

# Chinas evolving role in Peacekeeping

Exploring changes in norms, responsibilities and self-presentation

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It is a strange feeling to be in the final phase of this two-year journey. After countless hours of reading, writing, and other work, it is still nice to be able to conclude the journey and look ahead. As I now stand as a graduate with a master's degree in political science, it is exciting to see where the road leads next.

Writing this thesis has been an educational and interesting, but at the same time, challenging process. It has been a rewarding trial that has tested my academic skills. The work has provided me with new knowledge in theory, methodology, and scholarly writing, as well as refining personal qualities such as patience, accuracy, and determination.

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## Abstract

In recent decades, China has emerged as a prominent contributor to United Nations Peacekeeping operations, surpassing other permanent members of the UN Security Council in terms of its involvement. However, China's traditional emphasis on sovereignty and aversion to non-consensual intervention raises questions about its engagement in peacekeeping efforts. This thesis aims to explore the balance between China's commitment to peacekeeping operations and its views on non-intervention, shedding light on the factors that have influenced this dynamic.

By examining Chinese white papers and speeches on peacekeeping from 1995 to 2021, this study employs idea-analysis to delve into the prevailing ideas on power politics in international relations within the Chinese government. The research investigates whether these ideas reflect evolving views on sovereignty and a shift in self-presentation strategy. To achieve this, a comprehensive and applicable theoretical framework is developed, incorporating normative assumptions of sovereignty and conceptualizations of rising powers. The findings indicate significant ideational changes in China over the selected period. Notably, China has transitioned from a skeptical actor regarding key international norms and staunch support of traditional sovereignty, to a more normatively satisfied and flexible participant in peacekeeping efforts. Moreover, China appears increasingly content with its own international position while at the same time advocating for a redistribution of power toward the global south.

I attribute these shifts to China's growing comfort with its own role on the global stage, accompanied by its positioning as a responsible actor and champion of developing countries. The thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of China's evolving stance on peacekeeping and its broader implications for international relations, shedding light on the interplay between normative values, sovereignty, and China's self-portrayal.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the underlying ideas behind Chinese participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations and outline how those ideas have manifested themselves as changes in China's official communication and self-presentation. In line with the general emergence of the China as an international power it has become an increasingly active participant in UN PKOs. Since the 1990s China has supported multiple peacekeeping operations with both personnel, materiel, and money.<sup>1</sup> My interest in both general peacekeeping theory and writing on the rise of China has motivated me to choose this topic. I believe that an understanding of the PRC's policies on peacekeeping can yield valuable insights and may also provide insights into Chinese foreign policy in general.

I have chosen to approach my research question from a qualitative angle. I undertake a qualitative idea-analysis of a variety of official Chinese white papers and speeches on the subject of peacekeeping. A selection of white papers publicized by The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China will serve as a main source of analysis. I will be supplementing this selection with a small selection of speeches on peacekeeping.

As theoretical foundation for my analysis, I have chosen to root my analysis in ideas relating to two dimensions; Westphalianism – Post-Westphalianism, and satisfaction with the international order. With these theoretical lenses as a basis, I have developed a set of idea-dimensions that will serve as guidelines when exploring the degree to which such ideas are present in the sources of analysis.

The field of research on Chinese peacekeeping has recently flourished and a variety of writing exists on the motivations, results and implications of China's increased participation in UNPKOs. I have however found that little previous research has focused on the underlying ideas prevalent in the official Chinese communication in the way I intend to do. I believe that exploring the motivations, justifications, perceptions, and goals of the PRC, as expressed in various official communications is important for understanding the underlying ideological

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<sup>1</sup> Fravel, M. T. (1996).



motivations, beliefs and various (contradictory) values present within the population and leadership of the PRC. A thorough idea analysis is a good tool for exploring these issues.

