

The Clash of Global and Regional Norms and Their Implications to East Asia

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I. Introduction

Francis Fukuyama, in his 1989 writing, once said that since the end of the Cold War, the world has seen the triumph of liberalism.¹⁾ The end of the Cold War means a liberal order led by only one superpower, the United States. It also represents the spread of liberal ideas of free market and democracy both to already democratic and non democratic states. However, this also implies the potential clash between these liberal ideas and that of non democratic nations. In particular, the end of the Cold War becomes more and more controversial with the continuous rapid rise of one state—China—and what it implies for the current liberal order.

The rise of China is especially contentious to international politics. It is one of the few remaining non democratic regimes that contradict with the current liberal order. Typical realist scholars argue that China's rise will be dangerous to the stability of the world order, as any rising state poses a potential challenge to contemporary international relations. From a liberal perspective, China's continuous engagement and integration into the world economy will promote more cooperation and stability. However, for democratic peace theorists, China's non democratic regime is particularly dangerous as non democracies are more likely to be involved in conflict. This paper argues that from a normative perspective, China's ascendance should be seen within the historical context of the East Asian region. Due to China's size,²⁾ it was possible to create a regional order in East Asia that had less conflict for almost 500 years up until the 19th century. And this historical regional order has implications to the contemporary East Asian regional order

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1) Fukuyama, Francis, "The End of History," *National Interest*, 1989, pp. 3-18.

2) Womack, Brantly, "How Size Matters: The United States, China and Asymmetry," *Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition* Ed. Guoli Liu, Aldine de Gruyter: New York, 2004, pp. 73-99.

especially with the re rising of China. In order to illustrate my argument, the next section will discuss norms from a western and East Asian perspective. Based on this discussion, it will find implications to contemporary international relations, particularly during the periods of George Bush II and Hu Jintao governments. Bush II (2000 2008) and Hu's (2002 2012) leadership relatively started at the same period and both had or in the case of the latter, will finish two terms in office. Since the post Cold War, the US stood to be the only hegemonic power to lead the current order. The US has since then in a unilateral tried to expand liberal ideas of democracy to other non democratic states particularly during the Bush II period. China, since its opening up and the collapse of the Cold War, has economically continued to develop, and many western scholars argue the "China threat" due to its authoritarian government. On the one hand, the US during the Bush II administration has rekindled old and new enemies under the guidance of exporting democracy. On the other hand, China under Hu Jintao's leadership seemingly has seen less conflict and instead tried to foster more cooperation within the region. It is quite paradoxical the different outcomes that the two leaderships have brought about. Thus, it is time to review the significance of norms to better understand the two different political consequences.

II. How Norms Matter

The simplest definition of norms is that it is a "rule of behavior."³⁾ Whether we talk about relations among social groups or state to state relations, this definition can apply. In international norms, according to Axelrod, he defined norms as in any "given social setting, norm exists to the extent that individuals usually act in a certain way and are often punished when seen not to be acting in this way."⁴⁾ Florini elaborated the definition of norms to include "how states determine their interests, and the role of social construction in shaping behavior... the sense of "oughtness" that is analytically distinct... that sense of obligation that we need a term"⁵⁾; thus, Florini defined norms as

3) Bendor, Jonathan and Piotr Swistak, "The Evolution of Norms," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 106, No. 6, 2001, pp. 1493 - 1545.

4) Axelrod, Robert, "An Evolutionary Approach to Norms," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 80, No. 4, 1986, pp. 1095-1111.

5) Florini, Ann, "The Evolution of International Norms," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 3,

“standards of behavior.”⁶⁾ For this paper, the same definition of norms will be used.

