

**ROLE OF CULTURE IN FOREIGN POLICY: CONFUCIUS THOUGHT IN
FOREIGN POLICY OF CHINA**

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Prabesh Poudel

Letter of Recommendation

I certify that this dissertation entitled “Role of Culture in Foreign Policy: Confucius Thought in Foreign Policy of China” has been prepared by Mr. Prabesh Poudel under my supervision. I hereby recommend this dissertation for final examination by the Research Committee at the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University in the fulfillment of the requirements for the MASTER’S DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY.

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Prof. Dr. Khadga K. C.

Supervisor

Date: August 9, 2019

Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind and any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

Prabesh Poudel

Date: August 9, 2019

Approval Sheet

Abstract

Foreign policy guides a country in its relations with other countries. It is geography, population, history, economic resources, ideology and the nature of the government that are taken to be factors that determine foreign policy. While realism and liberalism are the principle guides for understanding the foreign policy, this thesis argues that culture influences the foreign policy decisions and therefore should not be discounted while studying foreign policy. From the way a country is seen by others, to the way it wants to be seen as well to the way it perceives the international developments and reacts to them, culture plays role that can be used to understand and solve developments in international relations. This paper shows how countries make use of culture in shaping their soft power. Focus on China shows why and how the importance of Confucius as its cultural front man in the post Deng Xiaoping era, at a time when it needs to project its amicable image, especially when its economy is ready to become the first in the world and with issues like Thucydides Trap, China Threat are to be tackled with.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Context

Foreign policy includes the directions through which a state interacts with state and non-state actors. Valerie Hudson defines it as “the strategy or approach chosen by the national government to achieve its goals in its relations with external entities. This includes decisions to do nothing” (2016, p. 14). In a globalized world where no country can remain without interacting with another, how they interact as well as perceive issues is of importance.

Christopher Hill defines foreign affairs as “the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations” (Hill, 2003, p. 3). Quincy Wright defines it as the behavior of a state with reference to the environment outside its territory. With the weightage varying among states, the basic issues that influence the development of foreign policy are domestic considerations, the policies or behavior of other states, or plans to advance specific geopolitical designs. Wright further shows the evolving nature of foreign policy when he writes “It results from the continuous effort of the community either to modify the external environment in order to fit its interests or to modify its interests as better to fit the changing world environment” (Wright, 1930, p. 910). The policies that have been formulated are implemented by various tools: diplomacy, war, alliances and international trade. Almost every aspect of international relations are seen through the foreign policy of the countries.

Rodee, Anderson and Christol provide the following definition of foreign policy: “Foreign policy involves the formulation and implementation of a group of

principles which shape the behavior pattern of a state while negotiating with other states to protect or further its vital interests” (1957, p. 7). The underlying principles that shape policy objectives are; the factors that condition the formulation of policy; the agencies involved in policy making; the planning process; and the techniques and instruments utilized in policy execution.

Foreign policy is made by individuals in the relevant posts. And they are not autonomous by themselves; individual characteristics as well as factors that affect it, like the national and societal characteristics are responsible for the policy that dictates how one country interacts with its counterparts. Elites and mass opinion also play some roles that cannot be overlooked.

In their book *Introduction to Political Science*, Rodee, Anderson and Christol point out that the entire fabric of international society is woven from a myriad of varied and often complex “political, social, economic and cultural contacts” (p. 500).

When Foreign policy is mentioned as “one means by which power relationships between nations may be established” (Rodee, Anderson, & Christol, 1957, p. 506), we can see how the policy of the states interacts with the difference in the power dynamics of the nations.

Hudson and Vore write about how human collectives comprise nation-states and therefore to explain and predict the behavior of nation-states, IR requires a theory of human political choice. They point out how foreign policy analysis has assumed that the source of most change in international politics is human beings, acting individually or in collectivities. Further, they point out that “it becomes apparent that with every transformation that human will and imagination are major influences in shaping world affairs.” (1995, p. 210). This is confirmed by Fareed Zakaria who notes

that “The parsimony of systemic theory is useful for some purposes ... [however, domestic politics explanations can be more useful in explaining events, trends, and policies that are too specific to be addressed by a grand theory of international politics” (1992, p. 198)

Several factors determine the Foreign Policy of a state. These include external and domestic determinants. Under the external determinants fall factors like the international system or power structure, international law, international organizations, alliances, and military strategy. With no ruling body over states, international law may not be as constraining a factor, with states opting for their national interest over legal norms, and being free to opt out of international organizations they are a part of, it may not be as restricting but these do play some role in states that may have to bear consequences of breaching the established norms and law. Despite this, the realist school of thought believes in foreign policy as determined by the anarchic international system.

Most countries may not be in the condition to influence all of these external factors by themselves, but depending upon its status (some of which fall under domestic determinants like economic and military might), they become passive observers but some countries, the superpowers in particular, can including their interest swaying the factors in their favor.

Under domestic determinants fall factors like culture and history of the country, its geography and population; the status of its economic development – developed, developing or under-developed; its military capabilities; the political system under which it operates – participatory or non-participatory; the personality of the leader governing the state whether s/he is a hawk or a dove for instance; the

political parties and interest groups that influence the decision making process; as well as the press and public opinion that might sway the policy the state undertakes during a course of time. Geography and population are not the chief determinants as can be seen in the case of small countries like North Korea and Israel where their small size is not related with the sway they hold in international relations. Despite being small and with fewer population, they hold distinct space in foreign affairs space. Location also plays an important role as well, as can be seen with the Nepalese foreign policy. The yam or bridge proposition that floats during the course of time is to do with the location of Nepal, situated as it is between two giant neighbors – population, geography, and economy-wise.

Interest groups and public opinion also affect foreign policy of a country. lobby groups, single-issue movements, constituency-based groups (e.g. ethnic minority voters) and special interest groups are some of the interest groups that present their positions collectively. Public opinion, on the other hand, is in the background through the mass, attentive public and various interest groups and lobby groups. While it has some influence over policy making and implementation, there are contesting views on whether the opinions that can be mercurial can be a determinant.

Media is yet another determinant in shaping foreign policy. It can be an agenda setting place, information clearing house or government propaganda tool (Alden & Aran, 2017, p. 73). From the CNN Effect, to the action taken by Saudi Arabia against Qatar starting from Al Jazeera to the various audio-visual mediums, media is an everyday presence that keeps evolving over time and has the same influencing role.

Culture is one of the important influences of foreign policy. Culture as defined by David Elkins and Richard Simeon (1979) "does not determine precisely what will be done," but it "conditions the range of issues to which attention will be devoted; it influences the way those issues will be defined; and it limits the range of options considered within a given issue domain" (p. 143). Culture, as it shall be seen throughout this research, can be of use in a number of ways: from formulation to implementation, from how it behaves to how it wants other to perceive it, and from how in some cases culture can be used to defend the course of action which would otherwise not have been possible. With each state unique in its own regard, this means the study of countries activities cannot be understood through a one size fits all approach, which is one of the aspects that states, including China – a country this research covers – advocate.

While culture was not taken to be the prime factor in influencing how states conducted themselves by the rationalist thinkers. It has come to the fore in recent times, especially after the end of the Cold War. With the advent of Constructivism and other elements like soft power with their focus on culture, it is one of the elements that cannot be ignored.

Culture also helps in forming a rhetoric that helps cast a positive light because states only project things that they think make them more civilized. Countries make case for defending their activities asking others to look through their cultural lens and not through a universal one.

With the thesis of Clash of Civilizations that is put forth (Huntington, 1993), culture is to be seen as an area that can cause future encounters involving states that share a common culture. But it is also an area that helps states know each other

closely and aid in making collaboration fruitful, making sure there are no misunderstandings in the due process.

For China, along with the factors discussed above, culture also helps cast a positive image, as a country that advocates its peaceful nature thereby averting any impending Thucydides Trap that scholars, like Graham Allison (2017) talk of. By emphasizing its history as well as culture, whereby it is, for instance a country that has never colonized other states, although the submission that Korea and Vietnam was their own legitimate acceptance and that what it wants to dispel any wariness that can come when a rising power looks to threaten established power a la Sparta fearing Athens in ancient Greece (and from which Allison derives the name Thucydides Trap) (2012). Also following smart power that combines soft power and hard power, China, alongside Russia is accused of wielding other form of power: Sharp Power (Walker & Ludwig, 2018) (Economist, 2017) where they (the countries) try to manipulate others into doing what they want, using distraction and manipulation as opposed to attraction and persuasion of soft power. Emphasizing culture means countering that threat as well, casting a light that can help fulfil its ambition not just of becoming a prosperous country.

In conducting its foreign relations, China advocates pluralism in culture, going against what some scholars advocate about universal civilization and which can be read in the speeches the prominent leaders of China give in occasions local and foreign.