## 1.2 China as a peacekeeper

In his 2018 new year's speech, president Xi Jinping of The Peoples Republic of China celebrated that his country had made significant advancements in several fields. The economy of the PRC had risen, with GDP rising to a new level of 80 billion yuan, 13 million new job opportunities had been created, more people had been given access to housing, pensions, and medical care, finally more than 10 million rural citizens had been lifted out of poverty. President Xi also spoke optimistically about the multilateral diplomacy of his country. He emphasized the point that China had in 2017 participated in several important diplomatic events and opened the first Belt and Road Forum for international cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

President Xi's 2018 new year's speech had parts that were markedly filled with liberal rhetoric. Referring to the world as «one big family», Xi stated that his aim was to work together with relevant parties across the world to build shared future for mankind and benefit people across the globe. In what can be construed as more realist rhetoric, president Xi did however also make it clear that he felt that China had both a right and an obligation to uphold the authority of the United Nations and extend its role within the organization. He further stated that China should keep pursuing its international interests, push forward the Belt and Road initiative and increase both its contributions and influence in global development while safeguarding the international order.<sup>3</sup>

In the decades following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, the ascension to power of Deng Xiaoping and the subsequent political reforms of the country, China has undergone a political sea change at both the national and international level.<sup>4</sup> The PRC grown into an economic superpower rivalling that of both the United States and of the EU. Some predictions expect the PRC to overtake the US economically by the year 2030.<sup>5</sup> China's role as an economic player is undeniable. It is a major producer of various goods and a major trade partner to essential every developed country. The PRC has become economically interlinked with all

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2 China plus – Chinese Internet Information centre. (2017).

3 China plus – Chinese Internet Information centre. (2017).

4 Jisi, W. (2011).

5 Jennings (2022).

other major powers and has also become a major international investor. In the past three decades China has become an economic superpower. With the continuing expansion of the belt and road initiative and continuing foreign investments their economic power is likely to grow in the coming decades.<sup>6</sup>

China has also emerged as an increasingly important actor in international politics. Since the emergence of the communist party the PRC has undergone several transformations as player on the international stage. The government of China did initially hold a reserved, sceptical, and sometimes even hostile position within the United Nations. The PRC was not granted a seat as a permanent member on the United Nations security council until 1971 (With the Republic of China on Taiwan holding the seat until 1971).<sup>7</sup> During the decades following its ascension to the UN security council the PRC grew to slowly embrace the validity of the organization and its mandate as both a forum for and regulator of international relations. The PRC has long held the view that national sovereignty and self-determination was central to international relations. Influenced by a Maoist-third world viewpoint, the early days of the PRC in the Security council was marked by the idea that the UN represented continuation of a western, imperialist system seeking to impose its will upon underdeveloped countries.<sup>8</sup> This view was reflected by Chinese opposition to both east and west, and by a general indifference to the organization, with the PRC often abstaining from important votes. With the death of Mao and the gradual shift towards the current political system of the PRC, their views on the role of the UN also changed. Throughout the late 1980s up until the mid-2000s the PRC gradually became more engaged as an actor within the UN.<sup>9</sup> The current Chinese leadership has on multiple occasions voiced strong support for the UN as a platform for cooperation. President Xi Jinping has made it clear that the UN plays an important role in managing international relations and in working towards common goals on areas such as socioeconomical development and climate change.<sup>10</sup>

The rise of China as a great power and its increasing participation within the UN and other international organizations is a subject of academic interest within many fields. China's emergence has spawned both scholarly and general political debate on many issues, including

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<sup>6</sup> China trade balance, exports, imports by country 2019 | WITS Data. (n.d.).

<sup>7</sup> Stähle, S. (2008).

<sup>8</sup> Fravel, M. T. (1996).

<sup>9</sup> Barelli, M. (2022).

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. (2021).

Chinese foreign investments, the diplomatic methods of the PRC and the intentions and motivations underlining China's increasing commitments on the international scene.

Some have viewed the increasing international commitments of the PRC, both politically and economically, with sceptical eyes. Critical discussions about the international actions of the Chinese have emphasized how the PRC and its government is taking an aggressive, cynical, and even neo-imperialist position in relation to international organizations and economically underdeveloped countries. From this viewpoint the actions of the PRC serve to increase its own power through economic visualization. Creating client states through economic investments and accompanying debt.<sup>111213</sup>