The study of norms in international relations literature has of late gained more significance. Norms do matter but to what extent do norms such as the role of interests, ideas and identity affect state behavior has been an ongoing debate. The dominant discourses in international relations literature have basically discounted the role of norms on state behavior, and instead focused on the states’ rational self interest and material gains. For realism, norms less matter to explain the behavior of states in an anarchic world; only material power and the distribution of power dictates state behavior to maximize security. Furthermore, the only way for states to comply with norms is if it is within the state’s interests.⁷⁾ For neoliberal scholars, states are also assumed to be working as rational, self interested actors whose only concern are economic and material gains, but norms, regimes and institutions work to constrain the behavior of states by facilitating compliance via monitoring and sanctions.⁸⁾ Neoliberals do acknowledge the role of norms but to a limited extent: “they facilitate cooperation among self interested actors, constrain the behavior of states (agents), but do not affect their identities/interests.”⁹⁾

In response to the predominant realist and neoliberalist paradigms, constructivism as a socially constructed approach asserts that norms do indeed matter and look at norms as critical in the formation of states’ national interests, the shaping of states’ identity and how they affect the behavior of states¹⁰⁾ which cannot be solely explained by conceptions of power and material gains. These “interests and preferences emerge from social construction and states must learn what they want.”¹¹⁾ States do adopt expected appropriate behavior from other “states, international organizations and NGOs.”¹²⁾

While realist and neoliberals focused on the material aspects of norms, each theory possess strong causal mechanisms in that power distribution and material gains respectively matter to make norms work. The logic behind much of the realist argument

Special Issue: Evolutionary Paradigms in the Social Sciences, 1996, pp. 363-389.

6) Ibid: p. 364.

7) Shannon, Vaughn P., “Norms Are What States Make of Them: The Political Psychology of Norm Violation,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2000, pp. 293-316.

8) Ibid: p. 296.

9) Checkel, Jeffrey T., “Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 1999, pp. 83-114.

10) Ibid: p. 366.

11) Florini, A., “The Evolution of International Norms,” p. 367.

12) Shannon, V., “Norms Are What States Make of Them: The Political Psychology of Norm Violation,” p. 297.

is that they are historically based on European western experience, when much of the 19th and middle of the 20th century was characterized by balance of power and war; and for neoliberalism, much of the characteristic of what is now the European Union and the burgeoning of regimes and institutions that have flourished and embedded under American hegemony have been at their empirical core. For constructivism, that norms do matter but how norms matter and what makes it matter is still far from having a clear causal mechanism, whether the independent variable is culture, identity, or interests. Different norms, however, have worked across different regions and around the world and have produced different outcomes. Particularly, norms between the east and the west have worked differently in affecting state behavior. The next section will provide a brief review of Western and East Asian norms literature and how they work in to shape international relations.

III. Democracy as a Global Norm

In the Post Cold War, the spread of liberal ideas primarily democracy has been at the core of the US leadership. Thus, this section will focus on the democratic peace theory. It will review some of its fundamental assumptions based on some of its leading proponents' arguments while at the same time, posing some of its critiques.

Democracy as a liberal idea is a legacy of President Woodrow Wilson with his pronouncement on the need "to make the world safe for democracy" after he renounced Germany's autocracy and declared war on it in 1917.¹³⁾ Proponents of the democratic peace theory have utterly argued that democracies rarely go to war on one another¹⁴⁾; conversely, democracies will sometimes go to war with illiberal states.¹⁵⁾ This has become a pillar of American foreign policy as was championed by President Clinton in that "ultimately the best strategy to insure our security and to build a durable peace is to

13) "Making the World "Safe for Democracy": Woodrow Wilson Asks for War," History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web. Retrieved March 3, 2009 from <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4943/>.

14) Owen, John M., "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," International Security, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1994, pp. 87 - 125. Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," in Foreign Affairs Agenda: The New Shape of World Politics (revised edition), Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., 1999, pp. 39 - 66.

