitimacy problem. The reason for such strong support is that the Chinese people favour substantial democracy that focuses on the political way and serving people's interests rather than formal democracy that emphasizes the political form and the ways the representatives of the society are determined. While for the second type of democracy elections are the standard for determining whether a political system is democratic or not, for the first type it is the ability of a system to respond to the objective needs of the people as well as to include the opinions of those people in satisfying these needs. In short, for a system to be a substantial democracy, it must serve the people, but it must also be a rule by the people (2012, 2013 pp. 141-147, 2014).

At this point, Wang indicates that the Chinese system does not have a neutral position among the members of the society and hence, makes a distinction among the "people" represented by its unique form of democracy. Since the proletariat, peasants and other less powerful interest groups cannot have much influence on public policies in comparison with more powerful interest groups, the Chinese democracy favours these less powerful groups and represents the interests of the masses who engage in material production. In fact, the ability of the CPC to involve

the masses into the policy-making processes has been the most outstanding achievement of the Chinese socialism. Furthermore, in representational democracy, all the people with political power, that is to say, not just the elected representatives but also government employees, or everyone who can be named “cadre”, bear the responsibility to represent the interests of the people (2012, 2014).

The critical point in the implementation of this Chinese theory of representational democracy is the concept and practice of the mass line, which was developed during the Yan’an years of 1930s and implemented intensively during the Maoist period. However, it was abandoned in the 1980s by the reform era politicians until Hu Jintao reinvigorated the idea during the CPC’s 90th anniversary in 2011. Since taking office, Xi Jinping, who is known for his close relationship with the masses throughout his early career, has been once again emphasizing the importance of the mass-work. The mass line can be defined as a continuous process of becoming one with the masses. In other words, in an endless effort, cadres at all levels must go and consult to the masses, hear and understand their ideas, analyse and study these ideas and then go to the masses again. Thus, unlike the elected representatives of formal democracy, in the mass line policy-makers should not stay in their offices but reach out to the masses to accomplish the primary ideal of democracy; making the people the masters of their own lives. Wang defines representational democracy based on the practice of the mass line as socialist democracy and notes that this is an ideal model that is to be used to evaluate future accomplishments of the country. Despite its accomplishments in the last decades, to be more responsive to the needs and opinions of the society, China still needs to improve its democratic socialist model, especially economic democracy, by improving the livelihoods of the people (2012, 2014).

5.2.3 Unifying the Three Traditions of Confucius, Mao and Deng

Gan Yang, the director of the Department of Liberal Arts of Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, takes the efforts of Wang Hui and Wang Shaoguang of indigenizing the critical thinking a step further by linking it with traditional Chinese political

systems and Confucianism. By embracing and unifying Confucian, Maoist and Dengist traditions of China, he tries to find a *sui generis* Chinese path.

Gan is a hard-to-classify intellectual because of his fluctuant ideas in the last four or so decades. As many, he started his intellectual life as a Marxist, as a member of the “sent-down-youth” during the Cultural Revolution when he was sent to the Daqing oil fields in the northeast of China. With the reform period, he joined the mainstream and started to identify himself as a liberal, a reformist criticizing the old era Maoist practices. However, soon after his forced departure from China following the 1989 turmoil, he began to be associated with the newly emerging New Left. Finally, as of the mid-2000s, he has become influenced by the Confucian revival and aimed to synthesize socialism with Confucianism (Gan, 2005). In his recent scholarly contributions, which reflect his ideational journey from Marxism to liberalism and finally to Confucianism, Gan tries to convince the Chinese intelligentsia to abandon their ideas on discriminating any one of the intellectual traditions in the thousands of years of Chinese history and unify them by means of simultaneously transcending radical and conservative thoughts.

His 1999 essay on liberalism is based on Alexis de Tocqueville’s ideas on democracy and identifies the question of transition from aristocratic liberalism to a democratic political form known as the “Tocqueville problem”. Here, Gan criticizes the mainstream tendency in Chinese liberalism for being elitist and ultra-conservative in its call for democracy and liberty, while neglecting mass democracy and liberty of the all. This elitism results from the Maoist era’s disregard for the ideal of liberty. Instead of liberty, at least in theory, socialist China put emphasis on equality, and as a reaction this has caused Chinese liberalism to prioritize liberty and disregard equality. However, liberalism prioritises the liberty of the market, not of the society, and calls for the freedom of the bosses and intellectuals. Therefore, they deny the democratic equality of the people and ask for an unequal freedom. In this way, Chinese liberals detract democracy and equal freedom. According to Gan, such an approach should be rejected by the Chinese intellectuals and instead, the idea of equality together with liberty needs to be embraced. For this to be achieved, however, conservatism as well as radicalism must be transcended (1999).

In the course of time, with the revival of Confucianism, Gan included this line of thought into his lexicon as well and called for the intelligentsia to unify the three traditions of the Chinese modern history: the Dengist, the Maoist and the Confucian traditions. The idea of merging different traditions is rooted in the thinking of Dong Zhongshu, a member of the *Gongyang* school of Confucianism who lived during the Western Han dynasty. He aimed to merge the experiences of the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties that are said to have existed long before the unification of China. Notwithstanding the question of the authenticity of this myth, the idea of unifying the histories of these dynastic transitions has served as a model for Gan and other liberal, leftist and Confucian scholars (2005).

According to Gan, all three traditions can be identified in China's history. The first one is the Confucian tradition or the tradition of Chinese culture that is characterized by interpersonal relationships, local ties and elitism. The second one is the Mao Zedong era tradition that is described in terms of equality and justice. The final tradition is the reform and opening up or the Dengist tradition which emerged from the market and is related to notions such as rights, freedom and competition. While many Chinese prefer to evaluate these three epochs as mutually exclusive, they are indeed a part of a whole and hence, a unique characteristic of China. Many people think of them as being in opposition to each other because of the ideological dominance of West. In other words, throughout the 20th century, Chinese intellectuals accepted the Western knowledge as the benchmark in comprehending both the West and China. However, this has started to change in the 2000s with the revival of Confucian thought (2005).

Gan claims that to fully grasp the case of China, Chinese intellectuals need build a new understanding of the Chinese history. Only this way they can re-imagine and comprehend the phenomenon of a rising China. However, this rejuvenation takes place in a Western-dominated world order and for that reason, to understand it in its fullest sense, instead of relying on either one of the Chinese or Western perspectives, Chinese intellectuals must study and benefit from both of the perspectives. Furthermore, the foundational role played by the Confucian culture for modern China and the continuity of the three traditions in the Chinese history must

also be acknowledged. Before the Republican era, the elite system of the traditional Chinese society was essentially reproduced by the examination system, which provided an opportunity for every Chinese person, at least potentially, to become a part of the elite system. For that reason, with the collapse of the examination system came the disintegration of the traditional Chinese society, which created the most urgent task of the Chinese elites: transforming an empire into a republic and in the meantime reconstructing their society. According to Gan, this process of modernization and reorganization is still undergoing and therefore, to make sense of a transforming and rising China, its three traditions need to be analysed in unity (2005).

5.2.4 The China Model: An Alternative to the Western Political Model

Pan Wei, a political scientist from Peking University, proposes a similar idea. His discussions on the “China Model” suggest a unique Chinese system of organizing politics, society and economy that is rooted in Confucian and socialist traditions. Pan was a member of an elite scholar family and as many Chinese intellectuals, during the Cultural Revolution he was sent to the countryside to be re-educated. After the opening up, during his doctoral studies in the US, Pan has benefited from his experience in rural China and completed his thesis on the (negative) effects of marketization on Chinese peasantry. In the 1990s and early 2000s, he has worked on the need to reform the Chinese polity by institutionalizing the rule of law but without experiencing electoral democracy. However, since the mid-2000s, he has been influenced by the intellectual movement around cultural revival and integrating the socialist and indigenous governing experiences of China in his attempt to analyse the China model. In other words, instead of benefiting from Western social sciences tools, he shifted to uniquely Chinese ways of understanding the phenomenon of a rising China (Callahan, 2013, p. 38).

While not talking about the need to unify the three traditions, Pan claims that the achievements made by China need to be evaluated as the accomplishments gained not only in the last forty years of reform era but in the entirety of the People’s Republic because the transition from a peasant society to an industrial society could

not be achieved without the infrastructural and industrial foundations laid by the Maoist era policies. Furthermore, as privatization and marketization in the last forty years were not the sole reasons for successful development, replicating the “universally applicable” Western model has not been the only source of success either. It is the result of a combination of 2000 years of Chinese and modern Japanese and Western development experiences. To grasp the essence of the achievements of China one should study the China model, which is rooted in socialist but also in Confucian traditions of organizing the Chinese economy, polity and society. In this way, Chinese intellectuals must also develop a “Chinese system of discourse” and a “Chinese school of thought” (2010b).

The China model, which has emerged from the necessities and experiences of thousands of years of Chinese civilisation, is comprised of three unique ways of organizing the economy (*guomin*), society (*sheji*) and politics (*minben*) and a unique perspective on the world. The economic model that prioritizes the well-being of the people rests on two parts that are in turn established on four pillars. Each of the two parts, namely state-owned and people-owned, are divided into two pillars. First, through the ownership of land, the state controls the use of land as well as production materials. This way, the state assures rural social stability, provides stability by distributing the means of production among the people in a balanced way, takes low levels of tax from the industrial sector and keeps the price paid for industrial infrastructure lower. Second, the state controls and regulates the financial sector through either state-owned financial enterprises or by owning majority shares in enterprises owned jointly with the private sector. It, furthermore, owns large corporations for infrastructure investments and raw materials and also non-profit organizations in areas like education, research, health etc. In this way, the state can stabilize the financial markets, provide the necessary infrastructure investment for the industry and the public and build facilities for the non-profit institutions. In addition to the state, the private sector plays an important role in organizing the economy as well. Unlike the pre-reform era, today, the labour market in China is free and a huge majority of Chinese workers are employed by private firms. Finally, the commodity and capital markets are also free. Small and medium sized family-owned and collectively owned enterprises are in a fierce competition with each other

in the commodity markets and this creates the pressure for a growing capital market. The reason for the latter being closed to foreign competition for the moment, according to Pan, is not ideological but technical, and as China's self-confidence in its system increases it will open its capital markets to foreign investors. In short, state- and people-owned parts of the Chinese economy are in a supportive and complementary relationship with each other and hereby establish a national (*guomin*) economy. Nevertheless, due to its regulatory and stabilizing roles, the essence of the national economy is the state-owned sector and therefore, a type of socialism still exists in China (Pan, 2007, pp. 2-6, 2010b, 2011, p. 16).

In the 2000s, Pan formulated the claim that democracy understood as electoral politics and the related majority principle is not a universal value and an indispensable feature of a legitimate government, but rather, the rule of law is, and in fact, these two may be in contradiction with each other. The electoral democracy is a way of smoothening the hierarchic relationships among the social classes in a stratified society. As the majority rule that comes with it maintains the idea of winner takes all, it is a way of managing the power struggle in the society. Such polity may create crises in an undifferentiated society like the Chinese society in the 1940s. For that reason, in China electoral democracy is not considered as a condition for legitimacy. Therefore, to have a successful polity, rather than electoral politics, the rule of law must be established and institutionalized. In other words, as many democratic Third World countries prove, electoral democracy is not a precondition for success but, as the cases of Hong Kong and Singapore demonstrate, an independent judiciary and efficient law enforcement is (2007, p. 6-7). In time, however, Pan departed from his ideas on the need to institutionalize the rule of law and started to think more in terms of indigenous ideas emanating from the Chinese socialist and traditional Confucian governing experiences.

Contemporary China, per Pan, is a highly mobile and an undifferentiated society whose members, unlike Western societies, prefer a neutral government that integrates the needs and interests of the society. Similar to the *guomin* economy, China has a unique way of organizing its society (*sheji*) that reflects the distinctive features of the Chinese society. In the Western class society individuals are the basic

political and social unit, whereas in the Chinese society it is the family. Therefore, Chinese society is not a stratified but an undifferentiated society. Accordingly, the underlying mentality behind this social organization is traditional family ethics. In other words, the Western idea of regulating the society and mediating the interests of the people based on the theory of social contract is not the basic form of administering the Chinese society. In line with these features, as in traditional China, contemporary Chinese society is organized in communities and work units (*danwei*) rather than in the civil society or class society forms of the West. Finally, different from the West, the state and the society are not in opposition to each other but coalesced into one. Accordingly, Pan states that rather than the Western identification of the Chinese political model as an autocracy, it is a meritocracy. This unique way of organising the politics (*minben*) arises from the *sheji* society and follows the model provided by traditional China. In *minben*-ism, in line with the traditional family ethics, the *raison d'être* of the government is to ensure the well-being of the people and harmony in the society. If a sovereign cannot fulfil this mission, then the people have the right to overthrow his/her rule. Contrary to electoral politics, through the thousands of years old tradition of meritocracy, the bureaucracy dominates the administrative system. Furthermore, again resembling the Confucian scholar tradition, the CPC controls the governance as the unified governing elite. Lastly, different from the principle of division of powers, in Chinese politics, the system of checks and balances is ensured primarily on the basis of division of labour. Pan defines this way of organizing politics as *minben* democracy. He further claims that since this is a substantive democracy that aims to ensure the well-being of the people, Chinese society prefers this model rather than the procedural electoral democracy (2007, pp. 2-4, 2010, p. 4, 13, 2011, p. 14-15).

According to Pan, the China Model, as the Chinese civilisation, is a flexible approach to organising a society and keeping good relations with the outside world. This ability of rapidly adapting to the changes in life has made the development experience of the Chinese people a success story. China is a peace-loving country that aims to achieve a peaceful and harmonious relationship with other countries. It has no intention of dominating the world, getting into an arms race with the US and dictating others what to do and how to do things. All China wants is to get in a

mutually beneficial relationship with other countries in the world of imbalanced interdependence. Therefore, despite its accomplishments, China does not regard its model as superior to other systems and has no intention of imposing its model on other countries unless they are keen on taking lessons from or emulating the Chinese development experience (2007, pp. 3, 8-9). In short, as an ancient Chinese teaching warns “Chinese should never govern non-Chinese” (Pan, 2007, p. 3).

5.3 New Confucianism as a Neo-conservative Intellectual Movement

Similar to the socialist revival, Confucianism in the Mainland has also experienced renaissance from the early 1990s onwards. As the “old” socialist or Maoist ideology lost its central place in the Chinese public space as a source of legitimacy for the CPC and of morality for the Chinese society, Confucianism, along with nationalism, has incrementally re-emerged as one of the contenders to fill the moral value gap affecting the society. Since then, research volume on New Confucianism progressively increased and it became one of the three influential schools of thought in China, alongside liberalism and the New Left. Distinct from other intellectual movements, however, New Confucianism takes its inspiration not from the Western world but overwhelmingly from traditional Chinese philosophy. Nevertheless, notwithstanding their focus on classical Confucian thought and search for Chinese subjectivity, even the strongest advocates of an essential Confucian civilization acknowledge the needs of a modern society and hence, link their ideas, despite to a limited extent, with the Occidental philosophy. However, for the most part, such communication with Western ideas does not hold the intention of transferring political institutions of the Western world to China. New Confucian scholars rather aim to find an essential and subjective Chinese way of legitimate governance distinct from alien, especially Western, political orders.