More optimistic voices in the discussions concerning the rise of China have made the argument that the PRC actions on the international stage, such as increasing foreign investments, development aid and multilateral engagements such as peacekeeping are signs that the country has "matured" politically and is ready to embrace and work within the international establishment.<sup>14</sup> This falls in line with some official statements made by the PRC leadership. China has made efforts to present itself as a "responsible power" internationally. Despite the many changes in the political establishment of China since the death of Mao, some elements of Third-Worldism can still be found in the rhetoric of the Communist party of China. Throughout changes in leadership in the PRC for the past decades, the idea that China is part of the "global south", with its own history as a victim of western globalization has been used by Chinese politicians to und substantiate its commitments in the developing world.<sup>15</sup>

Regardless of this debate, the fact remains that in the past decades the PRC has undergone remarkable political and economic development and emerged as a significant political force on a global scale. It is these developments along with a general interest in the debate surrounding the Rise of China that stands as the main motivation for writing this thesis. China is currently and will likely continue to be a major actor in the international system.

Understanding the (expressed) motivations of the political leadership of the PRC, along with its own perceptions on the role it plays on the international stage is important because it can

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<sup>11</sup> Shepard, W. (2019).

<sup>12</sup> Melber, H. (2008).

<sup>13</sup> Chan, W. Y. & Edel, M.M. (2018).

<sup>14</sup> Hudda, N. (2015).

<sup>15</sup> Kim, S. S. (1974).

provide insights into both the country-specific influences on international developments and potentially also more general trends in rising powers.

### 1.3 Literature review

Earlier writing on the subject of Chinese peacekeeping has primarily focused either on more general research on the motivations of China as a peacekeeper in relations to a greater theoretical framework of why states contribute troops and materiel to such operations in general, or on case studies of specific operations. There is also writing on the field directed at exploring the perceptions and ambitions of the PRC when it comes to its own role as a peacekeeper. A significant part of earlier writing has been qualitative work focused on document analysis of documents made by the PRC, exploring attitudes and stated intentions about UNPKO participation. Quantitative studies have examined the specifics of PRC peacekeeping contributions, primarily aimed at the kinds of troops, materiel and economic support being provided and to what cases Chinese peacekeepers are deployed. There have also been some comparative studies utilizing the theoretical framework of Westphalian and Post-Westphalian attitudes. Studies examining the impact on a “Chinese identity” have focused on Chinese paternalism on the international stage as well as on Chinas aim at presenting itself as a responsible power.

In this thesis I build on these studies. I will be drawing on the theoretical framework of Westphalian and Post-Westphalian approaches to international relations. By tracing Chinese communication on UNPKOs from 1998 until today, I will explore the changes in attitudes and perceptions of the PRC. This will provide insight to whether Chinese communication on the field has been influenced changed in a towards post-Westphalian norms and whether Chinese communication on peacekeeping exhibits a greater degree of distributive and normative satisfaction. More specifically, I tie my research up to a scholarly debate surrounding the nature of Chinas participation in PKOs. Earlier writing has diverged on this point, with differing views on whether the increased participation is a result of a change in Chinese identity or ideas, or more material factors such as changes in peacekeeping operations. I address this debate from a qualitative angle, with the emphasis on the driving ideas as they are expressed in public documents and speeches, and as they can be framed within a framework encompassing both normative and distributive elements of international order. I attempt to

place my writing somewhere between the writing of Stefan Stähle and Courtney J. Fung. Stähle made the argument that China's increased participation is primarily a result of both reforms in the UN peacekeeping missions after 2000 and of China reinterpreting its understanding of UN peacekeeping since the 1990s.<sup>16</sup> Fung on the other hand, turns the focus away from material factors, and towards China's international identities as both a great power and global south state as explanatory factors.<sup>17</sup> In my writings I build on the writings of Stähle and Fung, and position myself somewhere between the two. I accept that both material and ideational factors have been important but make the argument that it is primarily ideas, both changing and consistent, that stand as the underlying (or linking) variable.

## 1.4 Theoretical framework

As a framework for my analysis, I have chosen to look at two sets of typologies of foreign policy from international relations theory. The first set is the Westphalian and post-Westphalian approaches to foreign policy. This is a well-established theoretical framework with much writing behind it.