15) See Immanuel Kant in Doyle, M., "Liberalism and World Politics," p. 46; Owen, J., "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," p. 88.

support the advance of democracy elsewhere.”¹⁶⁾ That this line of thinking in foreign relations continues to be espoused by the most advanced democracy—the United States, a nation with unparalleled military strength and political influence¹⁷⁾—the means to spread the norms and values of freedom, human rights and democracy thus becomes a point of contention. In domestic politics, there is probably no better political regime than a nation whose people enjoys political and economic freedom and is ensured the protection of their basic rights to achieve domestic stability. But in international relations, whether the same logic can be applied with state to state relations, whether international order can be achieved through the imposition of one’s democratic institution to another state perceived to be non democratic is highly questionable.

In Doyle’s review of “three theoretical traditions of liberalism” of Schumpeter, Machiavelli and Kant, for instance, he finds in agreement with Kant that liberal states while indeed peaceful are sometimes prone to go to war based on liberal reasons for aggression.¹⁸⁾ Schweller posed the similar question as to whether democracies are more pacific.¹⁹⁾ According to his arguments, when there is a power shift involved in world politics, (1) when both the declining and challenger states are democratic states, accommodation will result; (2) when the declining leader is a non democratic state, preventive war is an exclusive solution against rising opponents; and, (3) when a declining democratic leader is faced by a rising non democratic challenger, defensive alliances will be sought. His implications suggest a similar trend from Kant, in that due to the increase in the number of democratic states, regardless of the major power shifts under way, there is the possibility for peaceful change. This peaceful change is possible because of the “current ascendancy of liberal democratic values throughout the world”²⁰⁾ after the advent of the Post Cold War, pertaining to the decline of major European powers and the rise of American hegemony.

Ikenberry’s main puzzle asks why there is a persistent cooperative and stable relations among the most advanced democracies and why the most advanced democracy, the US, would agree to limit its power.²¹⁾ According to his argument, the powerful state, in order

16) Owen, J., “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,” p. 87.

17) See the National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2002.

18) Kant in Doyle, M., “Liberalism and World Politics,” p. 40.

19) Schweller, Randall L., “Domestic Structure and Preventive War: Are Democracies More Pacific?” *World Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 1992, p. 238.

20) *Ibid*: p. 268.

21) Ikenberry, G. John, “Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Persistence of American Postwar

to have the cooperation of the weaker states, needs to create incentives for compliance that is acceptable and favorable to them. The United States was able to accomplish this by engaging in “strategic restraint—to reassure weaker states that it would not abandon or dominate them.”²²⁾ There was a bargaining to create this order: that the United States agrees to place limits on the exercise of its power and in return, secondary states will participate cooperatively in the postwar order. This reassured the weaker states that they will not be dominated or abandoned by the hegemonic state, which reduces the tendency to balance.

Owen’s argument so far seems to be the most provocative when it comes to democratic peace literature. From his article on *How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace*, his argument highlights that liberal ideas affect the foreign policies of democracies.²³⁾ From his book *Liberal Peace, Liberal War: American Politics and International Security*, he posits the role of ideas in its presence and strength before outcomes rather than demonstrate its causal force through outcomes.²⁴⁾ Liberal ideas prompt liberals to perceive the world through a liberal lens, which affect their course of action. Liberal ideology, according to his argument, makes a distinguishing mark between regime types—whether a state is a liberal democracy or not. States make an assessment whether a regime is a democracy or not. If a state accepts that the foreign state is a liberal democracy, they adamantly oppose war against that state. Owen’s contribution to western norms studies has greatly improved the loopholes or exceptions that previous democratic peace arguments could not explain. But, it has also weakened the parsimoniousness of the causal structure of the theory. By adding the variable of perception, the concept of liberal democracy contrary to Owen’s argument becomes subjective and thus becomes weaker. His argument on democratic peace liberalism brings crucial foreign policy implications as well to the current debate on China’s emergence.