Political philosophies of the West and China are quite dissimilar to each other. Western political philosophy is based on the Greek concept *polis* that had emerged

in fundamentally different social and historical conditions than the environment in which Confucianism had emerged. The *polis* was an independent entity consisting of citizens who were identified in terms of birth and property. In other words, individual citizens were the basic actors in the *polis* who acted according to their own individual rights and freedom. Furthermore, as members of the society, they had separate responsibilities and differing duties to fulfil. With such historical background, the basic function of the Western political philosophy based on *polis* has been to manage the diverging interests of individualistic citizens through human-made contractual agreements. This is how Chinese liberals also understand and evaluate the world (Chen, 2009, pp. 95-96, 2015).

The Chinese term for political philosophy, on the other hand, emerged in an entirely different historical and societal environment and is comprised of the two words *Zheng* and *Zhi*. While “*Zheng* refers to various activities like the preservation of material well-being, ancestral worship, foreign affairs and military expedition. The word *Zhi* means governing, which is close to the contemporary Western meaning of the word politics” (Chen, 2009, p. 94). Thus, the Chinese equivalent of political philosophy has a much broader meaning. Furthermore, unlike the individual citizen of the Western philosophy, the primary unit in the Chinese philosophy is the family. In other words, distinct from the West, the traditional Chinese philosophy and hence Confucianism, was based on blood lineage and kinship community. Accordingly, rather than managing the relationship between individuals, Confucianism concentrated upon the legitimacy of a ruler who represents the collective interests and will of the society. Moreover, Confucianism as a political philosophy was born during tumultuous years when China was in need of political order more than anything else. Hence, its main motivation was to bring peace all-under-heaven and create harmony and order in the society under the leadership of virtuous kings (Chen, 2009, pp. 95-96, 2015). As in the past, contemporary Confucianism still aims to build harmony in the society and bring order to the state and this way, create a peaceful order for the whole of humanity (Bell, 2008, p. 44). In short, for Confucian scholars, “The ideal goal is a harmonious political order of global peace... the Confucian ideal of Great Harmony” (Bell, 2008, p. 44).

While being a very recent phenomenon in the Mainland, the New Confucian thought has been in the making for some time among the wider Chinese community. The origins of New Confucianism as an intellectual movement or a school of thought has been a point of discussion in between scholars for a while. Despite many efforts to analyse Confucianism from a new and distinct perspective since the late 19th century, according to John Makeham, it is not possible to talk about a particular New Confucian philosophical and intellectual movement before the 1970s. In the Mainland, on the other hand, the 1970s witnessed the Cultural Revolution, during which Confucianism was one of the primary targets of the CPC. Therefore, the New Confucianism, as a discourse, could emerge only after the Party took initiative and encouraged intellectuals to it in the second half of the 1980s. Such that, in 1986, the Chinese government began to embolden studies on Confucianism, and the seventh five-year plan for the social sciences included New Confucianism among the key research projects to be funded (2003, p. 3, 25, 33-34). The following year, under the leadership of prominent Marxist scholar Feng Keli, the Research Group on Trends in Contemporary Confucian Thought, a government sponsored initiative, started to analyse and study present-day New Confucianism (Deng & Smith, 2018, p. 298).

Even though Mainland Confucianism was influenced by the research outside of China, their diverging tacks create an essential difference between the two lines of thought. While research outside of China consider the New Confucian thought as a cultural and philosophical endeavour, for Mainland scholars like Jiang Qing, right from the start New Confucianism has been “intensely political and a deliberate movement towards the re-sinification [*sic*] or de-Westernization, often reducing China to Confucianism” (Deng & Smith, 2018, p. 300). Despite their common interest in political Confucianism, it should further be noted that the Mainland New Confucianism is not a school of thought and New Confucian intellectuals are not in collaboration with each other in their endeavours to construct a Confucian political philosophy (Wang, R., 2011, p. 36).

In the last one and a half decades the rise of a political Confucian discourse has also been supported by the discursive backing, albeit partial, of the leading figures of the CPC, Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping being the primary proponents. Hu’s idea of building

a “Harmonious World” and Xi’s sympathy towards Confucianism and frequent use of quotes from the Chinese classics has increased public attention towards both the traditional Chinese philosophy and New Confucian ideas in the Mainland. Even though their primary audience is the Chinese people, the Party leaders also quote traditional, especially Confucian philosophers to employ Confucianism as a soft power tool to tackle the China threat theory and to demonstrate how a harmonious and stable Chinese political order can be transmitted to the world level to create a harmonious political order in the world. A Confucianism-inspired political system, in other words, may be a way of transforming the Chinese Dream into the world’s dream and creating a de-Westernized world order.

5.3.1 A Confucian Chinese Dream

A Confucian Chinese Dream is exactly what Chen Ming, a Philosophy Professor at the Capital Normal University in Beijing, desires for China. Similar to the idea of Gan Yang for unifying the three traditions in Chinese history, but taking it back strictly to the Confucian realm, Chen aims to transcend the distinctions between the New Confucianism’s neighbours to the “left” and “right”, namely the New Left and Chinese liberalism. His objective is to fuse them under the leadership of Confucian philosophy into a Chinese meta-narrative, to unify the traditions and experiences of the Qing Empire, the Republican era and the People’s Republic and hence, to re-establish historical unity. Finally, the ambition is to renew the party-state model and blend Xi Jinping’s China Dream with Confucian inputs (2015).

According to Chen, the contemporary world is very different from and much more complex than the past. In the past, the notions of left and right had distinctive and quite certain political understandings and moral meanings and proposed contrasting solutions to the problems faced by the world society. However, with modernization and globalization the world has been transformed into a complex reality in which, rather than singular systems of thought, a multiplicity of perspectives is needed. This is also true for China, which has kept pace with the world and became a pluralistic society. In line with the society, the intellectual and ideological sphere has also diversified (2015). In the process of modernization, however, unlike the

previous decades, China should not follow the footsteps of other nations and instead, try unique approaches to the Chinese modernity, which requires new ways of thinking that prioritizes China's rejuvenation. This is exactly what Confucianism, a political philosophy rooted in China, can offer to the Chinese people. For Chen, to install Confucian thought as the mainstream political philosophy, contemporary Confucianism must be legitimized before the Chinese people. This task can be accomplished by establishing Confucianism not only as a useful philosophy but also as a valuable praxis to overcome China's main problems stemming from modernization and globalization; national salvation, political reconstruction, cultural identity and religious faith (2009, p. 94, 2015).

Chen, like many other Confucian scholars, claims that Confucianism is distinctively Chinese¹³ and is the cultural moulder and expression of the Chinese nation. In other words, "Confucianism is the molder of the Chinese national ethos" and "the Chinese national pathway to realizing the meaning of life" (2009, p. 101). However, these characteristics of Confucianism are meaningful only if it can be adapted to the modern times to answer the contemporary problems related to politics, identity and sacredness. As in the classical era, the main preoccupation of political Confucianism should be to ensure the existence of a kingly rule or benevolent government to represent and achieve the collective interests and well-being of the people. Yet, with industrialisation and commercialisation modern Chinese society has evolved into an individualistic society, and these new conditions require new ways of dealing with the issue of collective interests. For that reason, Chen thinks that in order for Confucianism to regain its position as the mainstream political philosophy in modern China, a number of Western concepts that are compatible with Confucianism like individual liberty and human rights needs to be integrated into it. For Confucianism, the primary duty of the state is to effectively maintain the well-being of the public. However, it has not attached adequate importance to the necessary institutional setting to carry out the requirements of a complex modern society. For that reason, it needs to incorporate some aspects of the Western political

¹³ Bai Tongdong, a moderate New Confucianist, on the other hand, rejects the subjectivity of Confucianism as a distinctive Chinese philosophy and claims that it is a universal philosophy, "the philosophy for all civilized peoples" (2012, pp. 5-6).

philosophy and redress the balance between individual and collective interests (2009, pp. 101-103).

Chen also indicates that in managing and restricting the state a bottom to top, not a top-down approach is needed. Only through activism of the society and its impact on the state Confucian revitalization can be achieved. At this point, the successful transformation of Confucianism from a philosophy into a civil religion plays an essential role because a civil religion takes a crucial part in the effective functioning of a political order. Since the modern society asks for a small state and a vast society and since Confucianism was born out of a feudal society back in time, it is endowed with an important social capital to fulfil the requirements of the modern Chinese society (2009, p. 103).

Furthermore, as a philosophy born out of the Chinese society, erstwhile Confucianism represented the cultural identity of the Chinese people. However, since the mid-19th century, developments in three consecutive periods removed Confucianism from this position. First in the late Qing and the Republican eras, Chinese elites blamed Confucianism for being a backward culture that is responsible for the humiliation suffered from the Western powers. Afterwards, the CPC, through a number of ideological campaigns, attacked and tried to wipe out Confucianism as the primary ideological competitor. Finally, during the opening up and reform era, Chinese liberals disregarded the significance of cultural identity while overrating the importance of modernization and globalization. In the process, Chinese people lost their cultural identity, which is, according to Chen, the ideology of a nation. It is now the time for Confucianism to regain its lost position as the cultural identity of the Chinese people. Despite his emphasis on Confucianism as a national Chinese identity, Chen is also aware of the fact that China is a multinational country and hence, considers Confucianism not as exclusive of other ethnic identities and nations but as a harmonious, inclusive and universal identity that encapsulates all-under-heaven. For that reason, for Confucians, the great unity, not crumbling of borders and territories among different ethnic groups, is the essence of political correctness (2009, pp. 103-104, 2015).

Chen claims that the idea of transcending ethnic differences is closely related with President Xi's "China Dream", which pursues the great revival of the Chinese people. By positioning all Chinese nation at its centre, according to Chen, Xi *Dada*¹⁴ intends to transcend the left and the right, in other words, divisions among classes and individuals, and to unite the Chinese people under the banner of rejuvenation to build a modern nation state. Transforming an empire and constructing a sovereign modern country has been the foremost goal of the Chinese people since the May 4th Movement in 1919 that was sparked in opposition to the treatment of China in Western international treaties and Japanese colonialist intentions. In other words, in the last hundred years, the highest aim of the Chinese people has been national salvation. Since in the world all countries are in competition with each other and to survive each country can only rely on its own power and wealth, the main purpose of China in its rivalry with the West should be to safeguard its nation and culture and to achieve national emancipation by building a strong economy and military. To accomplish the goal of great national revival, Chen indicates, the only viable option of the Chinese people is the true way proposed by Xi *Dada* (2015).

China's road to modernity differed from the West in important ways and hence, the Chinese history requires a distinctive understanding that is rooted in the Chinese tradition. Differently from the Western powers, right from the start China's encounter with modernity was not just an internal process of protecting the rights of its people but fundamentally a process of protecting its sovereignty against an external challenge and so, preserving its existence. For that reason, the priority for the Qing Empire was not to overcome the internal struggles among individuals or classes but to prevent the breaking up of the state and the Chinese people/nation. However, this goal was only achieved by the Republic of China. While the new Republican political order was very much different from the previous one, it also retained some of the characteristics of the empire. Therefore, rather than talking about ruptures and disengagement, it is important to have a holistic historical perspective and acknowledge the continuity in the modern Chinese history. Thus, it

¹⁴ The epithet used for Xi Jinping by the Chinese media and people, which can be translated as father or grandfather. Chen uses the word "Dada" in his referred speech/article.

can be said that the Confucian understanding of regime change is quite different and in some sense in opposition with the socialist perspective. While the latter emphasizes class antagonism and struggle, Confucian philosophy focuses on political continuity and the legitimacy bestowed by heaven. Only by understanding the regime change through the Confucian political philosophy and by acknowledging the significance of historical continuity among the three modern traditions in the Chinese history can left and right be transcended and unity among the Chinese people be established. This is what, according to Chen, the China Dream, the shared pursuit of the Chinese people, strives to achieve (2015).

Since 1912, the Chinese people have directed their goal of national salvation and modernization under the leadership of the party-state, first of the *Guomindang* (Nationalist Party) and then the CPC. Contrary to the rightist perspective that in China the party captured the state, the historical conditions and the requirements for national liberation created the need for a strong organized force. Furthermore, unlike the leftist cheering of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the Chinese case the party-state had been Leninist by coincidence. For Mao, Chen claims, only socialism and socialists could save the country because other ideologies or groups did not have the ability to do so. So, for Mao, socialism was a tool to achieve the priority goal of national salvation. In short, the combination of the party-state and socialism emerged from the necessities imposed by modernity. However, the need for national liberation does not provide an endless legitimacy for the CPC. Once the goal was achieved and a new country was constructed, the preliminary Leninist 1.0 version of the party-state has fulfilled its mission and it needs to be transcended by a newer version that prioritizes not the dictatorship of the proletariat and permanent revolution but the unity of the party, the state and the people. This is what Xi's China Dream takes as its core idea. At this point, Chen claims, Confucianism should enter the picture and overcome the contradiction between the authority of the government and the rights of the individuals by proposing a middle way to successfully managing the relations between the state and the people. Hence, there is a need to blend the Chinese state with Confucian inputs and this way, achieve the great national rejuvenation of the Chinese people (2015).

5.3.2 A Confucian Constitutional Order

Jiang Qing, the most prominent and radical intellectual among the Mainland New Confucians, has a different perspective on the party-state, democracy, religious faith and social hierarchy than all of the intellectuals discussed so far, including his New Confucian counterpart Chen Ming. Notwithstanding that he is a Confucian scholar nowadays, like the vast majority of intellectuals under Chairman Mao, Jiang began his intellectual life as a committed socialist, reading Marxist classics and actively participating in activities to “wholeheartedly serve the people” during the Cultural Revolution. From the late 1970s, his commitment to orthodox Marxism started to divert and he participated in democracy activism. The political crisis in 1989, however, caused him to question Western political ideas and to entirely change his democratic leaning. Thereafter, under the influence of Liang Shuming, he developed into a New Confucian scholar (Bell, 2013, pp. 2-4).

For Jiang, it is a big mistake to evaluate the Tiananmen movement as a call for liberal democracy. Quite the contrary, it happened precisely because for almost a hundred years, Western ideologies of Marxism and liberalism were imposed upon the Chinese people with the intention of making them “modern”. As a result, generations of Chinese people were alienated from their own traditional culture and identity. Nevertheless, political chaos in 1989 showed that the governing ideology lost its legitimacy before the people. Therefore, there emerged a need for the building up of a new legitimate and stable political order emanating from the Chinese soil. To achieve this goal, in the post-Tiananmen era, Jiang devoted his life in finding such a polity inspired not by alien ideologies but by traditional Chinese cultural identity and philosophy. The solution he proposed for this problem is the idea of constructing a Confucian constitutional order, which is obviously an important challenge to both the existing CPC rule as well as to the proponents of a Western-style liberal democracy. For him, since the CPC has no legitimacy and hence, does not have the ability to survive in the long-run, the main challenge to Confucianism in China comes from liberal democracy. In short, he has developed his ideas substantially to counter his liberal intellectual rivals (Bell, 2013, p. 2).

In conceptualising a legitimate polity for China, Jiang looks back to classical Confucian texts, *The Spring and Autumn Annals* and *The Book of Rites*, and refers to political Confucianism that was developed by the *Gongyang* school, which is an interpretation of Confucian classical texts by Confucian masters like Dong Zhongshu and He Xiu during the Han Dynasty (202BC-220AD). Political Confucianism is interested in a constantly changing social-political reality. Change is an integral part of life because people live in a certain time and space and thus, are historical, not transcendental, beings. Furthermore, political Confucianism seeks to fix the negative sides of the human nature and immoral politics through social and political institutions. As a philosophy concerned with political institutions, political Confucianism aims to benefit from Confucian thought to find ways of establishing a benevolent government and a harmonious society that reflect and meet the interests of the people. Therefore, discovering ways of constructing a legitimate government is the main aim of political Confucianism (2011, pp. 25-29).