However, and as it shall be seen, cultural elements can be cherry picked in forming a positive rhetoric about a country, including China.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Culture is an aspect that comes as an afterthought in most international relations, with it only tagging along issues like trade. But it is equally important because it plays role in shaping how outward conceptions are made as well as how inward. Study of culture helps in smoothening any differences that may arise in understanding the same issue. Because of its nature, wherein it shapes not just the leaders who formulate and implement foreign policy, it is also a tool of foreign policy.

Culture impacts a country's foreign policy in a number of ways that cannot be ignored. Constructivism, the new lens to look into international relations – in seeing how the world is how we make it – considers cultural element to be of importance as does soft power (and consequently smart power).

Dealing with China, most countries view issues ranging from One Belt One Road Initiative to its currency and its human rights as well as its growing military size. Limiting foreign policy of a country to economic and military terms while accusing it without understanding why it is doing what it is doing misses the point considering how influencing China is aiming to be.

1.3 Research Questions

This research aims at answering the following questions:

- What role does culture play in the foreign policy of a country?
- How is culture used to shape the foreign policy discourse of a country?
- How is Confucianism reflected in the foreign policy choices of China?

1.4 Research Objectives

The study of foreign policy requires an engagement both with the literature on policy making in the social psychology, and with the rational-actor models of policy making. This thesis aims in studying one of the factors, the native history and philosophy, in the designing and implementation of foreign policy. Talking to the point, the influence of Confucius on Chinese Foreign Policy is what will be studied.

The objectives of the research are:

1. To highlight the role culture plays in foreign policy;
2. To understand how culture is used in shaping the foreign policy discourse of a country;
3. To reflect on the role Confucius plays in Chinese foreign policy

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research aims in shedding some light on the way culture plays in international relations. Following the arguments in this paper, it can be seen in the ways culture plays a prominent part in countries formulating their policies for interacting with the wider world. Foreign policy behavior of states can be better understood through a comprehension of their cultural elements.

Despite the fact that culture has important role in various steps of foreign policy – from formulation to implementation – Liland (1993) ascribes a number of reasons why it has been avoided. These include the difficulty in defining the scope of ‘culture’, difficulty in including non-traditional actors and non-traditional sources, the bulk it would present if included, and not to mention interdisciplinary approach it would entail. Researches into the study of foreign policy of countries delve on the

political, security and economic issues of the concerned country. While external influences – primarily the international environment – are studied, the discussion of the factor that shapes the individual leader and bureaucracy, i.e., culture often gets sidelined.

Importance of culture can be seen when one observes what Singer has to argue “the key variable [in the level of analysis] is not the system itself, but the way in which that system is perceived, evaluated, and responded to by the decision makers in the several and separate states” (1960, p. 461). Culture is also important in the sense that the last few years have also seen rise in its use, with the Merriam Webster claiming it to be the word of the year of 2014 (Steinmetz, 2014).

Focusing on China, one of the rising states in the present world, one that is tipped to be another superpower, beside the United States, or even surpass it at least in Gross Domestic Production (GDP), the study also sheds light on how issues like human rights and sovereignty cannot be understood by excluding how China perceives itself and how it acts in a particular way. Understanding culture can help ease tensions that may not be achieved through realistic way of thinking, through interlinkage created by trade or through international institutes on their own.

1.6 Limitations/Delimitations

The thesis does not mean that understanding culture and constructivism are the keys to unlock the prevailing problems of the world; this should not be akin to the situation where with a hammer as the only tool, every problem looks like a nail. Nor should the issue be made exclusive as with the case of a person looking for lost keys under a street lamp because that is where the light is at.

Lack of study materials in the original language for the study of foreign policy of China, due to my lack of understanding of Chinese language, has caused the researcher to choose from among limited sources although the sources have been chosen judiciously. In saying that, there are significant scholarships in English language that details about Chinese culture and foreign policy.

Furthermore, because of the nature of the topic, it is primarily a qualitative research that may not as concisely portray the intended results as data and numbers would. However, this being a study under social sciences faculty, exclusive qualitative nature will not hamper the result that would have been obtained by the use of qualitative analysis.

Also, as this study is made by an International Relations and Diplomacy student, the focus shall remain the impact of culture on foreign policy and international relations.

During the course of the research, selection bias that can mar the outcome of the research has been tried to be minimized. The selection of case studies that is small in scale – the number limited due to the time and budgetary constraints – can add to the problem of selection bias. This will be ensured by picking the most representative among the available cases. And by selecting primary source, as opposed to secondary source that can be amenable to non-neutral analyses, this thesis will take primary sources themselves thus minimizing this sort of error.

1.7 Chapter Organization

This research is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is introduces the idea and what will be explored further. It discusses the statement of the problem,

delineates the objectives, and points the significance of the study undertaken. The second chapter reviews literature associated with the topics under discussion, with study done of journal articles to see ideas that have not been discussed but is explored in this paper. The third chapter explains the methodology by which this paper was done, the research areas, the literature – primary and secondary, as well as the limitations of the study. This leads to the chapters that discuss and analyze the findings related to the research.

The fourth chapter discusses the theories of foreign policy and relate to the way culture is reflected in various theories. The fifth chapter then discusses how culture is reflected in the foreign policy of countries. The case of China, with focus in Confucius thought forms the central discussion in the sixth chapter. The seventh chapter draws conclusion obtained from the research as well as shows some way forward for researches taking this research as its starting point.

Distilling the components of foreign policy, this part of the research focuses in the way culture is taken by theorists as well as studying the way countries embrace culture in their respective foreign policy.

Chapter 2 Review of Literatures and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Review of Literatures

Robert Putnam (1988) discusses the domestic and international factors through a two-level game at the national level and international level:

At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favorable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign development. (p. 434)

These national and international levels can be seen in two levels of negotiations that Putnam has put forward: discussion within each constituent and bargaining between negotiators. With domestic assurance also needed to implement foreign policy matters, foreign policy should also be seen in relation with domestic policy. This further strengthens the argument that domestic policy and foreign policies are interlinked, thus the saying that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy.

Also, the negotiation that Putnam has put forth can be seen as an instance of implementation of foreign policy wherein the determinants of foreign policy can be observed:

- a. institutions,
- b. preferences and coalitions among the states
- c. negotiators' strategies.

Facing trade-offs, as most negotiation scenarios entail, negotiators' strategies are equally important.

Culture is placed in secondary place together with economic and social activities by writers like Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley who write how for the conventional account of international relations security is the overriding concern of states owing to the anarchical and self-help nature of the international system (2005, p. 4). But what can be seen is that even their assertion where state is of paramount importance, in a world where states remain the central actors in international relations, what makes those states run is the belief inherent in them, that is, their customs and traditions. While globalization may have threatened the survival of nation-states, Martin Wolf argues in his essay “Will the Nation-States Survive Globalization?”, “for people to be successful in exploiting the opportunities afforded by international integration, they need states at both ends of their transactions” (190).

The importance of knowing about culture can be seen in the concluding remark of Huntington (1993) when he writes “For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilization, but instead a world of different civilizations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others” (49). In a multicultural world where there are talks about a universal culture, this notion of different civilizations comes to the respect and accommodation one shows to other cultures.

With culture playing a number of roles, including culture as a foundation of foreign policy, as a part of foreign policy, and as a foreign policy resource on its own, this section reviews literatures that show how some researchers have done research in these areas.

Regardless of the problems, including the definition of culture, a number of researches have been done regarding its role in how countries interact with one another. Culture, in its various forms, like law, customs, and morals affects the way a state interacts with its counterparts. Religion, also a part of culture, influences different societies.

Julie Reeves writes about how international relations theorists and commentators have simply followed the dominant and popular trends in viewing culture as the way of life following the notion of Margaret Mead who wrote how “we are our culture” (Reeves, 2004, p. 2). Scholars use the notion of culture for meeting various ends including informing the narratives about international relations, as well as linking events, issues and problems at the international level (Reeves, 2004, p. 10). Terms like cultural relations, cultural diplomacy, and cultural internationalism are used to associate culture with international relations.

Islamic countries conduct foreign affairs in ways that differ from the Christian or other orthodox religions. Regarding Islam, Eickelman & Salvatore (2004) write how Islam provides “background clusters of concepts, shared understandings, and practices” that corroborate the public sphere (p. 10). Kayaoglu, studying the impact of Islam on the foreign policy of Qatar sees its foreign aid as *zakat*, *i.e.*, an offering of some personal income. In a similar vein, public debate on cultural issues also changes political ideas, while some political actors with particular beliefs lead to certain policy choices – and not something else.

When Fairbank (1969) argues that “Tradition is one ingredient in China's foreign policy today, but it seems to be the missing ingredient in our effort to understand that policy” (p. 450) we can see the gap that is extant in the studies of foreign policy. As will be discussed later, almost every interpretation of international relations of China is seen from the eyes of Realism, or Liberalism.