To synthesize, DPT as a norm has been the dominant idea since the end of the Cold War. There was simply no challenge to the DPT since the Cold War’s collapse, and thus, it has gained momentum. However, much of the ideas of the DPT are based on western historical experience; it cannot fully account as to how in other regions particularly in

Order,” *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1998–1999, p. 45.

22) *Ibid.*: p. 45.

23) Owen, J., “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,” p. 93.

24) Owen, John, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War: American Politics and International Security*, Cornell University Press: New York, 1997.

East Asia, while different countries have different political regimes, there seem to exist relatively peace and stability before the prior to the early 20th century and in the Post Cold War Era. Thus, the dynamism of the East Asian region provides promising scholars the opportunity for an alternative theory.

IV. Continuity of East Asian Norms

The role of culture to explain East Asian regional politics has not much gained wide acceptance in the field of international relations, particularly because the discourse on international relations has remained an “American church” despite problems of built in bias and obsession with theorization.²⁵⁾ Nevertheless, the different regional order in East Asia has prompted a growing number of scholars to find an alternative approach to dominant theories in international relations. Much of the cultural explanations have used historical analysis to explain that China has a persistent foreign policy. For instance, China’s world view, the tributary system, has been used as cases and its implications to current regional politics. This section will briefly discuss some of these attempts.

David Kang’s hierarchy stability theory seems to be by far the closest of “an alternative, albeit more realist, approach to understanding the causal connection between the cultural variable and China’s actual policies.”²⁶⁾ His theory asserts that the regional relations in East Asia have been historically hierarchic, which emphasizes formal hierarchy and informal equality.²⁷⁾ This East Asian order was more peaceful and stable and was led by China. Kang has given dominant western international relations particularly realist assumptions a reason to turn their heads as he challenged the totality of Western scholars’ pessimistic predictions of an Asia that is ripe for rivalry in the Post

Cold War era. Accordingly, these pessimistic predictions stem from the growing concerns of a rising China, given its rapid economic growth and most plausibly posed to become a great power once more. When this happens, will it challenge the existing status quo? Will the surrounding states balance a rising China or instead bandwagon? Furthermore,

25) Bin, Yu, “China’s Harmonious World: Beyond Cultural Interpretations,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2008, p. 122.

26) *Ibid*: p. 122.

27) Kang, David C., “Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytic Frameworks,” *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 2003/04, p. 67.

will a global and East Asian regional order clearly dominated by the United States allow a rising China to return to its original place within the hierarchical order? From a historical analysis, Kang contends that due to Asia's different historical and cultural traditions, geographic and political realities, and different historical paths taken as Asian nations have become incorporated in the larger system, so it should not be surprising that Asian nations function differently with regard to their foreign relations compared to their Westphalian counterpart.

Some early western scholars on China's foreign policy during Mao period assert that China's long historical tradition has as much influence in its contemporary foreign policy. They claim this line of thinking despite Mao's revolutionist drive to rid China of "any surviving tradition."²⁸⁾ While written during different time periods of Mao's reign, all these scholars claim that there is the persistent role of tradition in China's foreign policy. I will briefly discuss in an ascending periodical order these scholars' claims and find some implications in the contemporary Chinese foreign policy.

One of the earlier writers, Mark Mancall, during the early periods of Communist China, put forward the question why it is that there is a "failure of communications between China and both the Soviet Union and the United States stands in sharp contrast to the successful communication between the United States and the Soviet Union."²⁹⁾ That this puzzle of miscommunication between China and Soviet Union while being ideologically of the same pod, and even so with the United States, according to Mancall, stem from the different policy makers' assumptions which affect foreign policy. According to him, China's assumptions are rooted in history, China's traditional hierarchical world order, and not egalitarian. Based on his analysis, the Western egalitarianism which the Soviet Union recognized and recognition of American power totally conflicts with Chinese leaders' traditional assumptions. These basic differing assumptions gave communications a twist between the three states.