On the sources of a legitimate government, Jiang has a different approach both from the advocates of liberal democracy and from New Leftists like Wang Shaoguang. For him, in order for the Chinese culture to confront the Western cultural challenge, the single path that lies ahead of China is the one proposed by the “Way of the Humane Authority”, which is the hope of not only the Chinese people but also all of humankind. In other words, in their search for a legitimate and stable order, the Chinese people should appeal to traditional Confucian political philosophy and reject all sorts of democratic regimes, be it a liberal or a socialist one. The main concern of political Confucianism, or the Way of the Humane Authority, is the construction of political legitimacy. Unlike the singular source of legitimacy that the Western democracy demands, according to the Way of the Humane Authority, the legitimacy of a ruler rests on three forms of legitimacy: heaven, earth and the human. These three types of legitimacy respectively refer to the sacred or transcendent legitimacy, historical and cultural legitimacy and legitimacy of the people. Thus, in order to establish a legitimate, stable and harmonious order over a long-period, political power must simultaneously represent the way of heaven, the culture of the people developed over generations and the will of the people. When the ruling authority loses all three forms of legitimacy, as in the case of the CPC,

then it may easily face political crises. That's why, today, the main priority of the Mainland Confucians should be to construct a political order based on the Way of the Humane Authority and hence, on the three spheres of legitimacy (2013a, pp. 27-33).

The legitimacy of democratic governance, on the other hand, comes just from the people. This singular legitimacy is insufficient because it is based on pure reason and lacks both historical and transcendent forms of legitimacy. This insufficiency creates two very important problems. It results in secularization, individualism, commercialization and selfishness that create the problem of prioritizing immediate human wants and partial interests against common interests. This is why a government, as in the case of the George W. Bush administration, may choose to ignore a common problem like environmental degradation that is related to the interests not only of contemporary people but also of future generations and instead protect the interests of the present few. Another trouble caused by democracy is the lack of morality, which result from the formal, rather than the substantial, representation of the people's will. In other words, a democratic government represents the opinions of the majority irrespective of its quality and morality. This is why, in democracies, imperialist or fascist politicians can be elected to govern a country. To overcome these two main problems of democracy, legitimacy based on the will of the people must be constrained and balanced by the legitimacy of heaven and of culture. Furthermore, this three-dimensional legitimacy should not be considered as a flat harmony among the three spheres but as a hierarchic harmony. The sacred legitimacy provided by the way of heaven occupies a higher rank than the legitimacy of earth and the human because, according to Confucian thought, heaven is the source of the universe and thus, of humanity and culture. This is the point where the Way of the Humane Authority distinguishes itself from and outweighs liberal democracy since it is the only political form that combines all three types of legitimacy in a political system which acknowledges "the sovereignty of heaven" and hence, the supremacy of the sacred legitimacy (Jiang, 2013a, pp. 31-37, 2013b, p. 48).

In Confucianism, sovereignty and political legitimacy are expressed through institutions and the people. In ancient China, the Way of the Humane Authority was initially practiced by sage kings and after the era of sage kings ended, sovereignty was expressed by monarchs. In other words, in the past, Confucianism has delegated the sovereignty of heaven to a sage king or a monarch who had the ability to connect heaven, earth and the people and this way, could mediate between heaven and the people. However, since a single person could not rule the country on its own, the sovereignty was sub-delegated by the sage kings or monarchs to Confucian scholars who administered the country on behalf of the sage kings or monarchs. Through Confucian scholars, religious and moral values of Confucianism was put into action and the power holders in the state were cultivated and guided towards the goodness of the Way of heaven. However, times have changed, and the era of sage kings and monarchs has ended a long time ago. With it the historical political system of China has also collapsed. But since then a new Chinese system could not be constructed. Now is the time for China to be innovative in finding a new type of political system that is rooted in its own culture while at the same time meeting the demands of a modern society. For Jiang, a Confucian constitutional order with a tri-cameral parliamentary system is exactly this kind of creative polity originating from the Chinese civilization in that an innovative Chinese order must be constitutional to meet the needs of a modern society, but it should also be Confucian because a constitutional order can be identified as Chinese only when it is Confucian (2013a, pp. 40-41, 2013b, pp. 48-52).

Before moving on with Jiang's idea of a Confucian constitutional order, it should be noted that for such an order to be put into practice, for him, three conditions must be actualised. Initially, a Confucianism-centred Chinese civilization needs to be restored. Then, the number of scholars who practice Confucian beliefs and practices must be increased and this way, Confucianism should be spread among the public. Finally, the way of traditional Confucians, or Confucianism as a religion, needs to be put into the constitution. Even though the third one seems to be the hardest condition, Jiang is optimistic that one day such an amendment to the constitution will be made and the conditions will be ripe for the construction of a Confucian constitutional order (2013b, p. 68).

A Confucian constitutional order consists of three main institutions: The Academy of Confucian scholars to supervise the state, the tri-cameral parliament as the legislature and the symbolic monarch to represent the state. Resembling the traditional Confucian constitutionalism, Jiang proposes the creation of an Academy of Confucian scholars with three traditional and three new functions. This way he aims to bring together the past with the present and catch the *zeitgeist*. The Academy is the highest supervisory body in the Republic to ensure that the rulers of the state follow the Way of the Humane Authority. Another important duty of the Academy is to make state examinations for high governing and judiciary posts and even for the members of the House of *Ru* (Scholars), one of the houses of the tri-cameral parliament, and to prepare students for these exams. Since in this constitutional order Confucianism is the state religion, religious ceremonies and rituals are an important part of state affairs. As the representative of the nation and the state, the symbolic monarch leads some of the state religious ceremonies, but some of these rituals are directly related with God and as the representative of heaven and religion, the Academy must lead them. Other than these three traditional functions, the Academy also has three new functions. It has the capacity to recall the leaders of state institutions in case of problems related with legality, insufficient ability, poor performance or lack of morality arise. This way the Academy assures that the three forms of legitimacy are represented in the state structure and also its religious authority is provided. Furthermore, as the authority with the highest legitimacy in the state, when needed it moderates among state institutions. Since the Academy represents the Way of heaven, it is the ultimate decision maker. Finally, to fix the problems caused by the idea of separating the state from religion, the Academy has the power to ensure that politics follow morality, preserve religion among the nation and accordingly, keep the country away from immoral behaviours (2013b, pp. 55-64). In short, the Academy is the guardian of the Confucian constitutionalism and the guarantor of the Way of the Humane Authority.

The tricameral parliament, on the other hand, is the legislative body of the Republic and reflects the political legitimacy of the constitutional order. Differently from the Academy, the national parliament combines Western democratic and Chinese traditional cultures of governing. The three types of legitimacy are divided among

the three houses of the parliament: the House of *Ru* (Scholars) expresses the legitimacy of heaven; the House of the Nation expresses the legitimacy of history and culture; and the House of the People expresses the legitimacy of the will of the people. Only the members of the last house are elected through direct popular voting. The others are chosen according to different criteria. The Scholars of the first house are selected among the Confucian scholars who are either recommended by the people or examined after completing their educations in a Confucian Academy, which is constituted by the state, and who are nominated while serving at different levels of the administration. The members of the House of Nation are directly chosen by the leader of the house among the worthy members of the Chinese society and also among the representatives of universal religions practiced by the Chinese people. As the three forms of legitimacy, to reflect the sovereignty of heaven these three houses function in a hierarchic harmony. In other words, even though all three houses have real legislative powers and a bill has to pass at least two of the houses, only the House of *Ru* has a veto power. Thereby, a bill can only pass if it is not vetoed by Confucian Scholars and further supported by at least one of the other houses. The reason why only the House of *Ru* has a veto power is that only Confucian scholars bear the wisdom to follow the Way of heaven. Nevertheless, despite their veto power, the tricameral parliament ensures that the Scholars cannot dominate the legislation process and interfere in other houses (2013b, pp. 41-42, 65-66). In a nutshell, Confucian constitutionalism is primarily a Chinese-style parliamentarism with a little bit of Western cultural flavour.

For Jiang, the state type of a Confucian constitutional order can only be a Republic under the leadership of a symbolic monarch because this is the only way the historical and cultural legitimacy of the Chinese state can be assured. In this constitutional order, because the symbolic monarch is the representative of China's culture and history, he needs to be someone with a noble and ancient blood, namely a direct descendant of Confucius. However, the symbolic monarch does not possess real political authority, which is distributed among the legislation and the executive, but serves as the head of the state by only holding state power like appointing state officials and signing international treaties. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it has no authority over the parliament and the government. As the head of the state, he

has the duty of checking and restricting these two institutions. Furthermore, for the state authority is inherently religious and cultural, only the symbolic monarch has the ability to determine and exercise the essence of that power. Moreover, in line with this religious and cultural nature of the state power and resulting from his noble lineage, the symbolic monarch nominates the head of the House of the Nation as well. In short, through the state power the symbolic monarch limits the government and the parliament, and, in this way, a balanced and harmonious relationship is formed among the legislative, the executive and the state powers (2013c, pp. 71-72 79-80, 88-89).

5.4 Conclusion

The growing economic potential of China, diversification of the Chinese society and lessening of the state control over the public life in the previous decades incrementally eased off the pressure on the Chinese intellectuals and academia over the content and kind of knowledge they produce. Accordingly, over time, intellectual life has flourished as new streams of thought entered the Chinese world of ideas. This way, compared to Mao and early post-Mao periods, knowledge production in China and the status of intellectuals diversified significantly. As Chinese intellectuals are no longer the servants of the state as in the Maoist era, they are not only socialists or establishment intellectuals anymore. The intellectual life of China is now filled with a number of different perspectives on the Chinese state, politics, society, economy and religion. However, these new lines of thought do not stem only from the West. As China's control over the means of production soared, the state and intellectuals, both established and disestablished, initiated new research programmes to produce knowledge rooted in the Chinese soil. In other words, as the Chinese control over the means of material production increased, their efforts to control the means of mental production also increased. However, indigenous knowledge production is a time-consuming great task to accomplish, especially when the ongoing hegemony of the Western academia over the knowledge of the world taken into consideration.

Some of these homegrown theorizing efforts like the mainstream Tsinghua approach and critical socialist intellectuals follow a positivist or post-positivist (Western) ontology and aim to develop universal knowledge by bringing together Western theory with China's local knowledge. Others like Zhao and Jiang, on the other hand, pursue the goal of producing uniquely Chinese knowledge with different ontologies and standpoints than the producers of Western-centric knowledge. Even though both of the approaches have a claim to challenge the hegemony of Western-centric understanding of the world, the first approach, in its attempt to marry Western political and IR theory with Chinese philosophy, reproduces Western-centric universalist knowledge while simultaneously attempting to diversify the knowledge on the world. The other one, on the other hand, by viewing the world only in Chinese terms, works to create uniquely Sino-centric knowledge and this way, aim to build an alternative hegemony over the means of mental production.

Despite their diverging approaches, in their endeavour to localize knowledge, albeit in varying degrees, all non-mainstream Chinese intellectuals challenge the universality claims of Western concepts like "hegemony", "modernity", "legitimacy" and "democracy" and their "universal" meanings. As have been discussed in the previous three chapters, the economic and political rise of China has also brought with it the discussion on the possibility of China becoming a hegemonic power, especially among Western governing and academic elite. However, the intellectuals covered in this chapter, with the exception of Wang Hui, who takes a critical attitude towards the US hegemony, do not directly enter the discussion on how to theorize hegemony and the likelihood of China becoming a hegemonic state. Rather they fundamentally focus on the internal transformation of the Chinese economy, politics and society. This attitude may be related with the negative connotation the concept of hegemony has in the Chinese socialist lexicon. Since the initiation of the People's Republic, as a natural consequence of the colonial past of the country, the notion of hegemony has always had a negative meaning among the intelligentsia as can be seen in the identification therewith first of the US and then the Soviet Union. Mao's Three Worlds Theory, for example, defines these two countries as hegemonic powers who try to keep under control both

the developed Second World and developing Third World countries and this way, create turbulence and instability in the world (Deng, 1974).

As inheritors of the socialist tradition, instead of talking about a rising China as a hegemon-to-be, several New Left scholars like Pan Wei and Wang Shaoguang consider “the China Model” as a possible soft power tool and public good to offer for developing countries to emulate, not as a formula to be imposed upon them. Nevertheless, while they do not consider their country as a future hegemon, what they propose is a kind of hegemony building process in which a stronger China emerges as a model to be possibly imitated and admired. This can be seen in the writings of neo-conservative scholars as well. Jiang’s main idea is to develop a Confucian China in which Chinese people can live in harmony. However, he also claims that the Way of the Humane Authority is the hope not only of the Chinese people but also all of humankind. In other words, what he is proposing is a type of hegemony construction, but under the leadership of a Confucian China.

The lack of hegemony conceptualisation and debate further results from the domestic orientation of their research. The priority of these non-mainstream Chinese scholars is the construction and maintenance of a stable domestic order in their country, rather than achieving dominance in the international order. In other words, what they are primarily suggesting for their people and/or state is not the ways of building global hegemony, as mainstream US IR scholars do, but ways of either legitimizing and stabilizing the existing CPC rule or constructing a new order from scratch. Nevertheless, in this way, some of the unorthodox Chinese intellectuals like Chen Ming, Wang Shaoguang and Pan Wei aim to help their government in achieving the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

In this regard, the attitudes of non-mainstream intellectuals, in their relationships with the state, differentiate from each other. Jiang, with his challenging stance towards the CPC rule, clearly deviates from other five scholars. Such that in his bid for a Confucian constitutional order, he openly questions and moreover challenges the existing socialist government by claiming that it has no legitimacy. He further talks about the need to innovatively imagine and discuss a new, uniquely Chinese polity. In this effort, his main audience is clearly the Chinese people, not the state.

Others, on the other hand, have softer critical tones and more supportive attitudes towards the CPC and the state. Even Wang Hui, who has a very critical stance towards the Party on issues like the Tiananmen crackdown and the neoliberal transformation of the state and society and the related social inequality, in recent years toned down his critical position and incrementally moved closer to the Party. This is also true for the socialist Wang Shaoguang and New Confucian Chen Ming. Despite their diverse ideological backgrounds, both of these scholars aim to support the efforts of the state in its goal of rejuvenating the Chinese nation. These intellectuals aim for influencing and diverting the attention of the Chinese party-state either towards the left or towards Confucianism. These critical and neo-conservative intellectuals, in other words, are critical but not dissidents like Ai Weiwei. These scholars do not directly challenge the leadership of the Party but criticize it and propose alternatives by being aware of the limitations the system puts against them. Hence, they abstain from pushing the patience of the CPC too much. Therewithal, being aware of the capacity of the Chinese society to oppose and protest unfair practices, in particular the critical intellectuals try also to influence and get the support of the Chinese people in their efforts to guide the Party. This can be clearly seen from the writings of Wang Hui but especially of Wang Shaoguang, whose thoughts on a Chinese theory of substantial democracy and the mass line emphasize the need to develop policies with the people. Therefore, different from the establishment, mainstream scholars like Yan and Zhao, these are public intellectuals who engage in dialogue both with the Chinese state and the public.