Edgar Schein, in his book *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (2006) draws the following importance of culture:

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of culture as a concept is that it points us to phenomena that are below the surface, that are powerful in their impact but invisible and to a considerable degree unconscious. In that sense, culture is to

a group what personality or character is to an individual. We can see the behavior that results, but often we cannot see the forces underneath that cause certain kinds of behavior. Yet, just as our personality and character guide and constrain our behavior, so does culture guide and constrain the behavior of members of a group through the shared norms that are held in that group. (2006, p. 8)

Schein points to the way culture plays its role in an organization as well as in a nation, wherein the relation is mutual; on the one hand, cultural norms define how a given nation or organizations will define leadership and on the other, the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture (p. 11).

Alastair Iain Johnston (1995) phrases the general model this way: "Different states have different predominant strategic preferences that are rooted in the early or formative experiences of the state, and are influenced to some degree by the philosophical, political, cultural, and cognitive characteristics of the state and its elites" (p. 34). This notion of preference is taken by countries as they perceive it to be of importance on some occasions. Those preferences then form a part of the culture the respective country is associated to by others.

Strategic culture is another area of study where culture is studied in relation to the strategic course of action that is followed in the course of war. The importance of knowing about culture from Alastair Johnston's statement about how if we assume that, given a particular strategic culture, a state has a preference for some particular strategy, then we are better able to develop predictions about behavior against which predictions from non-strategic culture models of choice can be tested (Johnston, 1995, p. 48).

A number of bodies are involved in Chinese foreign policy decision-making. With both the Chinese Communist Party and the government of the People's Republic of China involved in foreign policy related aspects, some of the major bodies involved in foreign policy include: Central Committee of 205 members that falls under the former category, the State Council – China's Cabinet, and the National People's Congress – China's parliament that oversees the State Council. CPC Politburo Committee is another important decision-making body that has as its members seven of the 25 members of Politburo who in turn come from the Central Committee. While decisions have to be endorsed by the Central Committee, as it meets only once annually, Politburo Standing Committee makes discussion on the matters beforehand. This political structure can be seen in the following diagram:

The structure of political power in China



Source: CaixaBank Research.

Other bodies that manage international relations include CPC International Department (CPC ID) in the CPC, and the state bodies are Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) responsible for government-to-government relations all over the world, and the Taiwan Affairs Office for dealing with Taiwan authorities. In addition to the CPC ID, there are following bodies that influence foreign policy:

- Policy Research Office;
- General Office;
- Publicity Department, formerly Propaganda Department;
- International Communications Office, or State Council Information Office;
- and
- Organization Department.

Jakobson and Manuel write about Leading Small Groups (LSGs) made to study and advise the government on specific issues. Foreign Affairs LSG, also known as National Security LSG, is the main one with Taiwan Affairs LSG and Financial and Economics Affairs LSG being other groups that contribute to foreign policy. With the rank of leaders determining the importance of the LSG, the importance of foreign policy can be seen as the foreign policy LSGs are headed by Xi Jinping. (2016, p. 104)

Jakobson and Manuel point out how the involvement of different actors, who may not necessarily be foreign affairs officials, can lead to infighting. When five provincial leaders, also the Politburo members, are ranked higher than senior Chinese government foreign affairs officials, when the State Councillor on Foreign Policy, the highest foreign policy official is outranked in general Party by 30 other people and shares the same rank as 20 other people (p. 106), external influences and pressure can become a significant aspect in shaping foreign policy.

Compared to the bureaucratic setup, media takes relatively small time in influencing as well as channeling foreign policy. There are a number of media, including People's Daily, China Daily, China Radio International (CRI), Xinhua news agency, China News Service, China Global Television Network (CGTN), the China Central Television (CCTV), that act as a mouthpiece to the government through which commentaries and opinion pieces are printed. These pieces in turn can shape public opinion in matters relating to foreign affairs. But when Chinese state-owned social media platforms are used to manipulate politicized contents and favor Beijing-based narratives, when it seeks to influence its information infrastructures, China draws flak from around the world. Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), president of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) is at the top of foreign policy decision making and his personality does make a significant contribution in how China acts in international relations.

Chinese foreign policy is formulated to meet the two centenary goals: "to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects" by 2021 and "to build a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious" by 2049 celebrating centenaries of the Communist Party of China in 1921 and People's Republic of China in 1949. A rapidly rising country, whose GDP expanded by an average annual rate of 7.2 percent during 2013-2016, and whose per-capita tripled from 2012 to 2016 (Xinhua, 2017), China is aiming to become the next superpower. It is therefore imperative that Chinese foreign policy talk of peaceful development, a concept it changed from the negative connotation its earlier peaceful rise gave.

In formulating its foreign policies, China advocates the role of international organizations and international law. Its dignitaries speak of how China has "firmly upheld

multilateralism and free trade” participating in existing organizations like the G20, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), taking active role in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Also, being a rapidly developing country, it wants to engage in international economy, and therefore has put forward its Belt and Road Initiative that it wants other countries to benefit from as well. This, it believes will hasten international trade, make trade more frequent and lift millions of people – not just of China but other countries that are part of the Belt and Road Initiative.

China has also started to make active participation in world politics, and get out of Deng Xiaoping’s hiding itself and biding its time, including its role in Korean peninsula, Middle East, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine, and Israel.

It is on the domestic front that scholars comment that Chinese foreign policy is at a weak point. Economic growth that can stagnate, people that may seek more freedom and the growing level of pollution are some of the instances that stand in the way of China becoming a superpower. Domestic policies in these regards are what China needs addressing comment scholars.

And it is in handling the shortcomings of its domestic and foreign issues, mostly the former, that China takes aid of culture in its foreign policy. When Jakobson and Manuel complain that “there are no definitive guidelines or rules guiding the behavior of actors in the foreign policy sector” (p. 108), culture can be seen as one of the guidelines, although not the definitive guideline.

China advocates multi-culturalism, emphasizing how “[I]t is the diversity of its civilizations that gives our global village its vitality ... Civilizations can complement one

another as they seek common ground and make progress together through exchanges and mutual learning” (2017 UN GA Speech). And that “no matter how advanced China’s development becomes, it will never seek hegemony or to expand or extend its sphere of influence”. When Xi Jinping speaks of “We should increase inter-civilization exchanges so as to promote harmony, inclusiveness and respect for differences”, China can point to Confucius and his advocacy of harmony as a starting point.

With its long history and culture that it can draw upon, China has chosen Confucius as its cultural vanguard. The reason for selecting Confucius can be seen when considering the following:

No philosopher or religious visionary, whether Plato or Aristotle, Jesus, Buddha Gotama, or Mohammed, is the peer of Confucius as a focus of cultural significances, a founder of cultural institutions and a model of ethical behavior. Even today, in a China nominally influenced by Marxism, it is Confucianism which is the foundation of the society and culture. (Hall, 2003, p. 46)

Hall further writes about Confucius: “Confucius was one of the earliest of the itinerant scholars who would travel among the competing states offering advice to political leaders on the art of rulership” (p. 46).

While this may seem paradoxical that a Socialist country, with Chairman Mao Ze Dong to look upon, it is Confucius, who once took brunt of the Cultural Revolution of Mao, is at the center in its policies. The number of references its leaders make, not just to Confucius but to Mencius, Laozi and others show how culture can bring a country close as well as cast an image that does not scare others. This also helps in setting up a discourse that not just shows how rich China is in terms of history and culture but also how it can make other countries follow its footsteps without trying cultural assimilation. It is useful in

defending its course of action, ranging from territorial claims and never trying colonization in the future (historical) to its handling of human rights (culture coupled with sovereignty) as well as in accusing other countries, especially the West of trying to put cultural diversity at the backseat when it comes to the issue of development.

Coming from the time of Mao and Cultural Revolution when culture bore the brunt, as being one of the four old's: custom, culture, habit and idea, culture and Confucius have become a part of what Xi Jinping calls "China Story". Books like *Xi Jinping Tells a Story*, *Xi Jinping: How To Read Confucius and Other Classical Thinkers* are examples of how culture is making its relevance in modern China.

Not much has been written about the role of Confucius in Chinese foreign policy. While the sage master has been elicited in the context of domestic politics, with the leaders compared to the ancient rulers, foreign policy is a relatively untouched aspect. This thesis looks into the role of culture in Chinese foreign policy and how China interprets its course of action with cultural lens.

Anthony Giddens (2006:163) is quoted by Longhurst et al. (2008) to have described socialisation as the process whereby, through contact with other human beings, 'the helpless infant gradually becomes a self-aware, knowledgeable human being, skilled in the ways of the culture in which he or she was born' (p. 9).