Fairbank and Cranmer Byng wrote their articles during the height of Mao's Cultural Revolution. Fairbank claims the persistence of tradition in China's foreign policy, in which he analyzed what he called three of China's major traditions: "the strategic primacy of Inner Asia, the disesteem of sea power, the doctrine of China's superiority,

28) Fairbank, John K., "China's Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective," *Foreign Affairs*, No. 449, 1968/1969, p. 449.

29) Mancall, Mark, "The Persistence of Tradition in Chinese Foreign Policy," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 349, *Communist China and the Soviet Bloc*, 1963, p. 15.

and then asks what remains of these traditions today.”³⁰⁾ He analyzes it in the context of early rulers especially the Ming Dynasty and compares it with Mao period with regard to his foreign policy. According to his conclusion, China’s feeling of superiority still remains, complicated by 19th century humiliation and the stage of revolutionary leadership. Cranmer Byng, on the other hand, analyzed the persistence of China’s world order based on “a universally valid system of beliefs which were ethically right and out to be followed by all people: that China had a special role in the world as the guardian of these values, and that, although they could not be imposed on other peoples, China must herself live up to them and set an example by which others could learn how to follow the right path.”³¹⁾ He traces it in the context of the changing political elites since the beginning of Western incursions—from the early years of the Chinese republic, from Sun Yat Sen to Chiang Kai shek to Mao and his Cultural Revolution. The early years of the republic were analyzed in the context of Western imperialism. During Mao’s period, one important component of his world view is the interaction between the conception of China’s uniqueness as the exemplar of true Marxist Leninism and the universality of China’s revolutionary role. This “mission was based on the possibility of a world revolution in which China’s example and ideological “rightness” would be crucial.”³²⁾

In summary, there is a growing literature on the role of culture and its link to the East Asian order. Much of the growing discourse on cultural variables to explain East Asian politics, particularly the role of China in the region, has asserted that China has a persistent tradition that has been more of a continuity than a discontinuity regardless of the transition in the Chinese political regime, from the dynasties to current communism to its foreign behavior in the contemporary order. China, despite its size, military and economic prowess during ancient period, was a benevolent empire, and was able to establish peaceful relations with its neighbors. Its implications in the current world order suggest that with the emergence China, a similar pattern might occur, not in terms of China’s centrality and deference of surrounding neighbors based on the ancient discourse of the tributary system, but in terms of China’s behavior of a pacific emergence and respect for the autonomy of neighboring countries. Still, as in the usual critique of cultural studies, there is a lack of causal structure to strengthen the assertion of cultural

30) Fairbank, J., “China’s Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective,” p. 451.

31) Cranmer Byng, John, “The Chinese View of Their Place in the World: An Historical Perspective,” *The China Quarterly*, No. 53, 1973, pp. 67–68.

32) *Ibid*: p. 72.

variables, which needs further reassessment.

V. When East Meets West and Its Implications to Contemporary Period

The middle of the 19th century up to the first half of the 20th century was indeed characterized by the interplay of 'power politics to expand unilateral universalism of the west' under the guise of the Westphalian norms of sovereignty. When Europe was at the height of its colonial power and material conquest, weaker states had no choice but to bow to the European's universal ways. Thus, when East meets West for the first time, when the clash of norms collided, the several centuries old established East Asian institutions and norms based on the tributary system collapsed. This implies that the domestic imposition in the East Asian region of western universal norms cannot work since it is based solely on western experience. Stephen Krasner dubbed this as organized hypocrisy, when the logic of consequences, a sovereign nation's desire to maximize its own material interests, triumphed over the logic of appropriateness, the norms, rules and roles that guide state behavior.³³⁾ In many cases, Krasner explains that organized hypocrisy is more consistent within the international system than in domestic politics as there is no world government that can constrain the behavior of states. The starting period of colonization in East Asia forced China to sign international agreements; Japan's incorporation into western norms; and the loss of South Korea's autonomy.