The relationship between Chinese critical intellectuals and the state differentiates them from the Western critical scholars analysed in the second chapter of this study as well. Unlike critical Chinese scholars, Cox and Wallerstein do not produce knowledge for the sake of their own states, Canada and the US respectively. What Chinese and Western have in common, on the other hand, is the desire to challenge and overcome the Western-centric nature of knowledge production and the unequal power relationships of the existing world order. However, due to the fact that the knowledge produced by Western critical theorists, despite unwittingly, is Western-centric, Chinese non-mainstream intellectuals' claim for indigenisation of knowledge should also be considered as a form of reclaiming the critical and non-

Western-centric discourse from the Western critical scholars. In other words, as the occupants of the periphery of global and Chinese social sciences, heterodox Chinese intellectuals challenge all three positions taken by the mainstream US, critical Western and mainstream Chinese perspectives and try to offer alternative visions for the future of their country and the world.

This chapter, through its analysis of the knowledge produced by six unorthodox Chinese intellectuals on a rapidly transforming and rising China, revealed the persistence of region-centricity of knowledge production in the academia as well as the relationship between power and knowledge production in China. Furthermore, by including non-mainstream Chinese thinking, which holds a position only in the peripheries of social sciences knowledge production, it contributed to the efforts of bringing in and diversifying the knowledge on China.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

China's rapidly ascending status in the world order has sparked an intense debate among the contributors from diverse disciplines of social sciences from economics to sociology and politics. Most of these contributions, including the ones in the field of IR, have focused mainly on a single aspect of China's transformation rather than analysing it from a number of facets. Furthermore, these studies have analysed China from their respective standpoints originating from their locations in the core-periphery structure of the world order and social sciences and also from their positions in the power-knowledge nexus. Thereby, the locality of the knowledge produced about China and its relations with power structures ought to be taken into consideration while examining the existing literature. This necessity is the point of departure of this study.

This thesis was undertaken to scrutinize the heterogeneity of knowledge, the relationship between power and knowledge production and the region-centricity, in particular the Western-centricity, of knowledge production by analysing the discourse on the “(re-)rising” status of China in the world order from thirteen different perspectives originating from China and North America. In its endeavour of making sense of a rising China, this study has identified differing approaches to the issues of conceptualising hegemony, hegemony-building processes and the relationship between a hegemonic state and (a) rising power(s) and relatedly, the transformation of the Chinese state, society and political-economy, China's rising position in the world order and changing relations with the outside world and in particular China-US relations.

Within this scope, this thesis focused on and sought to answer the following research question: What can be learned about the heterogeneity of knowledge

production, the relationship between power and knowledge and the region-centricity of knowledge production efforts in social sciences from the contributions of mainstream and critical Western and Chinese approaches to the debate on a rapidly transforming and “rising” China? In other words, this study endeavoured to understand and reveal the close nexus between knowledge production and power structures, the heterogeneity and multiplicity of knowledge and the influence of locality on the knowledge produced in social sciences. The focus of the study in answering its problematic was the discourse about contemporary China. China’s expeditious economic, political and societal transformation and correlatively rapid ascent in the hierarchy of the world order as well as the intense debate regarding this changing status of the country provide an important source for understanding and explaining the close link between power and knowledge production and the heterogeneity of knowledge despite the intellectual hegemony of the West and Western-centric perspectives in social sciences and in the field of IR.

The discourse on China offers an important platform for debating these issues for two primary reasons. The vast IR literature on China is dominated by mainstream approaches and hence, by Western-centric knowledge, which are based on the Western standpoint in evaluating world affairs while ignoring the legacy of colonialism and imperialism in the world order and the experiences, histories and perspectives of non-Western societies. However, current era China cannot be fully grasped solely through a Western-centric perspective. To have a more complete picture of a (re-)rising China, non-Western and of course Chinese perspectives need to be taken into account as well. With China’s rising control over the means of material production, its efforts of controlling the means of mental production also increases. In other words, as their country has rapidly improved its economic capacity and position in the international hierarchy of states, Chinese ruling and academic elite has become aware of the need to produce knowledge rooted in the Chinese locality, rather than importing it from the West. Even though only a short period of time has passed since the initiation of Chinese attempts to provide alternatives to Western approaches, efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge in the social sciences need to consider China’s identification of itself and the world. Keeping this necessity in mind and to make sense of a rapidly changing and “rising”

China, this study sought to bring together thirteen approaches from China and North America, which occupy different positions in the core-periphery structure of social sciences knowledge production and hence provide diverging standpoints to understanding the phenomenon of China.

All studies in social sciences are part of the three-layered structure of the world order where each layer is in some ways linked to the other two: core, semi-periphery and periphery. Therefore, IR as a field of social sciences does not consist of a single global discipline, but instead of various national disciplines. The disciplines belonging to each layer have different capacities to influence the knowledge produced and circulated in the world of social sciences. The academia occupying the core of IR, namely the US-centred mainstream IR scholarship, dominate the means of mental production and to a great extent possess the means to circulate their own ideas and research. While the studies written in the US are widely circulated among and hence speak to the whole of world academia, publications originating from other parts of the world rarely find chances to be paid attention to by the core and also by the semi-periphery and periphery. This dominance enables mainstream US IR to be influential in directing the pathways of knowledge production not only in the US and the West but also throughout the world. This is a valid claim for the debate on China as well. Through its control over the means of mental production, mainstream US IR academia determines the concepts and debates to be utilized in discussing the phenomenon of a “rising” China. Semi-peripheral and peripheral studies, on the other hand, for the most part, abide by the rules set by the IR mainstream and import the theories, ideas and concepts emanating from the core. However, some critical intellectuals located in the semi-periphery and periphery of the discipline question and oppose this task sharing. Semi-peripheral scholars have more voice and influence over the literature compared to peripheral ones. They find opportunities to publish in the journals dominated by the mainstream IR studies and this way, to a certain extent can engage in dialogue with the core. Scholars in the periphery, on the other hand, have less capacities to create opportunities for their voices to be heard. While some scholars from the periphery like Yan Xuetong and Zhao Tingyang, with the increasing importance of China in the world order, find platforms to speak to the core, it is much harder for critical intellectuals located in the periphery to make their

voices heard even in their own national academic environments let alone in the world academia.

Their insufficiency in controlling the means of mental production further restricts their attempts and willingness to change the stratified structure of social sciences and in particular of the IR discipline. While mainstream IR approaches are content with the core-periphery distinction in the discipline and hence, do not want to give up their intellectual hegemony in the knowledge production, the majority of semi-peripheral and peripheral approaches consent to and do not challenge this segregation as well. These approaches follow and produce knowledge in accordance with the debates and concepts defined by the IR mainstream. Their primary aim is to move to the centre of social sciences rather than transforming its layered, unjust structure. What is striking, however, is the abundance of a number of critical Western and non-Western, in particular Chinese, scholars. In other words, several critical Western and mainstream and critical Chinese approaches also ground their studies onto the assumptions, concepts and debates determined by the mainstream “American” IR. This is evident in the discussions regarding the conceptualisation of hegemony and the changing status of China in the world order.

Mainstream IR, as discussed in the introduction and chapter two, view world affairs from a Western-centric perspective. It claims to be value free and universal and accepts the Westphalian state system as the only model for evaluating the relations among states worldwide. Accordingly, orthodox IR considers strong states as the most important agents in the system and hence focuses on the relations among them. In line with this, it defines hegemony as the dominance of a great power over other states. In other words, mainstream IR approaches take (powerful) states as the basic unit of analysis. Furthermore, their focal point is state security. In this direction, they evaluate the rise of China as a matter of US security and consider that country either as a status quo or a challenger power. In other words, through the lenses of IR mainstream, China is either a peaceful rising power in concordance with the liberal order and the US leadership or a rising power with the potential to cause trouble to and militarily challenge the US hegemony. The proponents of this first stance claim that there is no reason to be afraid of a rising China because it is the main

beneficiary of the system and hence has already been tamed or in other words “civilized”. The proponents of the second stance, on the other hand, argue that China is a threat to the interests of the US and the Western world in general and thus needs to be contained or balanced before increasing its power potential to the point of militarily challenging the US. In short, according to orthodox IR thinking, China is the “other” of the liberal Western world that either peacefully or forcefully needs to be integrated into the system or at least kept under control.

Possessing a semi-peripheral position in the discipline, critical Western IR approaches, namely world-systems analysis and historical materialist critical theory, as discussed in chapter three, criticize the orthodox thinking in IR and have a claim to overcome its Western-centric standpoint. It furthermore aims to free knowledge production from the dictates of existing power structures as well as to create alternatives for a fairer world order. However, their efforts in this endeavour have been insufficient primarily due to their own Western-centric point of views. Unlike their claims, since they take the Westphalian state system into their focus and consider Western great powers as the only historical hegemonies, these critical Western IR approaches strengthen the centrality of Western-centric knowledge production in the field. Furthermore, they put the supremacy of the West in world political economy at the centre of their analyses while visualising the non-West as the passive victim of this supremacy. Besides, in line with their definitions of hegemony, these critical approaches consider China as the main contender state as against the US and the liberal Western world order. In other words, by positioning China as the challenger and hence the other of the West, scholars of world-systems analysis and HMCT think and write about China in terms defined by the orthodox thinking in the discipline. In short, these critical approaches follow the pathways built by the IR mainstream and therefore, could not be successful in producing non-Western-centric or humancentric standpoints. In other words, they comply with the debates initiated by the status quo oriented, problem-solving mainstream IR that they intend to transcend.

Mainstream Chinese approaches, taking part in the peripheries of IR, follow a similar path. The Tsinghua approach and the theory of moral realism led by Yan

Xuetong, differently from critical Western approaches, do not oppose and even openly endorse the scientificity and universality of knowledge production as mainstream Western IR do. In line with this claim for universality, these approaches furthermore favour the Westphalian state system and hence pursue a Western-centric perspective. While the Tsinghua approach and moral realism, in some ways, localize knowledge regarding the concept of hegemony and the debate on China by merging realist thinking with Chinese traditional philosophy, they still generate knowledge in Western-centric terms. Zhao Tingyang, on the other hand, questions the Westphalian universality and instead supports the idea that the current international order is deprived of a universally endorsed political philosophy and institution to govern the world society. To overcome this problem, he claims that state-centrism needs to be abandoned and instead the ancient *Tianxia* system needs to be adapted to the modern world. This way, Zhao proposes an alternative ontology in understanding and explaining world affairs and overcoming the problems emanating from the state-centric structure of the modern world order. In other words, he puts forward a system-level analysis or a holistic view of the world. His distinctively Chinese approach to world governance is, as a matter of fact, another variant of a state-centric nationalist, or Chinese, solution to the problems the world faces. What he is suggesting is a Chinese version cosmopolitanism. In that sense, Zhao's approach is only different from the Western-centric standpoint because of its Sino-centric perspective. As he labels the West and non-Chinese people as the other, Zhao's non-Western critique of the Western-centric worldview is in fact recreating the self/other distinction, but to the benefit of his own country. With this way, he is substituting the Western exceptionalism with the Chinese exceptionalism.

Despite their differing perspectives to the world order, instead of attempting to transcend the core-periphery structure of social sciences, mainstream Chinese approaches seek to contribute to the goal of relocating Chinese knowledge production from a peripheral to a central position. Being aware of the intellectual hegemony of the US, Chinese scholars aim to produce innovative studies and transcend the US hegemony in knowledge production. Accordingly, they produce theoretical and practical knowledge and evaluate China's relations with the outside world and in particular the US based on their positions in this core-periphery

structure of social sciences and with the intention of moving towards the centre. However, in doing this, similar to the scholars of critical Western IR, they comply with the debates determined by the IR mainstream. They evaluate China's position in the world order with the intention of overcoming the "China threat" theory propounded by the mainstream US IR academia and claim that China is a status quo power that seeks to fully integrate into the US-led liberal world order. In short, as mainstream Chinese scholars actively contribute to the efforts of presenting the transformation and rising status of China as "peaceful development" they accept the dichotomy defined by the IR mainstream.

Critical or non-mainstream Chinese approaches, on the other hand, are located in the peripheries of both "global" and Chinese national IR disciplines. In other words, they are in the peripheries of the periphery of the field. In line with their position in this stratified structure, these approaches, despite in varying degrees, have critical stances towards both mainstream Western and mainstream Chinese perspectives and aim to transcend Western-centricity and bring in Chinese standpoints to the field. Some scholars like critical intellectuals Wang Hui and Wang Shaoguang follow a positivist or post-positivist (Western) philosophies of science and aim to develop universal knowledge by harmonising Western theory with China's local knowledge. These scholars, contrary to Zhao Tingyang, follow a state-centric point of view centring on the Westphalian state-system. Others like New Confucian Jiang Qing, on the other hand, aim to produce uniquely Chinese knowledge with a different ontology and standpoint than the producers of Western-centric knowledge. The first approach, in its attempt to marry Western political and IR theory with Chinese political philosophy, in a degree contributes to the reproduction of Western-centric universalist knowledge while simultaneously attempting to diversify the knowledge on the world. The other one, on the other hand, by viewing the world almost only in Chinese terms, endeavours to create uniquely Sino-centric knowledge and this way, aim to build an alternative hegemony over the means of mental production.

These approaches differ from Western and mainstream Chinese approaches in their attempts to challenge the claimed universality of Western concepts. In their studies, both critical and neo-conservative Chinese intellectuals redefine the concepts like

modernity, legitimacy and democracy in a way different from their Western usages. Hereby, these scholars strive to propose alternative meanings to concepts commonly accepted as “universal”. With such efforts of indigenising knowledge, non-mainstream Chinese scholars challenge other three clusters of scholars from the West and China. In other words, albeit in varying degrees, these intellectuals reject and challenge Western intellectual dominance and claims for universalism, reclaim critical and non-Western-centric discourse from critical Western scholars and finally, reclaim the production and usage of more purist Chinese ideas from mainstream scholars like Yan. In line with their rejection of “universal” meanings, critical and neo-conservative Chinese intellectuals do not engage in the debate on a rising China as it is designed by the IR mainstream. With the exception of Wang Hui, these scholars do not directly enter the discussion on how to theorize hegemony and the likelihood of China becoming a hegemonic state. In other words, instead of discussing the transformation of China in terms of the status quo versus revisionism dichotomy, critical Chinese intellectuals essentially focus on the internal transformation of the Chinese economy, politics and society and imply that a stable and harmonious China will contribute to overcoming the ills of the world. In short, non-mainstream Chinese approaches diverge from the other three clusters of approaches in their efforts of indigenising knowledge production and over the debate on the transformation of China.

Issues of core-periphery structure of social sciences and locality of knowledge are also related to the nexus between power and knowledge production. Such that all four groups of approaches discussed in this study are part of different power-knowledge relationships in accordance with their positions in the core-periphery structure. As indicated in chapter two, mainstream theories of IR, despite having minor differences among them, conceptualise hegemony essentially on material terms and evaluate China’s rise as a problem or a threat for the US to overcome to maintain its security and hegemonic position. By labelling China’s rise as an existential threat to the US to be tackled in the fastest way possible these theories securitize the “China problem”. In other words, the dominant approach in the discipline analyse China through the lens of (US) state security. In line with this stance, scholars of orthodox thinking in the discipline produce knowledge in the

service of the US state and hence, propose policy options for the US ruling class. Put another way, as a result of their ideological bias towards the existing international system and the Western-centric perspective, mainstream US theories of IR help the power holders of the US-led system in legitimizing the established power relationships and thus, stabilising and maintaining the existing unequal system. In short, as problem-solving theories, IR mainstream fundamentally produce instrumental knowledge speaking to the US academic elite and policy-makers.