The difficulty in understanding culture can be understood when noting how a single object and its cultural form can have different implication in different parts of the world as Longhurst et al. (2008) point out: Coca-Cola has taken on different meanings in different parts of the world: signifying neo-colonial oppression in India (and being banned for some time), while it suggests freedom and personal autonomy to British-Asian young people in London (p. 10). While a simple object like Coca-Cola can have such a different

interpretation in different places, the difficulty in understanding and interpreting culture as a whole can be of more difficulty.

Culture occupies a central place because, according to Longhurst et al, on the one hand it is internalized by individuals and on the other it is institutionalized in the stable patterns of action that make up major economic, political and kinship structures of the society. Further, they point as to how the two of society's basic features, its economy and its political system, are maintained by culture (p. 18).

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This is a qualitative research that depends primarily on library study for deriving study materials. And it draws its resources from texts and speeches (which again are in texts). This nature of research comes with a number of limitations constraining other modes of collecting data like interviews and survey. Being a multi-disciplinary topic involving glimpses of sociology and anthropology, this research looks beyond the intricacies of political science in general and international relations in particular although the latter is the hub around which the research revolves.

This research employs the tool of case study in concentrating the role of culture in foreign policy of China, with this being the most go to research design in International Relations and Only one case – that of China – means there are no comparisons made and it limits the study into a qualitative one (Klotz, 2008, p. 43). This research comes under the category of what Klotz (2008, p. 52) classifies as two categories of case study where this case is unlikely for a theory to explain, yet it does surprisingly well.

The research is made through prose reasoning without any equations or tables or numbers. It will look into the way a discourse is being generated with the help of the historical past that China puts forth.

3.2 Research Area

This thesis looks into the role of culture in foreign policy in different forms. Taking the notion of the three aspects in which culture affects foreign policy, it will look into

constructivism and soft power that can shed light on the foreign policy behavior of countries, including China which is the case studied in the thesis.

a. Nature and source of data

This research has primary data as well as secondary data as its source. The texts of Confucius, especially *Analects*, will be used. Writings of scholars, Chinese and non-Chinese, will be used as secondary sources during the course of the research. Public statements by Chinese leaders will be studied to find any hints of Confucius's thoughts.

While the texts that give the insight in the behavior of China are originally in native text but later translated into English, these are as primary a source as these can get. I have not taken analytical versions of those texts, speeches or documents, while making my conclusions.

Obstacles in the form of language barrier are also to be considered, especially in this case where even the primary texts, like *The Analects*, the foreign policy documents and the speeches of the leaders had to be relied on transliterated form. However, choice of authentic translations is from among small pool of resources, like the case of *The Analects* whose translation by James Legge has been chosen because of the background Legge is a scholar highly regarded and someone whose translation was first. Citation regarding *The Analects* is done to point the Books in which the texts appear because the print versions of the book varies and citing the Book number will make searching for the relevant quotes more convenient.

In addition, the foreign policy documents and the speeches were obtained from the Ministerial websites. Newspapers may not be reliable source for information but those that

have been consulted in the thesis, including Global Times and China Daily are regarded as the mouthpiece of the government.

b. Tools and technique of data collection and analysis

Levy (2008) constructs four typologies of case studies: idiographic case studies whose aim is to “describe, explain, interpret, and/or understand a single case as an end in itself”, hypothesis-generating case studies that aims to “generalize beyond the data” for developing theoretical propositions thus contributing to the process of theory construction, hypothesis-testing case studies is a comparative method to test hypothesized empirical relationships, and plausibility probes that allows the researcher to “sharpen a hypothesis or theory, to refine the operationalization or measurement of key variables, or to explore the suitability of a particular case” (pp. 4-6). This research will be carried under idiographic case studies.

Chapter 4 Theories of Foreign Policy

Bureaucracy, leadership, National identity Religious and Cultural issues affect how foreign policies are made and implemented. This chapter will discuss these issues.

Bureaucrats are involved in foreign policy making in a number of steps and their organizational impact can be observed in those steps. Halperin writes about how career officials see their interests reflected in the health of their organization. With a number of organizations involved in decision making, there may be some compromises along the way but once an agreement is reached, the organizations act to see its implementation.

Halperin (1971, pp. 74-76) notes how organizations and its actors influence foreign policy decision making: organizations are charged with missions with most of the tasks we discuss here requiring actions abroad (mostly) as well as at home, and these organizations seek influence to promote their missions with the stance organization. Furthermore, issues like the autonomy granted to the organization (with more emphasis on controlling own resource and resisting control by senior officials citing freedom to determine own procedure), organization morale (with its actions appreciated, some room for advancement in the organization having a positive impact), its essence (with career officials understanding capabilities and missions), roles and missions of the organizations (with most of the times shared by organizations, and that may at times change the roles and missions should be delineated so that chances of disputes are minimized) and budgets it gets (with larger preferred over smaller budget, and increasing budget with added responsibility) are what Halperin (p. 76-86) mentions writing on the influence of organizations (including foreign affairs) on policies.

These factors in turn affect the following areas in policy: organizations supply information that serve their organizational interest, the options they present are based on the notion of their essence in addition to lowering chances of cooperation with other organizations, provide choices that affirm their interest, and implement only the decisions that further the mission of the organization.

Leaders have to take decisions to take or not to take a course of action. How they gather information, who they trust in gathering the information, and taking decisions affect the way a country shapes its policies. In addition, factors like seeking consensus, degree of hierarchy, degree of coordination leader seeks among networks that process information, and whether the leader emphasizes unanimity or consensus in resolving any situation are some of the areas where the style of leadership affects foreign policy. Hermann and Preston are quoted by Preston (2017) writing how a sense of competence and issue one feels the most comfortable can shape a leader's agenda. It is this stylistic variation that sees political leaders like George Bush focus more on foreign than domestic policy and Ronald Regan focus on building military strength vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Another factor that affects decision-making is the attitude of the Head of Government toward political conflict and how much s/he is open to face-to-face disagreements and confrontations leading to the demand from those around him/her.

Preston (2017) notes the leaders' traits like involvement in the policy-making process, willingness to tolerate conflict, reason for leading as well as strategies for managing information affect the decision making process. Furthermore, policies vary depending on whether s/he is proactive or reactive, with the former wanting a loyal staff with similar mindset and the latter focusing on the function of the staffs.

Bureaucracy, discussed above also affects the leadership variable of foreign policy. Trust it and the leader accepts the recommendations while a distrust results in a centralized authority.

Nye talks of varying leadership attributes that shape foreign policies accordingly. He speaks of how South Africa could have evolved had leader other than Nelson Mandela presided in the aftermath of apartheid. He also mentions how George H. W. Bush and his son, George W. Bush had different policies that reflected their level of awareness of international affairs; while the former was involved in a number of institutions like the CIA, UN representative of China and therefore served well as president whereas the latter is mentioned as having not much knowledge of other parts of the world that resulted in the invasion of Iraq without success.

Foreign policy involves a number of domestic actors. They are involved in various stages of policy making and implementation. Established with their own objectives, they have their own interest in mind while supporting or rejecting whatever policies come to their attention. From civilian career officials to political appointees and even military officers, the interest of their institutions plays a significant role in foreign policy too. From raising issues to shaping the rules of the game, from planning maneuvers to discussing information, from being involved in decision making to taking part in the implementation of the formulated policy, bureaucracy plays a significant role

For Markus Fischer, there are three motives that shape foreign policy—culture, ideology, and material interests—with the influence of culture and ideology being far more contingent, particular, and normative (Fischer, p. 27) where

Culture affirms the way of life of the community as good and celebrates the attributes of its heroes as virtues to be emulated. Ideology postulates a moral principle, such as the

rights of individuals, that guides its followers in the construction of a better political, social, or economic order...material interests in terms of security, power, and wealth (p. 54-55)

There exists a cleavage between the seemingly permanent interest of states in security, prosperity, and dominance and their far more diverse and contingent concerns for cultural and ideological ends has been an enduring aspect of foreign affairs (p. 53).

Constructivists add to the international relations theory propagated by neoliberals and neorealists by pointing out what these theorists ignore: the content and source of state interests and the social fabric of world politics (Checkel, 1998). Constructivism compensates for its lack of a theory of agency by focusing on the role of social structures and norms.

Checkel points out that that constructivism is not a theory but an approach to social inquiry based on assumptions that the environment in which agents/states take action is social as well as material and that this setting can provide agents/states with understandings of their interests (p. 325).

In addition to questioning the methodological individualism that underpins both neoliberalism and neorealism, constructivists seek answers to questions like “What kind of situation is this?” with the help of norms (Checkel, 1998, p. 326).

Liberalism, writes Fischer, rejects cultural motives altogether because they interfere with the universal rule of rationality. For them, international cooperation brings benefits that conflict cannot and therefore they opt for the former, as “sustained cooperation rebounds to everyone’s long-term benefit” (Fischer, p. 41) and for whom experts in technical and economics field do a better job than politicians.