In the contemporary period, with democracy and human rights as the universal western norms, early 20th century seems to be repeating itself as norms of Westphalian tended to be ignored. Logic of consequences seems to once more triumph over logic of appropriateness, as US national and material interest under the guise of the spread of liberal values through unilateral expansion in other deemed illiberal states more often promote instability both in domestic and regional situations. This seriously puts into question the American leadership, for this kind of unilateral strategy can once more let loose forces of history, be it cultural or religious identities, that will continue to challenge its dominance. And with the revival of East Asian economic transformation and the

33) Krasner, Stephen D., "Organized Hypocrisy in Nineteenth Century East Asia," *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, Vol. 1, 2001, pp. 173-197.

seemingly resembling East Asian regional order as China continues to rise, the same question of whether democracy and human rights can be imposed begs some serious contention. The universalism of western norms, be it sovereignty or democracy and human rights, cannot be directly imposed on a region where there exists a different norm. In analyzing how the two different of east and west matter, the next section will discuss and compare in brief the leadership of Bush II and Hu Jintao's and will find implications.

George Bush II administration with universal western norms: After the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, the Bush administration has made it its ultimate foreign policy goal to rid the world of tyrants and terrorists and make the world safe for democracies.³⁴⁾ Known later as the Bush doctrine, it showed with strong conviction when on March 20, 2003, the United States and some of its allies, even without the United Nations Security Council support and with massive protestations in different parts of the world, invaded a state in the Middle East - Iraq. It did with an overwhelming American support to take military action to overthrowing the tyrannical leadership of Saddam Hussein. The world could only watch as the might of American stronghold through its military power dictated its entry into Iraq and consequently toppled Saddam Hussein's government believed to have been in possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and cooperation with terrorists. While to date, it has never really been proven that there existed WMD, the Bush II administration has nevertheless, kept its promise of ridding the world of one tyranny.

Whether Iraq today, as well as other states like Afghanistan which has also followed the same path to democracy with its first democratic elections held in 2004, is better off now than before will very much depend on the commitment of both domestic polity and American support to the daunting task of rebuilding its nation with its transition to a democratic state: it already started with its first nationwide election in January 2005 since Saddam Hussein's overthrow. In fact, "this vision of democracy promotion has been excessively focused on elections, while underemphasizing the more difficult tasks of building an overall culture of open civil society and institutions based on the rule of law."³⁵⁾ A more pressing issue that this paper would like to raise with regard to

34) See the National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2002.

35) Korb, Lawrence and Caroline Wadhams, "A Critique of the Bush Administration's National Security Strategy," [Electronic Version] Policy Analysis Brief, (June 2006), pp. 1-7. The Stanley Foundation: Iowa. Retrieved March 3, 2009 from <http://reports.stanleyfoundation.org>.

American foreign policy is whether the Bush II administration really made the world safe under the auspices of democracy. While many American presidents since the time of President Wilson have advocated the promotion of democracy, according to Korb and Wadhams, “No previous president has made democracy promotion the preeminent goal of foreign policy.”³⁶⁾ This implies that there was a radical shift in Bush II’s foreign policy, in that while both presidents espoused the importance of democracy, Bush II made it his vision to export democracy elsewhere in states not yet a domestic regime, a dangerous foreign policy as it may incite more violent and extremist reactions elsewhere. The argument that liberal democratic states rarely go to war with one another, and conversely, will sometimes go to war with illiberal states have seen a truism in contemporary international relations when the United States invaded Iraq and Afghanistan. But this becomes a very dangerous assumption in foreign policy, for the way to export democracy matters because it relates to great power politics that may cause unstable international relations, especially when it is exported in a unilateral way. And this great power politics concerns one of the most dynamic states in the East Asian region - China.