Critical Western IR approaches, on the other hand, evaluate world affairs in terms of their possible contributions to the efforts of transcending the unjust power structures of the existing world order and accordingly, finding alternative ways of creating a just world system. However, as shown in chapter three, these critical perspectives consider the case of China in terms of their Western-centric hegemony conceptions. In other words, instead of thinking about another, new type of leadership that China may propose to the world or the possibility of China's contribution in creating a different kind of world order, these critical approaches evaluate the phenomenon of China and Sino-US relations in terms of the previously existed Western hegemonies. Such that, with the exception of Arrighi, critical Western scholars continue to ignore the historical legacy of non-Western systems and especially the traditional China-centred system and focus only on the history and experiences of Western societies. In the end, these approaches act like problem-solving theories in that they work hard to de-naturalize and transcend and thereby, contribute to the efforts of legitimizing, naturalizing and stabilizing the existing unjust order. In other words, their Western-centrism makes them, quite paradoxically, contributors to the existing unequal power structures that they have been questioning since their earliest days as research programmes, which in turn causes them to lose their value as critical and anti-Eurocentric approaches. Nevertheless, albeit insufficiently, since the early days of their initiation, world-systems analysis and HMCT have broadened critical thought in social sciences and opened new ways for alternative, non-Western ways of thinking about the world. Therefore, notwithstanding their Western-centric perspectives and positions in the power-knowledge nexus, these are reflexive knowledge production efforts that focus on the fundamental values of the world society and that also examine and question the underlying assumptions of scientific

projects. Thence, as critical Western approaches, rather than speaking to the Western ruling elite, they engage in dialogue with, despite insufficiently, the public as well as the community of scholars on value relevance of knowledge production.

The links between mainstream Chinese intellectuals with the power holders of their own country resemble the relationship between mainstream US scholars and the US ruling class. These Chinese scholars are closely related to and furthermore, in some situations, actively contribute to the policy making structures of the Chinese state. In brief, these are established intellectuals who, in its goal of rejuvenating the Chinese nation and state and positioning China at the centre of world political economy, give intellectual support and propose policy options to the dignitaries of the CPC. Therefore, policy relevance of knowledge production occupies an important place in the research done by mainstream intellectuals in China. However, this is a mutual affinity in which the Party supports as well as scrutinizes the efforts of the Chinese intelligentsia in their efforts of producing alternative knowledge to Western-centric perspectives stemming from the Chinese historical experience and philosophy. Thus, mainstream Chinese IR academia is closely linked to the Chinese government. This is clear in the uniformity of political discourses of the CPC elite and Chinese scholarly debates as well. In short, mainstream Chinese intellectuals are part of the established power and social relationships in their country and accordingly, endeavour to offer ways of overcoming the problems the Chinese state is confronted with in its ambition of achieving a superpower status in the international system. In other words, established intellectuals of China produce instrumental knowledge with the aim of supporting the Party elite in their desire for developing their country “peacefully”, “building a harmonious world” and fulfilling the “Chinese Dream”.

In their relations with the ruling class of their country, critical Chinese intellectuals differ from the established Chinese intellectuals as well as amongst themselves. The first concern of New Left and New Confucian scholars is the construction, legitimization and maintenance of a stable domestic order in China. In other words, they prioritise domestic affairs of and the transformations that their country experiences. However, in this endeavour, these critical scholars are not in a close relationship with the Chinese government as the establishment intellectuals do.

Furthermore, they also diverge amongst themselves in their policy proposals to and links with the state and the CPC. Scholars like Wang Shaoguang, Chen Ming and Pan Wei openly support the efforts of the Party in its goal of rejuvenating the Chinese nation and proposing a model to the world. Jiang Qing, however, questions the sovereignty of the CPC by declaring that the socialist government lost its legitimacy and cannot sustain its leadership in the long run. Therefore, he claims that a new, uniquely Chinese polity needs to be developed. Wang Hui, on the other hand, follows a middle way in between directly challenging the authority of the Party and openly endorsing its policies, despite increasingly taking a position closer to that of the CPC when compared with previous years. In short, even though all produce knowledge with the intention of influencing the political power of their country, these critical or disestablished Chinese intellectuals, at least for now, are neither engaged directly with the Party nor dissidents. Furthermore, what these non-mainstream Chinese intellectuals are primarily suggesting for their people and/or their state, for the moment, is not the ways of building global hegemony, as mainstream US and Chinese IR scholars do, but ways of either legitimizing and stabilizing the existing CPC rule or constructing a brand-new order from scratch. Nevertheless, some scholars like Jiang, Pan and Chen hint that a stable and harmonious China will contribute to the world society in overcoming the problems the world encounters and even will be the hope of humankind. Therefore, while their main focus is on internal transformations, they still keep the “rising” position of their country in mind. In other words, non-mainstream Chinese intellectuals produce both instrumental and reflexive knowledge and hence engage in dialogue with the Party as well as the Chinese public.

An evaluation of thirteen different approaches from China and Anglo-America on matters of conceptualising hegemony and China’s “rising” status in the world order reveals that the discussions on conceptualising hegemony and China’s changing position in the global political economy are still dominated by the concepts and debates propounded by mainstream Western academia. It, furthermore, shows that the majority of both critical Western scholars and mainstream Chinese intellectuals comply with the rules set by the core rather than challenging their centrality in social sciences knowledge production. However, this should not mean that the efforts of

non-core scholars have no influence over knowledge production in IR and social sciences and that these endeavours have not contributed to the attempts of diversifying the knowledge produced in social sciences and decolonizing IR.

Chinese scholars, especially non-mainstream Chinese intellectuals, carry the potential to challenge the dominance of mainstream Western IR scholarship and to propose viable alternatives to Western-centric knowledge production. However, so far, their efforts have been primarily focused on providing guidance to their country in its massive transformation process. Nevertheless, their intention to use alternative meanings for the concepts such as democracy and legitimacy, which have been considered as the privilege of Western academia and politics, show the intention of these heterodox scholars to challenge the universality claims of mainstream Western approaches. Furthermore, these out of mainstream Chinese intellectuals bring in China's local experience, history and knowledge to social sciences and hence, claim their right to be recognized by the international community of scholars. In this way, these intellectuals challenge imperialism's denial to recognize the historicity of the "rest" and refusal to debate "the truth" of its (Western) version of history with its "others". That being said, since these scholars are positioned in the peripheries of the periphery of social sciences, they have a limited audience even in their own country, let alone in different parts of the world and thus, their contributions to decolonizing IR and in general social sciences have been quite limited so far. As Chinese and other non-core intellectuals from different parts of the world find more opportunities to circulate their studies worldwide and hence, engage in dialogues with scholars from different regions, they will have more occasions to contribute to the efforts of overcoming Western-centrism in social sciences, decolonizing IR and hence, diversifying the knowledge of the world.

Through its focus on the discourse regarding China's ascending status in the world order, this study makes several contributions to the literature. First of all, it reveals the close relationship, albeit to varying degrees, between scientific knowledge production and existing power structures in the Chinese and US academic communities. Hereby, unlike the claims for unbiased and neutral knowledge production, in particular, by studies with positivist ontology, this thesis shows that

knowledge production efforts are neither neutral nor unbiased but related to power structures. Second, this thesis shows that all intellectual contributions occupy a position in the stratified structure of social sciences, which again influences the type of knowledge produced. Third, in relation to the first and second points, it reveals the existence and persistence of region-centricity, especially Western-centricity, in IR and in general in social sciences knowledge production. Therefore, locality of knowledge production has an important influence over the type of knowledge produced and over the relations between knowledge and power structures.

Fourth, this thesis provides a more comprehensive view on the debate of a transforming and “rising” China and its influences on the world order. In other words, rather than analysing the phenomenon of China from a single Western theoretical perspective as the vast majority of the literature does, this study brings together the knowledge created by IR scholars, political scientists and philosophers from the two main proponent sides, China and the West, into a single discussion of making sense of a rising China. Through its analysis of thirteen Chinese and Western approaches, grouped under four chapters, on the changing nature and position of China in the world order, this thesis reveals the influence of power and different *weltanschauungen* on the heterogeneity of knowledge produced.

Fifth, by analysing the literature written by mainstream and critical Chinese and North American intellectuals, this study contributes to the efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge about the world and decolonizing IR. However, as indicated in the introduction, this is a great and long-term task to achieve and hence, this study alone cannot and therefore, does not endeavour to resolve the issue of decolonizing IR knowledge. It is a matter to be answered to by the joint efforts of scholars with diverse intellectual backgrounds worldwide. Therefore, this thesis should be regarded as a contribution to the efforts of producing humancentric knowledge of the world.

A final point to emphasize regarding the Chinese and Western intellectual debates concerning a rapidly transforming China is the lack of female voices amongst the thirteen approaches covered in this thesis. In other words, all the leading scholars of mainstream and critical Chinese and Western approaches covered in this study are

male scholars. This does not result from a deliberate choice of the writer of this study but from the male-dominated academic society related to world affairs and China. This deficiency of female contribution in the discipline, as a matter of course, negatively affects the knowledge produced about China. Therefore, efforts of diversifying intellectual knowledge in the discipline must include the contributions of female scholars and hereby, transform the androcentric nature of IR. In short, revealing the insufficiency of female contributions in theoretical and policy debates surrounding China's rise is the final contribution of this thesis.

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Demir, Emre
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 5 June 1985, İzmir
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EDUCATION

| Degree | Institution | Year of Graduation |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Ph.D. | METU, International Relations, Ankara | 2019 |
| MS | University of Warwick, PAIS, Coventry | 2014 |
| MS | Ankara University, International Relations, Ankara | 2010 |
| BS | Ankara University, Economics, Ankara | 2007 |
| High School | American Collegiate Institute, İzmir | 2003 |

WORK EXPERIENCE

| Year | Place | Enrolment |
|---------------|---|--------------------|
| 2012- Present | TED University, Ankara | Research Assistant |
| 2009-2012 | Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), Ankara | Research Associate |

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Intermediate Mandarin Chinese

PUBLICATIONS

1. Demir, E. "The Belt and Road Initiative vs. the Indo-Pacific Partnership: Competing Regional Visions of China and the United States", In Ash Rossiter and Brendon Cannon (Eds.), The Indo-Pacific: Competition and Cooperation in a Contested Zone, Routledge (forthcoming).
2. Demir, E. "Sino-Japanese Relations: Great Power Rivalry or Peaceful Interdependence?", In Fulya Köksoy (Ed.), The Current Relations Between Global Powers, Peter Lang (forthcoming).

3. Demir, E. "Fragmented or Integrated Asia: Competing Regional Visions of the US and China", *Rising Powers Quarterly*, 3(2), 45-65 (2018).
4. Demir, E. "Immanuel Wallerstein: Dünya Sistemleri Analizi", In Faruk Yalvaç (Ed.), *Tarihsel Sosyoloji ve Uluslararası İlişkiler*, İstanbul, Nika Yayınları, 61-94 (2018).
5. Demir, E. "Robert W. Cox: Yeni Gramscici Eleştirel Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı", In Faruk Yalvaç (Ed.), *Tarihsel Sosyoloji ve Uluslararası İlişkiler*, İstanbul, Nika Yayınları, 227-256 (2018).
6. Demir, E. "The Chinese School of International Relations: Myth or Reality?", *All Azimuth*, 6(2), 95-104 (2017).
7. Demir, E. "Dünya Sistemleri Analizi", In Mehmet Şahin ve Osman Şen (Eds.), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri Temel Kavramlar*, Ankara, Kripto, 125-156 (2014).

HOBBIES

Reading, skiing, sailing

B. TÜRKÇE ÖZET / TURKISH SUMMARY

“Hegemonya” kavramı, Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinde, dünya meselelerini anlama ve açıklamada temel kavramlardan biri olarak kabul edilir. Öyle ki 1970’lerden bu yana Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisinde hegemonya kavramının nasıl kavramsallaştırılacağı konusunda önemli bir tartışma yaşanmaktadır. ABD’nin Vietnam Savaşı’ndaki başarısızlığı, Batı Avrupa devletlerinin ve Japonya’nın göreceli ekonomik yükselişi, Bretton Woods sisteminin çöküşü ve *détente* (yumuşama) dönemi gibi 1960’larda ve 1970’lerde meydana gelen olaylar, ilk tartışma ile yakından ilgili olan ABD gücünün ve hegemonyasının göreceli düşüşü üzerine ikinci bir tartışmanın ortaya çıkmasına yol açmıştır. O zamandan günümüze hem hegemonya kavramı hem de ABD hegemonyasının durumu, disiplinin en çok tartışılan konularından biri haline gelmiştir ve gelecekte de bu şekilde devam edecek gibi görünmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, son kırk yıl içinde hegemonya tartışması Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Uluslararası Ekonomi Politik çalışmalarının önemli bir parçası haline gelmiştir. Bu tartışma aynı zamanda klasik realizmin değişen dünya düzenini açıklamadaki yetersizliği ve neoliberal kurumsalcılık, neorealizm, Dünya Sistemleri Analizi ve Tarihsel Maddeci ya da Gramscici Eleştirel Kuram gibi uluslararası ilişkilere yeni yaklaşımların ortaya çıkışı ile de yakından bağlantılıdır. Her yaklaşımın uluslararası sistem anlayışı farklı olduğundan her biri kendi hegemonya anlayışını öne sürmüştür. Bazıları hegemonyayı yalnızca maddi kapasite açısından ve askeri ve ekonomik egemenlik olarak tanımlarken, diğerleri politika, ideoloji ve kültür gibi maddi olmayan yönlerin önemini de vurgulamıştır.

Çin’in ekonomik gelişiminden siyasal sistemine ve kentleşmesine kadar farklı yönleriyle ilgili araştırmalar son otuz yılda hızla artarken, Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında Çin ile ilgili çalışmalar esas itibarıyla yukarıda belirtilen hegemonya tartışmasının bir parçası olmuştur. Başka bir deyişle, Çin’in uluslararası sistemdeki hızla yükselen konumu ve sistemin hegemonyacı gücü olarak ABD ile ilişkileri hakkında geniş bir literatür bulunmaktadır. Her bir yaklaşımın literatüre katkısını netleştirmek ve konumlandırmak için mevcut Uluslararası İlişkiler literatürünün

hegemonya terimini nasıl kavramsallaştırdığı ve mevcut bir hegemon güç ile yükselen güçler, yani tezin kapsamı çerçevesinde ABD ile Çin arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek gerekmektedir.

Bu çalışma, her kuramın hegemonya ve uluslararası düzen/dünya düzeni kavramlarını kavramsallaştırmasının iktidar ile bilgi üretimi arasındaki ilişki ile yakından ilgili olduğu fikrine dayanmaktadır. Bir araştırmada kullanılan kavramların seçimi dahi güç ile bilgi arasındaki bağlantının ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır. Robert Cox'un belirttiği üzere "Kuram, her zaman birileri ve bir amaç içindir" (1981, s. 128). Bu aidiyet ve amaçlılık dolayısıyla kuramlar iki olası hedeften birini gerçekleştirmeye çalışırlar. Ya dünyayı olduğu gibi kabul ederler ve dünyanın karşılaştığı sorunların üstesinden gelmeye çalışırlar ya da mevcut dünya düzenini ve nasıl ortaya çıktığını sorgularlar ve alternatif bir yapı kurarak onu aşmaya çalışırlar. İlk seçenek sorun çözücü kuramların izlediği yol iken, ikincisi eleştirel kuramlar tarafından takip edilmektedir. Her ne kadar pozitivist felsefelerinin bir sonucu olarak değerden yargısız ve tarafsız olduklarını iddia etseler de sorun çözücü kuramlar aslında yerleşik güç ilişkilerinin bir parçası ve tarafıdır ve bu nedenle değer yüklü ve ideolojik olarak önyargılıdır (Cox, 1981, ss. 128-130). Dahası eleştirel kuramlar, herhangi bir "ontolojik bakış açısının sorgulamaya açık" olduğunun bilincindedir (Cox, 1996, s. 144). Bu nedenle, "dünyanın rekabet halindeki imgelemelerinin merkezinde yatan ontolojik farklılıkları anlamak, uluslararası ilişkilerin düzgün bir şekilde tasarlanmış eleştirel disiplininin amacı olmalıdır" (Wight, 2006, s. 2).