For Fischer, the focus of liberalism on Human Rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights where there is no distinction made on the basis of, among other

things, language, national or social origin, do away with the notion that support cultural particularism.

Realism sees culture in different ways. Traditional Realists appreciate the cohesiveness of state that culture provides. However, when it comes to the choice between the pursuit of cultural ends and the security, power, and wealth of the community, the former has to sacrifice (Fischer, p. 45). For Neo-Realists, on the other hand, culture is the domestic factor least amenable to a scientific explanation and does not vary in the face of environmental or structural changes.

For Realists, cultural exchange can seem waste of resources: consider what Reeves writes when she quotes the US President Richard Nixon, “some Americans think that we can rely on peace by sending a few Fulbright scholars abroad . . . but that doesn’t bring peace. We can avoid war if we are realistic and not soft-headed” (Reeves, 2004, p. 58). Realists believe culture playing role in fostering mutual understanding is wish-dreams, wooly minded thought (Reeves, 2004, p. 59).

Realists see norms as lacking causal force while neoliberals see it playing some role in certain areas with the caveat that norms are built on the material base serving a regulative function. For constructivists, norms help create and define that very base (Checkel, 1998, pp. 327-28).

Katzenstein (1996) believes that culture is important because realism is “neither sufficiently established nor sufficiently precise” to be described as the ultimate paradigm and that power-and-interest-based argument should not be placed as the foundation with other arguments relegated as ancillary (p. 28). Katzenstein (1996) shows the growing importance of culture by showing how conceptualizations related with education have changed from core security concerns (due to their affinity to military mobilization) to domestic social concerns.

Similar is the case with international trade. For him, defining national security with the help of realism becomes a tautology (p. 29).

In connecting realism with culture, Katzenstein writes about how security interests are defined by actors who respond to cultural factors. Katzenstein (1996) counters Waltz's notion who in his neorealist theory talks about how international state system is decentralized, with the states unitary and functionally undifferentiated, and that the differences in the distribution of the capabilities of the states distinguish bipolar from multipolar states by stating

First, the international society of states is distinguished by both organizational decentralization and elements of a shared culture. Second, states are not unitary and functionally differentiated. Third, the distribution of capabilities and the number of poles may be less important than some of the effects of the society of states (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 63).

Also, Katzenstein opposes Keohane's notion of how international politics after hegemony, the international order formed thereafter continues to ameliorate the problem of international anarchy.

Katzenstein talks about how materialist theories do not necessarily talk about conflict and those cultural ones do not always result in cooperation as Huntington's "clash of civilizations" shows. This is because in order to avoid conflict anticipated in the clash among civilizations, mutual understanding is a must. The relation of culture with material power and coercion that Katzenstein (1996) talks about because, per him, "material power and coercion often derive their causal power from culture" (p. 18).

In understanding culture and the way the external environment affects actors, Katzenstein (1996) draws effects including environment affecting only the behavior of actors and affecting the contingent properties of actors (identities, interests and capabilities) (p. 12).

Culture refers to both a set of evaluative standards (such as norms and values) and a set of cognitive standards (such as rules and models) that define what social actors exist in a system, how they operate, and how they relate to one another (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 47).

While norms are the expectations shared by a community with regard to the behavior that is judged appropriate for a given identity (Morin & Paquin, 2018, p. 256), National identity is a socially constructed image that a political community uses to portray itself

Studying culture is important because “Cultural variables are regarded as useful for understanding what cannot be explained by actor-general power calculations” (Hudson & Sampson III, 1999, p. 668)

Strategic Culture, which attempts in integrating cultural considerations, cumulative historical memory, and their influences in the analysis of states’ security policies and international relations (Al-Rodhan quoted in Morin and Paquin, p. 286) shows how culture plays a role in addition to the rational choice analysis. After all, states are not ahistorical.

When Keesing and Strathern (quoted in Wilkening) explain how culture comprise systems of shared ideas, system of concepts, and rules and meanings that underlie and are expressed in the ways human live. As per Wilkening, for international relations scholars, politics, economics and culture are distinct spheres contrasting with anthropologists for whom the term culture is all encompassing. And he points how culture becomes too comprehensive and amorphous treating culture as a residual category used to explain what cannot be explained by “political” factors (Wilkening, 1999, p. 705).

Wilkening (1999) further cites Hudson in characterizing culture as an organization of meaning, shared value preferences and templates for action (p. 705). Furthermore, he likens culture with an idea toolkit built over time and from which people draw upon to act and make

decisions and that culture helps answer questions including who draws what idea from the toolkit, and how the ideas are drawn (p. 706).

For Realists, who formulate a top-down approach to explaining foreign policies, it comes in contradictory terms: foreign policy is important as it is linked to the security and survival of the state while at the same time due to the international realm being characterized by recurrence and repetition, its scope is limited (Wivel, 2017).

But foreign policy is more than what Wivel anticipates when he writes how a foreign policy decision maker has to interpret international politics to defend the interests of the state. It also concerns the interests of the alliance a country may have formed

Marxism may have viewed culture as the kind of “fluffy bourgeoisie stuff” that belonged to the superstructure but as Reeves points out, the communists, during the Cold War used culture as one of the methods to manipulate and control mass behavior from the cradle to the grave (Reeves, 2004, p. 89). Also, for Marxists, this superstructure of culture is shaped by the material base, that is, fundamental productive forces and the corresponding relations of production (Fischer, p. 46). For them, in international society, as in domestic environment, culture remains subservient to class interest and conditioned by the relations of production, with instances of hegemony and cultural imperialism (Fischer, pp. 47-48).

This thesis argues that in all the steps of foreign policy decision making, ranging from the three in Graham Allison model: Rational Actor Model, Bureaucratic Model and Government politics Model as well as in Liberalist theory of International relations. Although Realism also covers some aspects of cultural elements as well. But first of all, let us discuss the models mentioned above.

Under rational actor model, the options a nation is supposed to choose are spelled out as are the consequences of those respective options. Decision makers then make a choice based on its consequences that can yield maximum value. Decision making then is dependent on the leader making the choice and the leaders in turn are chosen by the people through electoral process. It is therefore that Krasner writes how values also affect this seemingly unrelated model when he mentions it to be the “primary determinant of government behavior” (Krasner, 1972, p. 161).

Even the bureaucratic paradigm can be understood as to whether values affect it or not. The top-level civil servants play an important role in determining what counts important and what not as well as suggest the course of action in the meantime. They provide information to the governments, the alternative course of action to choose from, act as per the standard operating procedures (SOPs). Alden and Aran point out how bureaucracies often will employ the prism of their common attitudes and shared images to study the implications of a foreign policy event for policy making (p. 47). It works by considering all factors that rational policy model would not consider.

Managerial skill is an important tool in making effective decision. However, this notion of placing importance on bureaucracy is countered by realists like Krasner for whom managerial skills and administrative feasibility are less important. Be it bureaucrats of the government or the appointees made by the Head of State (as in the case of the United States), the appointees agree with the one over them in terms of power. And making bureaucracy powerful means making elections less meaningful. Also, because a person in question here – the bureaucrat – is more than just an office holder, i.e., s/he is also an individual and therefore the rigidity of the office under which one works may not apply.

The domestic structure of the nature of political institutions is another determiner of foreign policy. The nature of political culture – parochial, participatory – marks departure in the way people interact with the state in the various stages of foreign policy. Another element of domestic structure is the political regime type. Alden and Aron write about how authoritarian regimes use foreign issues to distract from domestic difficulties whereas democratic regimes do not seek as much of foreign policy adventures. These come down to a number of points: firstly, the former does not have to contend elections and is therefore relatively at ease in pursuing relations. Also, the former has little red tape as well as checks and balances to slow decision-making. In addition to the two factors, the latter follows democratic peace theory limiting the choices it can make, for example resolving issues through negotiation and bargaining.

The foreign policy of states depending upon their state of influence is also different with middle powers observing multilateralist, bridge-building and concerned with the promotion of norms.

However, criticizing structural approaches to foreign policy Stephen Krasner proposes an approach that takes the historical evolution of the state as a starting point for understanding foreign policy conduct (Krasner S. , 1984).

Another way of looking into how foreign policies are made is through the interaction of center-periphery through the World-System lens where the foreign policy is formulated to maintain the relationship between the industrialized core and the ones at the periphery (Alden & Aran, 2017, p. 70).

State Identity is an aspect that constructivists emphasize when talking about foreign policy of that state in addition to their other core claims that the states are the principal units of analysis for international political theory and that the key structures in the states system are

intersubjective rather than material (Wendt, 1994, p. 385). Social identity, Wendt (1994) argues come into play when one sees oneself in relation to another, with the identity coming as being a liberal or democratic or hegemon or balancer.