Hu Jintao’s period with East Asian norms: When current State President Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang Zemin into office on November 15, 2002, China was then the sixth largest economy, and has grown much bigger as it surpassed Germany to become the third world’s largest. Needless to say, while China enjoys an unprecedented economic growth, a position of military power, and growing regional and global influence, the domestic reality facing China is a society of increasing disparity, marked by “widening regional disparities, a tattered social and welfare system, massive unemployment, structural poverty, and rising environmental concerns.”³⁷⁾ With regard external problems, China faces the threat of terrorism and separatist movements.

The internal and external issues mentioned above were the foremost challenges that Hu Jintao had to face as he stepped into office. The mounting social problems also called into question the capacity of the governing CCP to rule, which prompted Hu Jintao to look beyond the heightened emphasis on economic development. Thus, the “Harmonious Society” and its mirror image in foreign relations the “Harmonious World” came into policy rhetoric, a new leadership direction geared towards a peaceful and more sustainable

36) Ibid: p. 3.

37) Zheng, Yongnian and Sow Keat Tok, “‘Harmonious Society’ and ‘Harmonious World’: China’s Policy Discourse Under Hu Jintao.” China Policy Institute, Briefing Series - Issue 26, 2007.

development. Harmonious society/world has since been the political catchphrase in China today, signified by Hu Jintao's aims of leading the government to close the growing rich-poor gap and ease the social and political tensions both domestically and abroad.

As regards to policy implementation of Hu's harmonious society/harmonious world rhetoric, some scholars assert that the Chinese government in some ways seems to contradict its own rhetoric. With regard to Chinese foreign policy, China, however, has thus far tried to improve its relations with its neighbors since the post Cold War through bilateral and multilateral means. China since the normalization of its relations with ASEAN countries has produced dramatic changes in its economic relations. The same analogy can be said of China's northeast neighbors of South Korea and Japan, their relations strengthened by deep economic ties. China's strategic and to a certain extent, economic relations with Russia, India and other central states have also flourished. Still, China's overall foreign relations with its neighbors to the north, east, west and south have been primarily hampered by territorial and border disputes. The next few sections will discuss the South China Sea disputes and border disputes in the East Asian region within the context of Hu's harmonious world.

Flashpoints of potential conflict between China and its Northeast and Southeast Asian neighbors include the long disputed South China Sea chain of islands with claimants including China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei; the border disputes between China and Vietnam; the Diaoyutai (in Chinese) or Senkaku Islands (in Japanese) currently controlled by Japan but also claimed by China; and China's disputes with South Korea over historical interpretation of ancient claims to the kingdom of Koguryo. These issues have been over the years de-escalated in terms of a significant security flashpoint as wider regional developments have overshadowed these concerns and improved relations in the region. Nevertheless, they remain a volatile and fragile spot in the region's diplomacy, for "While an armed conflict seems unlikely in the short term, the situation could change rapidly in the long run, as the de-escalation of the dispute is not derivative of actually progress towards conflict management and resolution."³⁸⁾ The latest example being that of the move of the Philippine government to pass a baseline bill measure which includes the disputed Spratly Island despite diplomatic protestations from the Chinese government and Vietnam.³⁹⁾ There was no major escalation of the

38) Ibid: p. 6.

39) Guinto, Joel and Veronica Uy, "Palace Urges Passage of RP Territory Bill," Philippine Daily Inquirer, March

Spratly issue, however, and the Philippine military brushed off the issue of the possibility of China's use of force in the area.⁴⁰⁾ China also vowed "that Beijing remains committed to dialogue as the key to resolving disputes among claimants to the Spratly islands in the South China Sea."⁴¹⁾ This incident shows how China, a military superpower, did not use its disparity to provoke further conflict with a much smaller state. This incident also illustrates that territorial disagreements will ensue in the area given differing states' interests, and the United States military presence provides for a more neutral ground: a more calculated conflict management and resolution,⁴²⁾ however, is also needed among claimant countries in the long run. China's relations with Japan and South Korea are more complicated. Their relations are further complicated by historical war memories and the presence of North Korea. Nevertheless, China has been a willing participant of trying to ensure cooperative relations within its Northeast Asian neighbors. For instance, it has been a willing participant of the Six Party Talks to find peaceful resolutions to North Korea's nuclear program. While in all of China's territorial disputes, there are still no concrete mechanisms that exist to help solve these territorial issues, the territorial and border disputes has not been a deterrence to what China and its East Asian neighbors have accomplished in terms of deepening regional ties.