Sosyal bilimlerde üretilen her kuram, her bir katmanın diğer iki katmanla bağlantısının olduğu dünya düzeninin üç katmanlı -merkez, yarı çevre ve çevre- yapısında bir konuma sahiptir. Dolayısıyla sosyal bilimlerin bir çalışma alanı olarak Uluslararası İlişkiler, tek bir küresel disiplin yerine çeşitli ulusal disiplinlerden oluşmaktadır. Evrensel geçerlilik iddialarına rağmen, sosyal bilimlerin bu tabakalı yapısında ABD merkezli ana akım sorun çözücü kuramlar merkezi bir konuma sahiptir ve böylece disipline entelektüel anlamda egemendir. (Batı) Avrupalı ve Batılı olmayan Uluslararası İlişkiler çalışmaları ise kendilerine ancak sosyal bilimlerin sırasıyla yarı-çevre ve çevre katmanlarında yer bulmaktadır (Kristensen, 2016, ss. 143-144; Tickner, 2013; ss. 632-635). Kısacası, tüm kuramlar farklı güç-

bilgi ilişkilerinin bir parçasıdır ve sosyal bilimlerin merkez-çevre yapısında belli bir konuma sahiptir.

Bilimsel bilgi üretimini değerlendirirken göz önünde bulundurulması gereken bir diğer önemli nokta, üretilen bilginin izleyicisinin kim olduğu ve bilginin üretilme nedenidir. Başka bir deyişle, bilimsel bilginin bir akademik topluluk, politika yapıcılar ya da halk için üretilip üretilmediğini ve bunun refleksif mi, yoksa araçsal bir bilgi mi olduğunu bilmek gerekir. Bu bağlamda çalışma, Michael Burawoy'un iki tür izleyiciye yönelik olarak üretilen dört tür bilimsel bilgi tanımlamasından faydalanmaktadır. İlk tür olan politika bilgisi (*policy knowledge*), önceden var olan bilimsel bilgiye dayanır ve maddi veya anlamlı bir bedel karşılığında bir müşterinin çıkarlarına hizmet edecek şekilde üretilir. İkinci tür olan profesyonel bilgi (*professional knowledge*), bir araştırma programının tanımlayıcı parametrelerini sorgulamadan bu programı genişletmek amacıyla üretilir. Politika bilgisi ve profesyonel bilgi araçsal bilgiyken, diğer iki bilgi refleksif bilgidir. İlk iki türden farklı olarak, eleştirel bilgi (*critical knowledge*) üretimi, araştırma programlarının altında yatan varsayımların, özellikle değer varsayımlarının sorgulanmasını ve tartışılmasını içerir. Son olarak, kamusal bilgi (*public knowledge*) ise, toplumsal amaçlarla ve bu amaçlara ulaşmanın yollarıyla ilgili olarak bilim insanları ile halk arasında iletişim kurulmasını sağlar. Eleştirel bilginin bir araştırma programının değerinin uygunluğuyla ilgili olarak bilim insanları arasında, kamusal bilginin ise toplumsal hedefler ile ilgili olarak akademisyenler ile akademi dışı kitle arasında diyalog kurmaları dolayısıyla bu iki bilgi türü birer refleksif bilgidir (Burawoy, 2007, ss. 139-141). Dolayısıyla Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplini kapsamında üretilen bilgiler hakkında yapılan her değerlendirme, bilgi üretimi ile ilgili yukarıda belirtilen noktaları göz önünde bulundurmalıdır.

Cox'un, bir bilginin gücünün bu bilgiyi üretenin gücünü yansıttığı fikri uyarınca Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin Batı ya da Avrupa merkezli bilgisi, Avrupa uygarlığının genellikle göz ardı edilen sömürgeci ve emperyalist mirasına dayanmaktadır. Bu durumun dünya tarihinin daha eksiksiz bir resmini sunmak amacıyla literatüre yapılacak olan yeni katkılar tarafından kabul edilmesi ve bunlar tarafından üretilecek olan yeni bilgilerde yansıtılması gerekmektedir. Başka bir

deyişle, yeni araştırmalar, Uluslararası İlişkileri sömürgeleştirerek mevcut Uluslararası İlişkiler bilgisini genişletmeye katkı sunmalıdır. Uluslararası İlişkileri dünya veya insan merkezli bir bakış açısıyla incelemek ancak bu şekilde mümkün olabilir. Eleştirel bilgi üretiminin en önde gelen savunucularının dahi Batı merkezci bilgi üretimi tuzağına düştüğü gerçeği göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Uluslararası İlişkileri sömürgeleştirme ve sosyal bilimler alanında bilgi üretiminde Batı merkezçiliğini aşma çabalarını daha da önemli kılmaktadır. Ne var ki Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında dar görüşlülüğü aşma çabası, başka bir bölge-merkezçiliğe, örneğin Çin-merkezçiliğine yol açmamalıdır.

Immanuel Wallerstein, Avrupa merkezçiliği dünyadan temizlenmesi gereken bir hastalık olarak tanımlamaktadır (1993, s. 295). Ne var ki bir hastalığı iyileştirmek için hastalığın doğru bir şekilde teşhis edilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle, Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininde Avrupa merkezci bilgi üretiminin üstesinden gelmek için her şeyden önce Avrupa merkezcilik sorununun ne anlama geldiği tanımlanmalıdır.

Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin Batı merkezci yapısı, dünya düzeninin sömürgeci ve emperyalist niteliğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Sömürgeci dönemin zirvede olduğu yıllarda devletler arasındaki ilişkileri açıklamak amacıyla Batı akademisi tarafından geliştirilen bir sosyal bilim disiplini olarak Uluslararası İlişkiler, en başından beri sömürgeci ve emperyalist akıl yürütme ile donatılmıştır (Saurin, 2006, s. 24). Öyle ki Uluslararası İlişkilerin egemen düşüncesi dünya düzenini “sömürgecinin dünya modeli” olarak tasavvur etmektedir (Blaut, 1993; Saurin, 2006, p. 26). Dahası, Karl Marks’ın “Maddi üretim araçlarını elinde bulunduran sınıf, aynı zamanda zihinsel üretim araçlarını da denetimi altında bulundurur” (1845/1998, s. 67) düşüncesi uyarınca, dünya düzenini tanımlamak amacıyla üretilen bilgi, üretim araçlarını elinde bulunduranların, yani güçlü olanların, düşüncelerini ve dolayısıyla da çıkarlarını yansıtır. Bu nedenle bilgi üretimi ile iktidar sahipleri arasında içsel bir bağ vardır ve dünyanın bilgisi, üretim araçlarını elinde bulunduranların çıkarlarına ve faydasına uygun olacak şekilde üretilir. Dünyanın hala sömürgeci ve emperyalist bir düzen altında örgütlenmesi dolayısıyla ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler bilgi üretimi, sömürgeci ve emperyalist düşüncüyü yansıtmaktadır (Saurin, 2006, ss. 27-

31; Tickner, 2013). Kısacası, dünya düzenini tam olarak resmedebilmek için Uİ çalışmaları sömürgeciliği ve emperyalizmi incelemeli ve açıklamalıdır (Miller, 2013, s. 2). Böyle bir çalışmanın, hali hazırda üretilmiş olan çalışmaların büyük bir çoğunluğu gibi yalnızca güçlülerin değil, aynı zamanda tarihin farklı dönemlerinde sömürgeleştirilmiş ve nispeten güçsüz olan toplumların deneyimlerini, tarihlerini ve düşüncelerini de içermesi gerekmektedir.

Emperyalizm, bilgi üretme araçlarına hükmederek, dünyaya yönelik kendi tasarımını tabi konumdaki toplumlara “gerçek” olarak dayamakta ve böylece sömürgeci bilgiyi yeniden üretmektedir. Bu sürecin bir diğer tarafı, emperyalizmin, Batının “öteki” olarak gördüğü “geri kalanın” tarihini tanımayı ve kendi tarih yorumunun “gerçekliğini” kendi “ötekisi” ile tartışmayı reddetmesidir. Başka bir deyişle, ana akım Batılı Uluslararası İlişkiler, diğer toplumların uluslararası tanınma ve kendi tarihlerini yazma haklarını meşrulaştırmalarına engel olur (Jones, 2006, s. 2; Saurin, 2006, ss. 34-36). Tüm bu nedenlerden dolayı, Uluslararası İlişkiler üzerine çalışmaya yapanlar dünyanın bilgisini çeşitlendirme çabalarına katkıda bulunmalıdırlar. Bununla birlikte Uluslararası İlişkileri sömürgesizleştirme görevi, yalnızca Batı dışı tarih ve deneyimleri inceleyerek ve bunları Uluslararası İlişkiler çalışmalarına dahil ederek başarılı olamaz. Bunlara ek olarak egemen ontolojinin, tarihin ve yöntemlerin sorgulanması ve bilgi üretiminin ekonomi politiği üzerine çalışmalar yapılması gerekmektedir (Saurin, 2006, s. 25, 38). Bu, yerine getirilmesi büyük ve zorlu bir görevidir.

Bu bağlamda, elinizdeki çalışma iki araştırma sorusuna yanıt aramaktadır: (i) Ana akım ve eleştirel Batılı ve Çinli yaklaşımların hızla dönüşen ve “yükselen” Çin ile ilgili tartışmaya yaptıkları katkılardan bilgi üretiminin heterojenliği hakkında neler öğrenilebilir? (ii) Bu aynı tartışmadan sosyal bilimlerde iktidar ile bilgi üretimi arasındaki ilişki ve bilgi üretimi çabalarının bölge merkezli olması ile ilgili olarak ne öğrenilebilir?

Çalışma, Çin'in dünya düzenindeki yükselen konumu hakkındaki söylemlere odaklanarak, Çin ve ABD toplumlarındaki bilimsel bilgi üretimi ile mevcut güç yapıları arasındaki ilişkiyi ve Çin üzerine üretilen bilginin yerelliğini ortaya koyarak literatüre katkıda bulunma iddiasındadır. Başka bir deyişle, tez, ana akım ve eleştirel

Kuzey Amerikalı ve Çinli entelektüeller tarafından yazılan literatürü analiz ederek, entelektüel bilgiyi çeşitlendirme ve Uluslararası İlişkileri sömürsüzleştirme çabalarına katkı sunmaktadır. Ne var ki bu, büyük ve gerçekleştirmesi güç bir görevdir. Bu nedenle çalışma, Uluslararası İlişkiler üzerine üretilen bilginin sömürsüzleştirme sorununu tek başına çözme iddiasında değildir. Bu mesele, dünya çapında farklı entelektüel birikimlere sahip olan bilim insanlarının ortak bilgi üretme çabaları ile yanıtlanması gereken bir meseledir. Dolayısıyla elinizdeki tez, bu çabalara bir katkı olarak değerlendirilmelidir.

Bu bağlamda çalışma, hegemonya kavramı, Mao sonrası dönemde Çin'in dönüşümü ve Çin'in dünya düzenindeki değişen konumu konularında Kuzey Amerika'dan ve Çin'den kaynaklanan farklı bakış açılarını analiz eden dört bölümden oluşmaktadır. İkinci bölüm, ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramları olan post-klasik realizm, saldırgan realizm ve neoliberal kurumsalcı yaklaşımların, Uluslararası İlişkiler literatüründe hegemonya kavramı, hegemonya inşası, mevcut hegemonyacı güç ile potansiyel meydan okuyucu güç(ler) arasındaki ilişkilere ve uluslararası sistemdeki değişimin olasılığı hakkındaki tartışmalara katkılarını içermektedir. İlk iki yaklaşımın her ikisinin de realist varsayımlara dayanması ve hegemonyacı istikrar sağlamaya meyilli olmaları dolayısıyla bu iki kuramsal yaklaşım aynı alt başlık altında toplanmıştır. Bölüm, realist ve neoliberal yaklaşımların hegemonya tartışmasına kuramsal katkılarını değerlendirdikten sonra, Çin'in yükselişine dair bu üç kuramın nasıl bir yaklaşım sunduğu ile ilgili bir tartışma sunar. Başka bir deyişle ikinci bölüm, post-klasik realizm, saldırgan realizm ve neoliberal kurumsalcılık yaklaşımlarının dünyayı nasıl algıladıkları ve açıkladıkları üzerine bir tartışma yaptıktan sonra Çin'in uluslararası sistemdeki yükselişini realist ve neoliberal düşüncelerin bakış açılarından ele almaktadır. Bölümün sonuç kısmında ise, tezin iki temel araştırma sorunsalı kapsamında bu yaklaşımlar üzerine bir tartışma yapılmaktadır. İkinci bölümün amacı, ana akım Batılı (ABD) Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisi ile ABD devleti arasındaki ilişkiyi ve dolayısıyla da disiplindeki ortodoks bilgi üretiminin Batı merkezli doğasını ortaya çıkarmaktır.

Üçüncü bölüm, Dünya Sistemleri Analizi ve Tarihsel Maddeci Eleştirel Kuram (TMEK) üzerine bir inceleme sunarak çalışmanın seyrini eleştirel Batılı Uluslararası

İlişkiler yaklaşımlarına doğru çevirmektedir. Bölüm, bu iki yaklaşımın ana akım (ABD) Uluslararası İlişkiler teorilerine alternatif olarak ortaya çıkması dolayısıyla hem ortodoks Uluslararası İlişkiler bilgi üretiminin eleştirel yaklaşımların bakış açılarıyla bir değerlendirmesini hem de hegemonya, hegemonya kurma süreçleri ve mevcut hegemonyacı güç ile potansiyel rakipleri arasındaki ilişkiye yönelik bir değerlendirmeyi ele almaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm, ikinci bölüme benzer şekilde her bir yaklaşımın bu konulardaki kuramsal katkılarını inceledikten sonra Dünya Sistemleri Analizi ve TMEK aracılığıyla Çin'in dünya sistemindeki/düzenindeki değişen konumu üzerine bir tartışma ile devam etmektedir. Bu şekilde, bu iki eleştirel yaklaşım arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Dahası bu iki eleştirel bakış açısının, ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramlarının Batı merkezli bilgi üretimini aşmak konusundaki yetersizliklerini ve güç ile bilgi arasındaki ilişkide yer edindikleri çelişkili konumlarını göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Çalışma, Uluslararası İlişkilerin Batılı ana akımın ve eleştirel bakış açılarını analiz ettikten sonra, dikkatini Çinli bakış açılarının dünyayı nasıl tanımladıkları ve inceledikleri üzerine çevirmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, dördüncü bölüm ilk olarak, Çin Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisinin son otuz yılda Çin Uluslararası İlişkiler Okulu yaratma girişimlerini kısaca ele almaktadır. Ardından iki ana akım Çin Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımı olan *Tianxia* (gökyüzünün altındaki her şey) yaklaşımı ile Tsinghua yaklaşımının veya ahlaki realizmin (moral realism) hegemonya kavramı ve dünya düzeninde liderlik konuları üzerindeki farklı fikirleri üzerine bir analiz sunmaktadır. Bu yaklaşımların her ikisi de analizlerinde geleneksel Çin felsefesinden faydalanmaktadır. Bu bölüm ayrıca (Batılı) bilgi üretimi ve bilim felsefesinin evrenselliği üzerine, özellikle de Batı düşüncesine kendine özgü ontolojisi ile bir alternatif önerdiğini iddia eden Çin merkezli *Tianxia* yaklaşımının bakış açısından, bir tartışmayı da içinde barındırmaktadır. İkinci ve üçüncü bölümlere benzer şekilde, dördüncü bölümün kuramsal kısımlarını, Çinli ana akım yaklaşımların Çin'in uluslararası düzende yükselen konumunu nasıl değerlendirdiklerine dair bir tartışma izlemektedir. Son olarak bölüm, Çin Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisi ile Çin'in yönetici eliti arasındaki ilişkiye yönelik bir değerlendirme ile sona ermektedir.