Chapter 5: Role of Culture in Foreign Policy

Brenda Shaffer describes culture as “the force or group of forces that determines a predominant self-identity of a specific and sizeable collective of people” (2006, p. 2) while culture is also identified as the web of significance that holds society together (Fischer, p. 32).

Culture is a domestic adhesive as Diamond points out, after all “Any nation risks falling apart if its citizen do not feel joined by some unifying national ideology. Each nation has its own familiar ideals and phrases responding to that task of creating a unifying ideology” (Diamond, 2019, p. 115).

Reeves quotes Street on the changing stance of culture: “[T]he job of studying culture is not of finding and then accepting its definitions but of ‘discovering how and what definitions are made, under what circumstances and for what reasons ... Culture is an active process of meaning making and contest over definition, including its own definition (Reeves, 2004, p. 83).

It is who does what with the cultural resources at hand, as Kenneth Wilkening points out, “[I]t is in the ‘who draws what ideas’ and ‘how the ideas are used’ aspects [of cultural analysis] that causes of events can be found” (qtd. by Hudson & Sampson III, 1999, p. 668).

Learning about culture also helps understand foreign policy of a country in a number of ways. Firstly, it is comparative analysis wherein the differences between cultures become apparent. Secondly, it helps understand the power nodes from which culture is linked and foreign policy decisions are made. Thirdly, culture helps understand the discourse prevalent at the moment, to the heroes evoked and to the myths spun. Fourthly, it addresses the questions as to the direction the cultural emphasis brings and what the constraints of this

advocacy. Finally, it helps understand the point of conflict that may arise in international relations between countries that have their own cultural story (Hudson & Sampson III, 1999, pp. 672-73).

The importance of culture can be noted with the reasoning that it “enables mediation in games where there is a situation of multiple equilibria and helps clarify anomalies that rationalist theories cannot explain” in addition to facilitating research on the subjective utility of rational actors. (Morin & Paquin, 2018, p. 255) Rather than explaining the causes of foreign policies, Morin & Paquin (2018) believe culture helps gain insight into foreign policies “by placing them in the cultural context” (p. 255).

Julie Reeves (2004) outlines international attempts in institutionalizing culture, starting with the International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) that was an attempt by the League of Nations with its aim to exchange academics, students, books and ideas “to create greater understanding between peoples” and “understanding of the attitude of other countries” (p. 48). ICIC is what paved way for the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after the Second World War with its belief that the cultural approach is capable of bringing much benefit to the world of international politics (p. 50).

Individual countries also involve in promoting their culture. Reeves (2004, pp. 52-53) mentions about the United Kingdom, India, Japan, among others. The British Council was founded in 1934 to further ‘cultural propaganda’ and to promote a global understanding of the British culture, education science and technology. Its function has ranged from being a cultural exchange organization to a development organization and an English language organization.

France is another country that used culture as a tool to colonize, with what Reeves (2004, p. 53) notes as the “mission civilisatrice” that aimed in cultural assimilation in the countries it had colonized. It was, she notes, more to do with furthering the cause of France than to promote cultural exchange or cultural internationalism.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations has the slogan of “strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding with other countries. More recently, India has launched Project Mausam stemming from its Ministry of Culture that aims at focusing on “monsoon patterns, cultural routes and maritime landscapes” as mentioned in the website of its Ministry of Culture (<https://www.indiaculture.nic.in/project-mausam>) . It is a project aimed at understanding how shared knowledge systems are spread across areas affected by monsoon winds with its micro level of understanding cultural values and concerns among Arab, African, and Asian countries.

Similarly, Japan has the Kokusai Koryu Kikin, the Japan Foundation that helps carry out the international cultural exchange helping contribute to the enhancement of world culture and the welfare of mankind (Reeves, 204, p. 52).

When China’s official document, China's Peaceful Development Road, writes that “Chinese culture is a pacific culture” we can see the direct mentioning of culture while number of references that point to the influence of culture can be traced in various aspects of its policies – domestic as well as foreign (China, 2005). Another point that states “Sticking to peace, development and cooperation, and, together with all other countries, devoting itself to building a harmonious world marked by sustained peace and common prosperity” derives from the concept of harmony that was advocated by Confucius, who writes extensively about the concept.

The case of South China Sea ruling can also be seen as an example where China put the agenda of harmony over legal norms. As the Philippines put a case against China in the Arbitral Tribunal of the Hague, about how the latter was encroaching upon its territory, threatening its sovereign integrity, the Philippines had the ruling in its favor. However, China dismissed the ruling by Arbitral Tribunal of The Hague, instead wanting to settle the case not using force, as it assumes “peace, stability and development to be the main themes of the South China Sea” (Baijie & Jing, 2016). This is a case where cultural values, and historical claims are made to outright dismiss the legal norms that is accepted all over the world.

The influence of Confucius also help address the shortcoming of Constructivism that Shaffer points out when she says “the constructivists have failed to provide an answer as to how states resolve the conflict between their cultural goals and survival threats to the existence of the regime and state” (Shaffer, 2006, p. 13).

Classical Chinese conceptions were reinforced by contacts with the European state system: nationalism and Marxism-Leninism provided themes of class war and anti-imperialist war that could be grafted onto traditional constructions (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 30). This shows how the notion of culture is fluid and how it is shaped according to the regime.

Katzenstein points as to how the “state policies both reproduce and reconstruct cultural and institutional structure” (1996, p. 23). We can see the way Chinese foreign policy is different when comparing the one during the era of Mao, Deng Xiaoping and at present. During the time of the rule of Deng Xiaoping culture resurfaced, albeit indirectly; his slogan during reform era was “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics”. The latter part of the slogan is clearly a reflection of how the values of China would transpire into Socialism. And the Chinese-ness does not stop with Deng Xiaoping. When foreign policy in topics like “Beijing

consensus” and “China Model” is looked, we can see not Realism or Liberalism, but China trying to shape it in its own way.

Constructivism used in the research points to the connection between other theories of International relations as well: anarchy, agent-structure relationship and national interests can be understood better if we use this concept. After all, as Wendt writes, “anarchy of friends differs from one of enemies” (qtd. by Hurd, p. 305).

This thesis looked into how different countries act the way they act. This means the notions of realism, idealism, neorealism or neoliberalism may not express everything there is to explain regarding the international relations. One prominent case of foreign policy behavior of China could be observed in the ruling of South China Sea which was When China rejected the judgment by an international tribunal in The Hague in a case against it by the Philippines, instead trying to resolve disputes through negotiation, the result should be analyzed not through what is popular interpretation - of China disobeying the international law – but through its cultural values that prioritizes negotiation what it calls other peaceful means that considers factors like ‘peace, stability and development’ (Baijie & Jing, 2016).

That China is overtaking the US is not a matter to contest. But what China wants to assure is that the threat of Kindleberger Trap or Thucydides Trap is unlikely to occur. For worries that Joseph Nye puts forward in his article, “The Kindleberger Trap” (Nye Jr., The Kindleberger Trap, 2017) there is Belt and Road Forum (BRF) of 2017 where China hosted 30 leaders of countries and International Organization with the shared commitment “to protect the planet from degradation”, “eradicating poverty, creating jobs, addressing the consequences of international financial crises, promoting sustainable development, and advancing market-based industrial transformation and economic diversification”, to “promote peace, justice, social cohesion, inclusiveness, democracy, good governance, the rule of law,

human rights, gender equality” (FMPRC, 2017). With the B&R Initiative, backed by Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), China can no longer be thought of as a free-rider to the established norms that were already at place during its establishment at 1949 and further opening up in the late 1970s.

Comparing the way Frode Liland has made in his paper Culture and Foreign Policy: An Introduction to Approaches and Theory to the way it is seen in Chinese context:

I. The part where culture is a foundation of foreign policy

By shaping the scholars who help in the formulation of foreign policy as well as the discourse established in interpreting the international relations, culture can be seen to play a fundamental role. For these scholars who have knowledge of the local culture, resources provided by scholars of ancient thoughts can be used to develop theory.

Thuy T Do (2014), in the paper “China’s Rise and the ‘Chinese Dream’ in IR Theory” argues that “the ‘Chinese IR theory’ debate is shaped by the personal identity of scholars which in turn is forged by their social background, the emerging national identity of China, and broader features of the time including political and institutional changes”.

II. The part where culture acts as a part of foreign policy

In China’s Foreign Policy White Paper, “China's Peaceful Development Road” (2005), it is stated as to how culture is used in the conduct of foreign relations:

In recent years, China has cooperated with numerous countries in holding Culture Weeks, Culture Tours, Culture Festivals and Culture Years, thus helping promote exchanges and understanding between the Chinese people

and other peoples, and creating new forms for equal dialogue between civilizations.

III. The part where culture is used as foreign policy resource in its own

Culture is used to make other countries better understand the country. The need for emphasizing culture can be seen in the speech of Xi Jinping (2018, p. 328):

We should clearly present our domestic and foreign policies to the outside world, explain China in an acceptable way, speak out and make ourselves heard, interpret the Chinese Dream from the perspective of our neighbors and their aspirations for a better life and regional prosperity, and let a sense of common destiny take root.