Based on the above comparison between the Bush II and Hu Jintao leaderships, norms between the East and the West seem to have functioned differently with regard to relations among states. From a normative approach, the United States hegemonic position since the Cold War has made democracy and freedom an acceptable norm in international relations. However, in East Asia, there is a long historical tradition that helped form and define its norms. Thus, it is time to compare and re evaluate norms studies. Many international relations scholars claim that economically more developed and politically democratic countries are less likely to go to war and more likely to reconcile the configuration of contemporary international system. According to these propositions, America, with the most developed political system and well established institutions,

13. 2008. Retrieved April 11, 2009 from http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/nation/view/20080313124478/UPDATE_Palace_urges_passage_of_RP_territory_bill.

40) Quismundo, Tarra and TJ Burgonio, "Military Sees no Sino Threat in Spratlys," Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 21, 2009. Retrieved April 11, 2009 from

http://globalnation.inquirer.net/news/news/view/20090221190189/Military_sees_no_Sino_threat_in_Spratlys.

41) "China Vows to Use Dialogue on Spratlys," Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 21, 2009. Retrieved April 11, 2009 from http://www.inquirer.net/specialreports/spratlys/view.php?db=1&article=20090321_195340.

42) Ibid.

should be conducive to maintaining peaceful coexistence among states. By far, however, it is worth taking note that America has had much more conflicts in showing its world leadership as a superpower: whereas authoritarian China, under the leadership of Hu Jintao, with one dominant party system and vertically very strict political structure, has been much less controversial with the constitutes in the world stage. Many western scholars argue the China threat because China is an emerging power and a non democratic country. To liberal ideas especially democratic peace theory, their argument is not different from realist because as long as China is non democratic, China will be a threat. But they missed a critical point: their assumption is based on western historical experience and western political viewpoint to the world. So far in contemporary international relations, democracy has brought more instability and conflict in the world. China's authoritarian regime has been more pacific and there is no balance of power in East Asia unlike many realist hypotheses. This brings us to the question of whether 'regimes matter' to make peaceful and stable international relations. The Post Cold War truism of democracy begs to be questioned especially now that the United States, the most advanced democratic state, has made it its doctrine and its vision, "to make the world safe for democracies." It begs the question of the means and ends to achieve democracy when the state in question is non democratic.

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〈동북아연구〉

《Abstract》

The Clash of Global and Regional Norms and Their Implications to East Asia

Elaine Tolentino

The rise of China is especially contentious to international politics. It is one of the few remaining non democratic regimes that contradict with the current liberal order. This paper, however, argues that from a normative perspective, China's ascendance should be seen within the historical context of the East Asian region. This historical regional order has implications to the contemporary East Asian regional order especially with the re rising of China. In order to illustrate my argument, the paper will discuss norms from a western and East Asian perspective. Based on this discussion, it will find implications to contemporary international relations, particularly during the periods of George Bush II (2000 - 2008) and Hu Jintao (2002 - 2012) governments. This paper finds that on the one hand, the US during the Bush II administration has rekindled old and new enemies under the guidance of exporting democracy. On the other hand, China under Hu Jintao's leadership seemingly has seen less conflict and instead tried to foster more cooperation within the region. It is quite paradoxical the different outcomes that the two leaderships have brought about. Thus, it is time to review the significance of norms to better understand the two different political consequences.

Key Words : Norms, Democracy, East Asia, George Bush II, Hu Jintao

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