Beşinci bölüm, önceki bölümlerden ayrı bir yapıya ve içeriğe sahiptir. Eleştirel ve yeni-muhafazakâr Çinli bakış açıları hakkındaki bu son bölüm, Çin'in dış dünyayla ve özellikle de ABD ile olan ilişkilerinden ziyade asıl olarak Çin'in ekonomisinde ve iç siyasetinde yaşanan dönüşümlere odaklanmaktadır. Bu bölümde ele alınan yaklaşımlar, Çin'in dış siyasetine ancak kısaca ve ülke içinde yaşanan dönüşümler bağlamında değinmektedir. Böylelikle bölüm, Yeni Solcu ve Yeni Konfüçyüsçü yaklaşımların devlet, meşruiyet, modernite ve neoliberal hegemonya meselelerine yaklaşımları arasındaki farklılıklar ve benzerlikler üzerine bir analiz sunmaktadır. Çinli eleştirel entelektüeller fikirlerini Çin liberalizmine karşı konumlandığından, beşinci bölüm Çin liberallerinin fikirlerinin kısa bir değerlendirmesini de içermektedir. Bu bölümün amacı, Mao ve özellikle de Tiananmen sonrasında Çin'de entelektüeller arasında yaşanan tartışmalar ile müesses nizamın bir parçası olmayan veya ana akım dışında kalan entelektüeller bağlamında bilgi üretimi ile iktidar arasındaki ilişki hakkında bir tartışma sunmaktır.

Bu bölümün içerdiği yaklaşımların meseleleri ele alış biçimlerinin tezin diğer bölümlerindeki yaklaşımlardan ve tezin genel yapısından farklı olmasına rağmen, Çin'in deneyimlediği muazzam dönüşümlere ilişkin bu Çinli eleştirel bakış açılarının söylemleri, Çin'in yükselişiyle ilgili tartışmaya birçok sebepten dolayı çok önemli katkı sunmaktadır ve dolayısıyla da bu tartışmada çok önemli bir yere sahiptir. Batı merkezli bilginin literatürdeki ve yayıncılık endüstrisindeki egemenliği, Batılı olmayan akademik çevrelerde üretilen bilginin küresel sosyal bilimler topluluğu içindeki dolaşımını zorlaştırmakta ve dahası önlemektedir. Bu durum, Batılı olmayan eleştirel ya da ana akım olmayan bakış açıları için birtakım engeller yaratır; zira bu aydınlar için araştırmalarını kendi ülkelerinde dahi yayınlayacak ve yaygın olarak dolaşıma sokacak uygun kanallar bulmak oldukça zordur. Dahası bu yaklaşımlar, Çin ve Batı felsefelerinin birleşiminden türemeleri ya da yalnızca Çin felsefesinden kaynaklanmaları dolayısıyla yerli kuram üretimi çabalarına önemli katkılar sağlamaktadırlar. Bu nedenle burada hem eleştirel ve yeni-muhafazakâr Çinli entelektüeller hem de Çin'in ana akım yaklaşımlarına yer vermek, çalışmanın Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinde entelektüel bilgi üretimini çeşitlendirme hedefine katkı sunmaktadır.

Ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramları, dünya meselelerini Batı merkezli bir bakış açısıyla ele almaktadır. Bu yaklaşımlar ayrıca değer yargısız ve evrensel olduğunu iddia etmekte ve Vestfalyan devlet sistemini, devletler arasındaki ilişkileri değerlendirmek için geçerli tek model olarak kabul etmektedir. Aynı doğrultuda, ortodoks Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları, güçlü devletleri sistemdeki en önemli fail olarak görmekte ve dolayısıyla bunlar arasındaki ilişkilere odaklanmaktadır. Buna paralel olarak bu yaklaşımlar hegemonya kavramını, büyük bir gücün diğer devletler üzerindeki egemenliği olarak tanımlamaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları, (güçlü) devletleri temel analiz birimi olarak kabul etmektedir. Ayrıca bu yaklaşımların odak noktası devlet güvenliğidir. Bu doğrultuda ana akım düşünürler, Çin'in yükselişini ABD güvenliği açısından değerlendirmekte ve bu ülkeyi ya uluslararası sistem ile uyumlu statüko yanlısı ya da ABD hegemonyasına rakip olan bir güç olarak betimlemektedirler. Başka bir deyişle, ana akım yaklaşımlara göre Çin, ya liberal düzene ve ABD liderliğine uygun olarak barışçıl bir yükselen güç ya da ABD hegemonyasına sorun çıkarma ve askeri gücü ile meydan okuma potansiyeli olan yükselen bir güçtür. İlk görüşün savunucuları, yükselen Çin'den korkmak için hiçbir neden olmadığını belirtmektedir; çünkü onlara göre Çin sistemden en fazla fayda sağlayan ülkedir. Başka bir deyişle Çin zaten sisteme entegre olmuştur ya da bir başka deyişle “medenileşmiştir”. İkinci görüşün savunucuları ise, Çin'in genel olarak Batı dünyasının ve özellikle de ABD'nin çıkarlarına tehdit oluşturduğunu ve bu nedenle güç kapasitesini ABD'ye askeri olarak rakip olabilecek bir noktaya yükseltmeden önce bu ülkenin çevrelenmesi veya dengelenmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadırlar. Kısacası, ortodoks Uluslararası İlişkiler düşüncesine göre Çin, liberal Batı dünyasının uluslararası sisteme ya barışçıl ya da zorla entegre edilmesi ya da en azından kontrol altında tutulması gereken “ötekisi”dir.

Disiplinde yarı-çevre bir konuma sahip olan eleştirel Batılı Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları, yani Dünya Sistemleri Analizi ve Tarihsel Maddeci Eleştirel Kuram, Uluslararası İlişkilerdeki ortodoks düşüncüyü eleştirmekte ve Batı merkezci bakış açısını aşma iddiasındadır. Dahası bilgi üretimini mevcut güç yapılarının etkisinden kurtarmayı ve daha adil bir dünya düzeni için alternatifler oluşturmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ne var ki bu yöndeki çabaları, öncelikle kendi Batı merkezcilikleri

nedeniyle yetersiz kalmıştır. Öyle ki Vestfalyan devlet sistemini çalışmalarının tek odağı olarak almaları ve tarihsel hegemonyalar olarak yalnızca Batılı büyük güçleri görmeleri dolayısıyla bu iki eleştirel Batılı Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımı, iddialarının aksine Batı merkezci bilgi üretiminin disiplindeki merkezi konumunu güçlendirmektedir. Buna ek olarak eleştirel iki yaklaşım, çalışmalarının merkezine Batı'nın dünya ekonomi politiğindeki üstünlüğünü alırken, Batı dışı toplumları ise bu üstünlüğün pasif kurbanları olarak görmektedirler. Ayrıca bu eleştirel yaklaşımlar yaptıkları hegemonya tanımları doğrultusunda Çin'i ABD'ye ve Batı merkezli liberal dünya düzenine karşı ana rakip olarak görmektedirler. Başka bir deyişle dünya-sistemleri analizi ve TMEK düşünürleri Çin'i meydan okuyan güç ve dolayısıyla da Batı'nın ötekisi olarak konumlandırmaları nedeniyle bu ülkeyi ana akım yaklaşımlar tarafından tanımlanan kavramlarla düşünmekte ve tartışmaktadırlar. Kısacası, bu iki eleştirel yaklaşım, ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımlarının izinden gitmekte ve bu nedenle Batı merkezliliği aşan, insan merkezli bir bakış açısı üretmekte başarılı olamamışlardır. Diğer bir deyişle aşmayı amaçladıkları statüko yönelimli, sorun çözücü ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımlarının ortaya koyduğu tartışmaların bir parçası haline gelmişlerdir.

Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin çevre bölgelerinde yer alan Çinli ana akım yaklaşımlar da benzer bir yol izlemektedir. Tsinghua yaklaşımı ve Yan Xuetong'un önderlik ettiği ahlaki realizm (moral realism) kuramı, eleştirel Batılı yaklaşımlardan farklı olarak, ana akım Batılı Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramlarının bilgi üretiminin bilimselliği ve evrenselliği iddialarına karşı çıkmamakta ve hatta bu iddiayı açıkça desteklemektedir. Evrensellik iddiası ile uyumlu olarak, bu yaklaşımlar ayrıca Vestfalyan devlet sistemini desteklemekte ve dolayısıyla Batı merkezli bir bakış açısına sahip olmaktadır. Tsinghua yaklaşımı ve ahlaki realizm, hegemonya kavramı ve Çin hakkındaki tartışma ile ilgili bilgiyi Çin'in geleneksel felsefesi ile realist düşünceyi birleştirerek bir noktaya kadar yerelleştirse de en nihayetinde bilgiyi Batı merkezli terimleri kullanarak üretmektedir. Diğer yandan Zhao Tingyang ise Vestfalyan evrenselliği sorgulamakta ve mevcut uluslararası düzenin dünya toplumunu yönetmek için evrensel olarak onaylanmış bir politik felsefeden ve kurumdan mahrum olduğunu belirtmektedir. Zhao, bu sorunun üstesinden gelmek için ulus devlet merkezli yaklaşımın terk edilmesi ve yerine tarihsel *Tianxia*

sisteminin modern dünyaya adapte edilmesi gerektiğini belirtmektedir. Bu şekilde Zhao, dünya meselelerini anlamak ve açıklamak ve modern dünya düzeninin ulus devlet merkezli yapısından kaynaklanan sorunların üstesinden gelmek için alternatif bir ontoloji önermektedir. Başka bir deyişle, Zhao sistem düzeyinde bir analiz ya da dünya ile ilgili bütüncül bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Nitekim Zhao'nun dünya yönetişimine dair yaklaşımı, dünyanın karşılaştığı sorunların çözümü için başka bir tür ulus devleti merkezine alan milliyetçi ya da Çin merkezli bir yaklaşımdır. Zhao'nun önerdiği çözüm, Çin usulü kozmopolitanizmdir. Bu anlamda Zhao'nun yaklaşımı, Batı merkezli bakış açısından yalnızca Çin merkezli bir bakış açısına sahip olması dolayısıyla farklıdır. Batı'yı ve Çinli olmayanları öteki olarak tanımlaması dolayısıyla Zhao'nun Batı merkezci dünya görüşüne yönelik olarak geliştirdiği eleştiri, aslında ben ve öteki ayrımını kendi ülkesinin yararına olacak şekilde yeniden yaratmaktadır. Bu şekilde, Batı istisnacılığının yerine Çin istisnacılığını koymaktadır.

Dünya düzeni ile ilgili farklı görüşlerine rağmen ana akım Çinli yaklaşımlar, sosyal bilimlerin merkez-çevre yapısını aşmaya çalışmak yerine Çin bilgi üretimini çevreden uzaklaştırıp merkezi bir konuma taşıma hedefine katkıda bulunmak için çalışmaktadır. ABD'nin entelektüel hegemonyasının farkında olan Çinli araştırmacılar, yenilikçi çalışmalar yapmayı ve bilgi üretiminde ABD hegemonyasını aşmayı amaçlamaktadırlar. Bu doğrultuda Çinli bilim insanları kuramsal ve pratik bilgiler üretmekte ve Çin'in dış dünya ile ve özellikle de ABD ile olan ilişkilerini, sosyal bilimlerin merkez-çevre yapısındaki konumları ve merkeze doğru hareket etme niyetleri doğrultusunda değerlendirmektedirler. Ne var ki bunu yaparken, eleştirel Batılı Uluslararası İlişkiler düşünürlerine benzer şekilde, ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımlarının belirlediği tartışmalara uyum sağlamakta ve dünya meselelerini onların belirlediği kavramlarla tartışmaktadırlar. Çinli ana akım düşünürler, Çin'in dünya düzenindeki konumunu, ana akım ABD'li Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisinin öne sürdüğü "Çin tehdidi" kuramının üstesinden gelme amacına uygun olarak değerlendirmekte ve Çin'in ABD merkezli liberal dünya düzenine tam olarak entegre olmayı amaçlayan bir statüko gücü olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Kısacası, ana akım Çinli entelektüeller, Çin'in dönüşümünü ve yükselen konumunu "barışçıl kalkınma" olarak sunma çabalarına aktif olarak

katkıda bulundukları için ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımlarının tanımladığı ikilemi kabul etmektedir.

Diğer yandan, ana akım olmayan Çinli yaklaşımlar ise hem “küresel” hem de ulusal Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin çevresinde yer almaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, eleştirel Çinli yaklaşımlar disiplinin çevresinin çevresinde bulunmaktadır. Bu yaklaşımlar, disiplinin katmanlı yapısındaki konumlarına uygun olarak hem ana akım Batılı hem de ana akım Çinli bakış açılarına karşı eleştirel bir duruşlara sahiptir. Dahası bu yaklaşımlar bilgi üretiminin Batı merkezli olma niteliğini aşmayı ve Çinli bakış açılarını disipline getirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Eleştirel aydınlar Wang Hui ve Wang Shaoguang gibi bazı Çinli akademisyenler, pozitivist ya da post-pozitivist (Batılı) bilim felsefesini takip etmekte ve Batılı düşünceyi Çin’in yerel bilgisiyle uyumlu hale getirerek evrensel bir bilgi üretmeyi amaçlamaktadırlar. Bu düşünürler, Zhao Tingyang’ın aksine, Vestfalyan devlet sistemini merkezine alan ulus devlet merkezli bir bakış açısını takip etmektedirler. Diğer yandan Yeni Konfüçyüsçü Jiang Qing gibi diğer entelektüeller ise, Batı merkezci bilgi üreten düşünürlerden farklı bir ontolojiye ve bakış açısına sahip olarak emsalsiz bir Çin merkezli bilgi üretmeyi amaçlamaktadırlar. İlk yaklaşım, Batılı siyaset ve Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramlarını Çin siyaset felsefesiyle buluşturmaya çabalarken, hem bir dereceye kadar Batı merkezli evrenselci bilginin yeniden üretimine katkıda bulunmakta hem de eşzamanlı olarak dünya üzerine üretilen bilgiyi çeşitlendirmeye çalışmaktadır. Diğer yaklaşım ise dünyayı neredeyse yalnızca Çin bakış açısıyla inceleyerek, tamamen Çin merkezci bir bilgi üretim çabası içindedir ve böylelikle zihinsel üretim araçları üzerinde alternatif bir hegemonya kurmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Eleştirel Çinli yaklaşımlar, Batılı kavramların iddia edilen evrenselliğine meydan okumaya yönelik girişimleri dolayısıyla Batılı ve ana akım Çinli yaklaşımlarından farklılık göstermektedir. Hem eleştirel hem de muhafazakâr Çinli entelektüeller çalışmalarında modernite, meşruiyet ve demokrasi gibi kavramları Batılı kullanımlarından farklı bir şekilde yeniden tanımlamaktadırlar. Bu düşün insanları, bu şekilde “evrensel” olarak kabul edilen kavramlara alternatif anlamlar önermek için çaba sarf etmektedirler. Bilgiyi içselleştirme çabalarıyla ana akım olmayan Çinli akademisyenler, Batıda ve Çin’de yer alan diğer üç grup akademisyene meydan

okumaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, bu entelektüeller, farklı derecelerde olsa da Batılıların entelektüel egemenliğini ve evrenselcilik iddialarını reddetmekte ve ona meydan okumakta, eleştirel ve Batı merkezci olmayan bilgi üretimini eleştirel Batılı düşünürlerden geri almakta ve nihayet Çin merkezli fikirlerin üretimini ve kullanımını Yan Xuetong gibi ana akım Çinli entelektüellerden geri almaktadır. Eleştirel ve yeni-muhafazakâr Çinli aydınlar, kavramların “evrensel” anlamlarını reddetmelerine paralel olarak, ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları tarafından ortaya atılan yükselen Çin tartışmasından da uzak durmaktadır. Wang Hui hariç olmak üzere, bu alimler, hegemonyanın nasıl kavramsallaştırılacağı ve Çin’in hegemonyacı bir devlet olma olasılığı hakkındaki tartışmalara doğrudan dahil olmamaktadır. Başka bir deyişle eleştirel Çinli aydınlar, Çin’in dönüşümünü statüko-revizyonizm ikilemi bağlamında tartışmak yerine, esas olarak Çin ekonomisinin, siyasetinin ve toplumunun geçirdiği dönüşümlere odaklanmakta ve istikrarlı ve ahenk içinde yaşayan bir Çin’in dünyanın yaşadığı sorunların üstesinden gelme konusunda önemli katkılarda bulunacağını ima etmektedir. Kısacası, ana akım olmayan Çinli yaklaşımlar, içselleştirilmiş bilgi üretme çabaları ve Çin’in dönüşümü konusundaki tartışmalar bağlamında diğer üç gruptaki yaklaşımlardan ayrılmaktadır.