There is no better way to explain China in an acceptable way than to project its culture, out of which Confucianism is the most heard-of aspect, to the outside world. It is therefore that China has established Confucian Institutes in all parts of the world.

Because China is feared of assertive policies and hegemonic ambitions, placing focus on its peaceful values that have driven it since the past times makes for an argument that it hopes can win friends. After all, as Joseph Nye points, in an era where politics is a contest of political credibility, it is not whose army is biggest that wins but it is about whose credibility wins (2004, p. 106). Chinese investment in media houses in Hollywood, from where the movies come out that are watched by millions and which is a source of the American soft power, is an example that can help reach those millions until China can stand on its own in this regard.

Discourse of culture are evident in books like *Xi Jinping: How to Read Confucius and other Chinese Classical Thinkers* (CN Times Book) that collect commentaries made by Xi

Jinping connecting his speeches with historical sources serve two purpose: firstly, it sheds light on the historical and cultural elements that China is proud of, including the prominence given to Confucius and secondly, it shows how China is a peace-loving country and has been such since ancient times. Instances of the second point can be seen in speeches like “A powerful yet warlike country cannot survive”.

Cultural pluralism can be observed practiced with the sayings of Confucius quoted “Who would eat soup if we used water to bring flavor? Who would listen if we played music with only one tune?” For Confucius, “The gentleman aims at harmony and not at uniformity. The vulgar man aims at uniformity and not at harmony”. In Bandung Conference, Zhou Enlai spoke about “seeking common ground while reserving differences” showing the respect for cultures of other states.

According to Graham Allison, 12 out of the 16 cases since 1500 where an established power confronted a rising power have resulted in a major war (2015). Graham Allison fears that the phenomenon of Thucydides Trap repeating itself compounded by the difference in civilizations of China and the United States. Even as he compares the two countries, the points are mostly that of civilizational difference that causes difference like that of the perception of issues like how government and free market are seen.

China, in Xi Jinping’s words, does not believe in the trap and that “should major countries time and again make the mistakes of strategic miscalculation, they might create such traps for themselves” (Xinhua, 2015). He proposes that the two countries “read each other's strategic intentions correctly”, “advance win-win cooperation”, “manage our differences properly and effectively”, and “foster friendly sentiments among our peoples” (Xinhua, 2015).

When the foreign minister of China speaks of going together, and how “By building a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, we want to replace the old practice of "going it alone" and reject the old mentality of "the winner takes all”

(MoFAPRC, 2015), and compares the flagship of Chinese foreign policy of current times (of 2015) – One Belt One Road (OBOR) – as a symphony and not a solo attempt, we can notice the way narrative of a peaceful China is being made, one that respects other states for what they are.

Chapter 6: Confucius's Thought in Chinese Foreign Policy

When China's official document, China's Peaceful Development Road, writes that "Chinese culture is a pacific culture" we can see the direct mentioning of culture while number of references that point to the influence of culture can be traced in various aspects of its policies – domestic as well as foreign (China, 2005). Another point that states "Sticking to peace, development and cooperation, and, together with all other countries, devoting itself to building a harmonious world marked by sustained peace and common prosperity" derives from the concept of harmony that was advocated by Confucius, who writes extensively about the concept.

Shaffer quotes Fischer who argues, "[C]ulture can be a means of foreign policy by serving as a pretext that aims at foreign or domestic support" (Shaffer, 2006, p. 18) and Confucius is the best alternative that China can come up with in both of these fronts.

The influence of Confucius also help address the shortcoming of Constructivism that Shaffer points out when she says "the constructivists have failed to provide an answer as to how states resolve the conflict between their cultural goals and survival threats to the existence of the regime and state" (Shaffer, 2006, p. 13).

Classical Chinese conceptions were reinforced by contacts with the European state system: nationalism and Marxism-Leninism provided themes of class war and anti-imperialist war that could be grafted onto traditional constructions (Katzenstein, p. 22 of 436). This shows how the notion of culture is fluid and how it is shaped according to the regime.

Katzenstein points as to how *State policies both reproduce and reconstruct cultural and institutional structure*. we can see the way Chinese foreign policy is different when comparing the one during the era of Mao, Deng Xiaoping and at present. During the time of

the rule of Deng Xiaoping culture resurfaced, albeit indirectly; his slogan during reform era was “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics”. The latter part of the slogan is clearly a reflection of how the values of China would transpire into Socialism. And the Chinese-ness does not stop with Deng Xiaoping. When foreign policy in topics like “Beijing consensus” and “China Model” is looked, we can see not Realism or Liberalism, but China trying to shape it in its own way.

For Ding and Saunders (2006), Chinese culture consists of the ability to speak Mandarin or any of the Chinese dialects, and secondarily a familiarity with and a strong attachment to Chinese cultural mores. In the latter falls Confucius and his values like filial piety, veneration of elders and ancestors, respect for authority, the importance of education, a strong work ethic, etc. This culture is so strong that even the invaders, like the Mongols (Yuan) who invaded China in the 13th century assimilated themselves into the Chinese culture.

That Confucius is promoted by China can be seen in line with the “community of character” idea of Stanley Hauerwas whereby [Chinese] “people will derive their identity from a historical narrative that prompts them to emulate the virtues displayed by its hero” (Shaffer, 2006, p. 29), i.e., Confucius. With this anchor, Chinese government can ensure that its domestic policies are seen in the manners that are in line with Confucian thought and to some extent distance itself from the Cultural Revolution of 1960s that had Chairman Mao at its helm with consequences the government does not want to repeat.

China needs to counter, among others, discourses like China Threat, The Long Arms of China, and Sharp Power. This is in addition to the Marshall Plan, Thucydides Trap, New Imperialism that accuse China of being a menace that can harm the future of the world, about to engage in conflict with the United States and the West.

In addition, with quotes from Confucius that asks whether in intercourse with friends, a party may have been sincere (Analects: Book 1), China wants to show that it is sincere and faithful to its friends, i.e., other sovereign countries.

When Xi Jinping cites Confucius, he aims to be a learned man, someone the footsteps of a superior man as the sage had mentioned. He wants to ensure that he is a wise man who follows following: reverent attention to business, and sincerity; economy in expenditure, and love for men; and the employment of the people at the proper seasons as Confucius wanted his ideal ruler to be. Xi Jinping may strive to be the polar star Confucius talks about having exercised government by means of his virtue (Analects: Book 2).

While China may be blamed by other countries as having contempt for human rights, Chinese culture gives regards to virtue and shame where leading by laws and seeking uniformity will yield in people with no sense of shame whereas leading by virtue results in good (Analects: Book 2). Ruling should be done by advancing the upright and setting aside the crooked (Analects: Book 2). This can be compared to the anti-corruption campaign that Xi Jinping has started although complaints that it is to purge his opponents also abound.

The Analects also has sayings that can be compared with the reciprocity in international relations. Consider “What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to men” (Analects: Book 5). This shows the awareness of China in international relations where it will not do harm to others and a warning that others should behave likewise with it.

The Belt and Road Initiative that China advocates is for all countries and not just for itself can be seen in line with what Confucius had advised: “Have no friends not equal to yourself” (Analects: Book 1). Chinese policy is to make others as developed as it is and it will become. After BRI, all will be equal in status, in terms of development.

When we see the speeches of President Xi Jinping, when he says how China should “discard the dross and select the essential; eliminate the false and retain the true, and adopt traditional Chinese culture and foreign things through scientific review of both” and compare what is used by China at present, we can see that Confucius is important to China. It is chosen to be the true story of China and is used in making China’s voice heard (p. 175). Xi Jinping sees traditional Chinese culture as “a great strength of the Chinese nation and its most profound cultural soft power” (p. 174) In order to make famous the culture of China, Xi suggests firstly that China disseminate the most fundamental Chinese culture in a popular way to attract more people to participate in it. This can be seen in the increased involvement of Chinese investors in Hollywood, one of the chief disseminators of American soft power, at least until Chinese language and Chinese film industry can stand on its own. Secondly, Xi suggests to popularize Chinese cultural spirits across countries. Thirdly, he suggests China tell the world about the new achievements featuring both excellent tradition and modern spirit (p. 179). In order to achieve these, he wants China to bring back the relics sleeping in closed palaces (that can be seen in reference to the aftermath of Cultural Revolution where ancient statues as well as other relics were destroyed. The other suggestion Xi puts forth, of improved cultural communications including international speech to tell the true story of China (p. 180).

Because Xi understands that cultural soft power depends on “the vitality, cohesion and appeal of the core values of a nation” (p. 181) and how it is a major aspect of a nation’s governing system and capability, we can see the connection between domestic policies and foreign policy. Even for the core socialist values that Xi and the Chinese Communist Party strives for, he seeks traditional Chinese culture as the base (p. 181) enabling the past to serve the present.