Sosyal bilimlerin merkez-çevre yapısı ve bilginin yerelliği meseleleri, güç ile bilgi üretimi arasındaki ilişki ile yakından bağlantılıdır. Öyle ki bu çalışmada tartışılan dört grup yaklaşımın her biri, merkez-çevre yapısındaki konumlarına uygun olarak farklı güç-bilgi ilişkilerinin bir parçası haline gelmiştir. Ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramları, aralarındaki küçük farklara rağmen, hegemonyayı esasen maddi terimlerle kavramsallaştırmakta ve Çin’in yükselişini ABD’nin güvenliğine ve hegemonyacı konumuna karşı bir sorun ya da tehdit olarak değerlendirmektedirler. Ana akım ABD’li Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları, Çin’in yükselişini ABD için en kısa sürede ortadan kaldırılması gereken varoluşsal bir tehdit olarak tanımlayarak, “Çin sorununu” güvenlikleştirmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, disiplinin egemen yaklaşımı, Çin devletini (ABD) devlet güvenliği çerçevesinde ele almaktadır. Ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler düşünürleri, bu görüş doğrultusunda, ABD devletinin çıkarlarına uygun bilgi üretmekte ve ABD yönetici sınıfına politika seçenekleri önermektedir. Diğer bir deyişle mevcut uluslararası sisteme ve Batı merkezli bakış

açısına karşı olumlu ideolojik meyillerinin bir sonucu olarak, ana akım (ABD) Uluslararası İlişkiler kuramları, ABD liderliğindeki uluslararası sistemde güç sahiplerinin yerleşik güç ilişkilerini meşrulaştırmalarına ve böylece mevcut eşitsiz sistemde istikrarı sağlamalarına ve sistemi sürdürmelerine yardımcı olmaktadır. Kısacası, sorun çözücü kuramlar olan ana akım Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları, esas olarak ABD'deki akademik seçkinler ve politika yapımcılarla diyalog halinde olan araçsal bilgi üretmektedirler.

Diğer yandan eleştirel Batılı Uluslararası İlişkiler yaklaşımları, dünya meselelerini, mevcut dünya düzeninin eşitsiz güç yapılarını aşma ve buna bağlı olarak, adil bir dünya sistemi kurmanın alternatif yollarını bulma çabalarına olası katkıları açısından değerlendirmektedir. Bununla birlikte, üçüncü bölümde gösterildiği üzere bu eleştirel bakış açıları, Çin örneğini Batı merkezci hegemonya anlayışları çerçevesinde ele almaktadır. Başka bir deyişle bu yaklaşımlar, Çin olgusunu ve Çin-ABD ilişkilerini, bu ülkenin dünyaya önerebileceği yeni, alternatif bir liderlik türü sunma veya Çin'in farklı tür bir dünya düzeninin kurulmasına katkıda bulunma ihtimali çerçevesinde düşünmek yerine, tarihsel Batılı hegemonyaların deneyimleri üzerinden açıklamaya çalışmaktadır. Öyle ki Giovanni Arrighi dışında kalan eleştirel Batılı düşünürler, Batılı olmayan sistemlerin ve özellikle de geleneksel Çin merkezli sistemin tarihsel mirasını görmezden gelmeye devam etmekte ve neredeyse yalnızca Batı toplumlarının tarihlerine ve deneyimlerine odaklanmaktadır. Nihayetinde bu yaklaşımlar, aşmak için çok çaba harcadıkları sorun çözücü kuramlar gibi hareket etmekte ve bu nedenle mevcut adaletsiz düzeni meşrulaştırma, olağanlaştırma ve istikrara kavuşturma çabalarına katkıda bulunmaktadırlar. Başka bir deyişle, Batı merkezci bakış açısına sahip olmaları, bu eleştirel yaklaşımların, oldukça çelişkili bir biçimde, en başından bu yana sorguladıkları mevcut adil olmayan güç yapılarına katkıda bulunmalarına yol açmaktadır. Bu durum bu yaklaşımların, eleştirel ve Avrupa merkezcilik karşıtı yaklaşımlar olarak değerlerini yitirmelerine neden olmaktadır. Yine de yetersiz de olsa Dünya Sistemleri analizi ve TMEK, sosyal bilimlerde eleştirel düşüncenin gelişimine önemli katkılarda bulunmuş ve dünya hakkında alternatif, Batı dışı düşünme biçimleri için yeni yollar açmıştır. Dolayısıyla Batı merkezci bakış açılarına ve güç ile bilgi ilişkisindeki konumlarına rağmen, bu yaklaşımlar dünya toplumunun temel değerlerine odaklanan ve aynı

zamanda bilimsel çalışmaların altında yatan varsayımları inceleyen ve sorgulayan refleksif bilgi üretme çabalarıdır. Bu nedenle eleştirel Batılı yaklaşımlar, Batının yönetici seçkinleriyle konuşmak yerine, bilgi üretiminin değeri ile ilgili olarak, yetersiz de olsa, akademik camia ve toplumla diyaloga girmektedir.

Ana akım Çin entelektüelleri ile Çin yönetici sınıfı arasındaki bağlantılar, ABD'deki ana akım akademik camia ile ABD yönetici sınıfı arasındaki ilişkiyi andırmaktadır. Bu Çinli araştırmacılar, hem Çin devleti ile yakından ilişkilidir hem de zaman zaman devletin politika yapım süreçlerine aktif olarak katkıda bulunmaktadır. Kısacası, bu düşünürler, Çin ulusunu ve devletini ayağa kaldırma ve dünya ekonomi politığının merkezine yerleştirme hedefi doğrultusunda Çin Komünist Partisi (ÇKP) erkanına düşünsel anlamda destek veren ve politika seçenekleri sunan yerleşik entelektüeller ya da müesses nizamın düşünürleridir. Bu nedenle, bilgi üretiminin politikaya uygunluğu Çinli ana akım entelektüeller tarafından yapılan çalışmalarda önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bununla birlikte, bu ilişki, ÇKP'nin, Çin'in tarihi deneyiminden ve felsefesinden beslenen, Batı merkezci bilgiye alternatif bilgi üretme çabaları doğrultusunda Çinli entelektüelleri hem desteklediği hem de denetimi altında tuttuğu karşılıklı bir ilişkidir. Dolayısıyla ana akım Çin Uİ akademisi, Çin hükümeti ile yakından ilişki içindedir. Bu durum, ÇKP elitinin siyasi söylemleri ile ana akım Çinli entelektüellerin kendi aralarındaki tartışmalarda kullanılan kavramların birbirlerine olan benzerliğinde kendisini göstermektedir. Kısacası, ana akım Çinli entelektüeller, ülkelerindeki mevcut güç ve toplumsal ilişkilerin önemli bir parçasıdır ve dolayısıyla da Çin devletinin karşı karşıya bulunduğu sorunların üstesinden gelmesine ve uluslararası sistemde süper güç konumuna yükselmesine yardımcı olacak politikalar önermektedirler. Başka bir deyişle, Çin'in yerleşik entelektüelleri, ülkelerini “barış içinde” kalkındırma, “ahenk içinde bir dünya inşa etme” ve “Çin rüyasını” gerçekleştirme gayesinde olan ÇKP elitini desteklemek amacıyla araçsal bilgi üretmektedir.

Eleştirel Çinli aydınlar ise ülkelerinin egemen sınıfıyla olan ilişkilerinde hem kendi aralarında hem de yerleşik Çinli aydınlardan farklılık göstermektedir. Yeni Sol ve Yeni Konfüçyüsçü entelektüellerin birincil kaygısı, Çin'de istikrarlı bir iç düzenin inşası, meşrulaştırılması ve sürdürülmesidir. Başka bir deyişle, bu düşünürler

lkelerinin i meselelerine ve yařadığı dnřmlere ncelik vermektedirler. Bununla birlikte, eleřtirel entelekteller bu abalarında yerleřik aydınların yaptığı gibi in hkmeti ile yakın bir iliřki iine girmemiřlerdir. Dahası KP ve devlete sundukları politika nerileri ve bu gler ile kurdukları iliřki biimleri dolayısıyla birbirlerinden ayrılırlar. Wang Shaoguang, Chen Ming ve Pan Wei gibi dřnrler KP'nin in ulusunu yeniden canlandırma ve dnyaya bir model sunma hedefini aık bir biimde desteklemektedir. Jiang Qing ise, sosyalist hkmetin meřruiyetini tamamen kaybettiğini ve liderliğini uzun dnemde srdrmesinin olanaksız olduğunu savunarak KP'nin egemenliğini sorgulamaktadır. Bu nedenle Jiang, in'in Konfyř dřnceye dayanan tamamen yerli ve yeni bir ynetim biimi geliřtirmesi gerektiğini iddia etmektedir. Diğerk yandan Yeni Sol grubunun en nde gelen dřnr olan Wang Hui ise, her ne kadar son zamanlarda KP'ye biraz daha yakınlamıřsa da KP'ye aıka meydan okumak veya aık bir destek vermek yerine bu iki yaklařımın arasında bir pozisyona sahiptir. Kısacası, hepsi de lkelerinin siyasi gcn elinde bulunduranları etkilemek amacıyla bilgi retseler de bu eleřtirel inli aydınlar ne doğrudan KP ile ne de sistemden aforoz edilmiř muhaliflerle sıkı bir iliřki iindedirler. Dahası, ana akım dıřında yer alan inli entelekteller, ana akım ABD'li ve inli dřnrlerin aksine, en azından řimdilik, kendi halklarına ve/veya devletlerine kresel hegemonya kurmanın yntemlerini nermek gibi bir abanın iinde de değıldir. Aksine bu dřnrler ya KP'nin meřruiyetini ve istikrarını saėlamaya ynelik ya da yepyeni bir dzenin kurulması ynnde nerilerde bulunmaktadırlar. Yine de Jiang Qing, Pan Wei ve Chen Ming gibi bazı dřnrler, istikrarlı ve uyum iinde yařayan bir in'in dnya toplumunun karřı karřıya bulunduėu sorunları ařmasına yardımcı olacaėını ve hatta insanlık iin bir umut kaynağı olduğunu belirtmektedirler. Dolayısıyla bu entelektellerin alıřmalarının odak noktası in'in yařamakta olduėu isel dnřmler olsa da bu dřnrler lkelerinin "ykselen" konumunu akılda tutmaya devam etmektedirler. Bařka bir deyiřle, ana akım olmayan inli entelekteller hem arasal hem de refleksif bilgi retmekte ve bu nedenle de in halkının yanı sıra Parti ile de diyalog halindedirler.

in'in dnya dzenindeki ykselen konumu ile ilgili ok sayıdaki syleme odaklanan bu alıřma, Uluslararası İliřkiler literatrne bira katkıda

bulunmaktadır. İlk olarak, farklı düzeylerde de olsa, bilimsel bilgi üretimi ile mevcut güç yapıları arasında var olan yakın ilişkiyi Çin ve ABD akademik camiaları üzerinden ortaya koymaktadır. Böylelikle tez, özellikle pozitivist ontoloji ile yapılan çalışmaların tarafsız bilgi üretme iddialarının aksine, bilgi üretme çabalarının tarafsız olmadığını, aksine güç yapılarıyla yakından ilişkili olduğunu göstermektedir. İkinci olarak, tüm entelektüel bilgi üretimlerinin sosyal bilimlerin katmanlı yapısında bir konuma sahip olduklarını ve sahip oldukları bu konumların üretilen bilgi türünü etkilediğini ortaya koymuştur. Üçüncü olarak, çalışma, ilk iki unsur ile bağlantılı olarak Uluslararası İlişkiler ve genel olarak sosyal bilimlerle ilgili bilgi üretiminin bölge-merkezciliğini, özellikle de Batı merkezciğini ortaya koymaktadır. Dolayısıyla bilgi üretiminin yerelliği üretilen bilginin türü ve bilgi ile güç yapıları arasındaki ilişkiler üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahiptir.

Dördüncü olarak, bu tez, Çin'in dönüşümü ve "yükselişi" hakkında uzunca bir süredir devam etmekte olan tartışmaya kapsamlı bir bakış sunmaktadır. Başka bir deyişle Çin olgusunu, literatürün büyük bir kısmı gibi tek bir Batılı kuramsal bakış açısı ile incelemek yerine bu çalışma, meselenin iki ana tarafı olan Çin'den ve Batı'dan Uluslararası İlişkiler düşünürleri, siyaset bilimciler ve felsefeciler tarafından üretilen bilgileri yükselen Çin'i anlamlandırmak başlığı altında tek bir tartışma altında bir araya getirmektedir. Çin'in dünya düzenindeki değişen konumu hakkındaki on üç Çinli ve Batılı yaklaşım üzerine yaptığı inceleme ile bu tez, iktidarın ve farklı dünya görüşlerinin üretilen bilginin heterojenliği üzerindeki etkisini ortaya koymaktadır.

Beşinci olarak, çalışma, ana akım ve eleştirel Çinli ve Kuzey Amerikalı entelektüeller tarafından kaleme alınan literatürü inceleyerek dünya üzerine üretilen entelektüel bilginin çeşitlendirilmesine ve Uluslararası İlişkilerin sömürsüzleştirilmesine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Ne var ki, daha önce belirtildiği üzere, bu çok büyük, uzun dönemli ve dünya çapında farklı entelektüel bilgi birikimine sahip bilim insanlarının, entelektüellerin ortaklaşa bir biçimde yerine getirebilecekleri bir görevdir. Dolayısıyla bu tezi, dünyanın insan merkezli bilgisinin üretilmesi çabalarına yapılmış bir katkı olarak düşünmek gerekmektedir.

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