Considering the selection of cultural norms in Chinese foreign policy, it is in line with Xi's thought of discarding the dross and keeping the essential (p. 182). Emphasizing its own culture also gives China an edge in a time of globalization where culture gets eroded owing to the flow of people, idea, commerce, technology, and information. While stopping this

Xi Jinping respects all cultures profoundly and is evident in a number of speeches he gives, including where because of its uniqueness in culture, history and basic conditions, it chooses a development path featuring its own characteristics.

And however much Xi Jinping may undermine culture, saying how "Keeping up with the times, one cannot live in the 21st century while thinking in the old fashion, lingering in the age of colonial expansion or with the zero-sum mentality of the Cold War" (p. 299), but this is not to discount the role of Confucianism or culture as in the same speech he cites an ancient poem and a popular saying.

Further, when Xi Jinping talks about making people better understand present-day China comprehensively and objectively through publicity and theoretical work, it is Confucian Centres and not those publicizing Mao Zedong and other generations of Chinese leadership that had given the "Chinese" in the Marxism with Chinese Characteristics he talks about during study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee. And in what he calls telling "the true story of our country and making our voice heard", Confucius has been brought forth. One wonders whether when this has happened, and when comparing his speech where he talks how China should "discard the dross and select the essential; eliminate the false and retain the true" (2018, p. 174) where Confucianism stands.

Culture is brought as an issue uniting domestic front as well. It is only when morality is practiced by virtue and ethical behavior is realized that Chinese Dream of national renewal will be realized.

Under Soft Power

It is therefore that Xi Jinping has highlighted what China needs to do to project its soft power “disseminate the most fundamental Chinese culture in a popular way to attract more people to participate in it...popularize [Chinese] cultural spirits across countries as well as across time and space, with contemporary values and the eternal charm of Chinese culture” (2018, p. 179). Looking at the way China is establishing Confucius Institutes all over the world, one can surmise which aspect of Chinese culture he is focusing on. These Institutes are another measure to teach foreign people the lingua franca of China.

On how culture is used to unite domestically: “We should also enhance education in patriotism, collectivism and socialism with the help of all possible means, such as classroom teaching, theoretical research, historical study” thereby helping people “build up and persist in a correct concept of history, national viewpoint, state outlook and cultural perspective” (Jinping, 2018, p. 180).

Confucius Institutes, established in foreign countries in 2004, are the prime disseminators of the Chinese culture all over the world. This can be seen in the places the Institute operate in. These institutes are based on the objectives of

[E]nhancing understanding of the Chinese language and culture by these peoples ... strengthening educational and cultural exchange and cooperation between China and other countries ... deepening friendly relationships with other nations ... promoting the development of multi-culturalism, and to construct a harmonious world. (Nanjiang University, 2016)

After all, scholars including Sapir Whorf and Herder point out, language helps shape thought and from corollary, shapes culture as well. Consider Herder, who is quoted by Hersch as

linking culture and language: the best culture of a people . . . thrives only by means of the nation's inherited and inheritable dialect"; because "in [a people's] speech resides its whole thought-domain, its tradition, history, religion, and basis of life, all its heart and soul" (p. 29).

Although this is not to say the Institutes operate without any blemish; these are charged of being a tool of propaganda. Being a government funded institute that operates not independently but as a part of the universities they are attached with, Confucius Institutes (CI) attract blames. With the council of CI recommended by the education administrative agency of the Chinese State Council and approved by the State Council, it supports the accusation of the independence of the organization.

Confucius Institutes that China wants to model after Alliance Francoise, Goethe Institute and British Council also are not able to make their objectives of bridging the cultural and more importantly, language gap. However, unlike its foreign counterparts, Confucius Institutes, that are run in primary and secondary schools, as well as universities abroad have come under flak for being complicit in spreading the propaganda, of undermining the norms of the country where they are established. These include being accused of facilitating or blocking issues the Chinese government deems appropriate, as well as pressuring the university they are associated with to block what the government deems inappropriate like Xinjiang, Tibet, Taiwan, Falun Gong, Occupy Central, the Nobel Peace Prize, the spectacular private wealth of leaders' families, including complaining about the University hosting figures like Dalai Lama, as well as monitoring Chinese academics abroad. (Sahlins, 2014, p. n/a) Non-disclosure clauses that it imposes make for another hurdle that adds to the complaints host countries make.

American Association of University Professors accuses that most agreements establishing Confucius Institutes feature nondisclosure clauses and unacceptable concessions

to the political aims and practices of the government of China. They also point how “Confucius Institutes function as an arm of the Chinese state and are allowed to ignore academic freedom” (AAUP, 2014) further noting how their academic activities are under the supervision of Hanban, a Chinese state agency which is chaired by a member of the Politburo and the vice-premier of the People’s Republic of China. These sorts of accusation do not help in advancing Chinese soft power across the world, something China is working on to cast a positive image as the next superpower.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion

Culture is one of the driving forces of international relations; from the way foreign policies are formulated by the authorities to the way international developments are perceived, its role can be observed. The people who make the foreign policy are ingrained in the norms they grow up in, and in turn culture affects the way interactions are made among nations. With countries sharing some notions of culture, this interaction is easy to make; after all, they know what makes good etiquette and what goes for a bad one. And as relations are kept intact with constant interactions, cultural norms should be on top of the list of everyone coming in contact with the other.

Despite its rapid development, China is not a superpower yet; scholars do not think it is a superpower yet, neither does China itself think of being a superpower. What it is doing with its emphasis on cultural elements is that it is building up an image of a benevolent country. And it is doing so with appropriate historical and cultural elements that are brought up in policies and speeches. From not trying to becoming a hegemon to trying to make a win-win proposal, China is building up its soft power steadily. And it has to contend with the opposition of its policies that are portrayed negatively, including issues ranging from its observance of international law to the respect for human rights. With the help of cultural elements, not only is China attempting to make its mark in international arena, its domestic issues are also being addressed simultaneously.

Foreign policy is multilevel process with factors ranging from individual leaders to the international system. Analyzing every part requires a study that can hardly be in a single

study; rather, these require aggregation of different studies. This thesis studies the impact of culture in the foreign policy of China, and that too has been narrowed down to Confucianism.

China is building up its soft power so that in the future when it will be a major power, its culture is understood by most people. And with the increasing people to people interaction, helped shape by breaking down the language barrier via the Confucius Institutes, the existing hard power can be used wisely so that the result is a smart power that befits a major power. Until then, it has to resist oppositions, hear complaints about the shortcomings including the way it rules inside the country. Again, this accusation is denied using the concept of Chinese characteristic that the leaders are used to speak about.

China wants to assure that with its cultural values and norms, the world will not see another Thucydides Trap where a rising power (China) and a power in the wane (the US) confront each other as they rise and fall. China wants the transition of power to be as smooth as it can, failing the grim prediction of realist thinkers. By talking about cooperation with other countries, especially the US, China aims to quash the tension on whether there will be another Thucydides Trap wherein a rising power rivals a ruling power. It also wants to assure that there is no such a thing as China Threat, which China was not and will not act in causing harm to other countries.

That Confucius is important can be seen in the number of Confucius Institutes that China has started all over the world. It can be seen as the vehicle through which culture of China is dissipated to the world, through the means of language as the primary tool.

And the importance of Confucius can also be observed when his quotes are cited by scholars and politicians – Chinese and foreigners alike. The point of harmonious society can be read in the lines of The Analects that contains the teachings of Confucius collected by his

disciples. Graham Allison (2017, p. 82) also writes about the prime value derived from Confucius, about knowing one's place.

China wants to assure the world that it does not seek world domination however much it may talk about its history, a point that can be seen being reiterated by Chinese leaders, including one in *The Governance of China* that has collection of speech delivered by Xi Jinping in various occasions, inside as well as outside China. Xi Jinping's speeches and thoughts are in line with his predecessors Jiang Zemin whose societal goals of "stability and harmony" as well as "ruling by virtue" in 2002 and Hu Jintao whose promotion of a "harmonious society", concepts of Confucianism are inherent in Chinese policies.

Whatever doom and gloom scenario maybe painted by realists, including by Mearsheimer whose propositions contain states with "malign intentions", where states tend to fear each other, where states strive to become mightier than its rival, culture provides some assurance as to how peace can be obtained.

Further research can be made looking at the way political values reflect on soft power of a country. Also, a comparative analysis can be made on the way culture was reflected prior to China becoming the People's Republic.

Also, the research makes study of elements like soft power, Confucianism, constructivism in relation with culture. Further study can be done focusing on one element at a time that can even better shed light on working of each item. In addition, comparison of countries of the East Asian Region can be done in studying the influence of Confucius there.

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