The theory of a Westphalian global order has its roots in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. It is primarily based on the assumption that the Sovereign state should stand as a primary actor of international relations, that state borders should remain fixed and highlights the importance of non-interference by one state in the internal affairs of another. The vast political changes of the past century have led to a debate in which some argue that we have entered post-Westphalian era in which international organizations are becoming increasingly independent sites of authority. Post-Westphalian foreign policy emphasises the point that state sovereignty is not the ultimate authority, and that states have an obligation to their own citizens.<sup>18</sup>

In a 2015 paper comparing the peacekeeping policies of China and India, Garima Mohan and Olivia Gippner utilized the framework of Westphalian and Post-Westphalian approaches as one of multiple outlines for a theoretical analysis. They outline some primary differences between the two approaches, with specific regard to peacekeeping. In my analysis, I draw upon their framework to conceptualize the two approaches.

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<sup>16</sup> Stähle, S. (2008). China's Shifting Attitude towards United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.

<sup>17</sup> Fung, C. J. (2016). What explains China's deployment to UN peacekeeping operations?

<sup>18</sup> Bellamy, A., Williams, P., & Griffin, S. (2010).

	Westphalian	Post-Westphalian
Sovereign responsibility	Inter-state relations, intra-state policymaking	Inter-state relations, intrastate policymaking, wellbeing of citizens.
Non-interference	Emphasized as an Absolute right of the sovereign.	Dependent on fulfilment of responsibilities to own citizens.
Peace operations (inter-state)	Preferred. Consensual, designed to facilitate peaceful settlement of disputes.	Less frequent. Designed to facilitate peaceful settlement of disputes.
Peace operations (intra-state)	Limited. Deployed only at request of host state.	More frequent. Extensive. Designed to facilitate or impose liberal democratic polities and free-market economies.
Key normative and legal principles	UN Charter (Articles 2(1), 2(4)).	R2P, UN charter (Articles 1, 55)

Table 1. Westphalian and post-Westphalian approaches to peacekeeping<sup>19</sup>

The second part of my theoretical framework draws on literature that is more directly connected to Chinese foreign policy, namely the concept of revisionism in international relations. Among both academic and non-academic debates, the notion that China is a somewhat revisionist power has been common, particularly in US debates surrounding the rise of China.<sup>2021</sup>

Revisionism is a rejection of some or all aspects of the international status quo, including norms, institutions, and hegemonic leadership. Conceptualizations of revisionism can take various forms and may be driven by different factors. It often distinguishes between limited revisionists and more extreme, revolutionary revisionists. In my analysis, I draw on a two-dimensional typology presented by authors Cooley, Nexon and Ward in their 2019 article “Revising order or challenging the balance of military power? An alternative typology of revisionist and status-quo states.”. In this article, a typology is provided for analysing revisionist and status quo orientations, which divides states into four ideal types based on whether they seek to alter the balance of military power, other elements of the international order, or both.

I draw on these theoretical contributions to create my own framework. I argue that when combined and operationalized, this framework will provide me with idea-dimensions that

<sup>19</sup> Mohan G & Gippner, O. (2015).

<sup>20</sup> Christensen, T. J. (2011).

<sup>21</sup> Johnston, A.I. (2003).

provide a way to explore and analyse my selected documents in a manner to provide insights into the central ideas underlying China's participation in peacekeeping. The point here is that where the conceptualization of revisionism and satisfaction will allow me to trace both Chinese understanding of the peacekeeping regime, perceptions of their own position within this regime and their attitudes towards the ruling norms of peacekeeping. The Westphalian dimension serves both as a proxy for contrasting views on international norms, but also to examine any changes in China's views on the importance of state sovereignty. This is primarily to limit the scope of my analysis. I argue that when combined these two theoretical contributions provide a framework that allows me to analyse ideas as they appear in my selected documents and to trace changes over time. I believe that the implications of changes along these dimensions are theoretically interesting for the implications of how they would shape Chinese behaviour.

## 1.5 Research design

The primary point of analysis will be in exploring the motivations, perceptions, and goals behind Chinese participation in peacekeeping operations. Essential to this task is pinpointing the ways in which China publicly communicates its own policies. How China chooses to justify their participation, what means and methods they express a preference for, and what perceptions exist on the current peacekeeping system. This is meant to provide further insights into the already broad literature on the rise of China by examining the way in which China chooses to present its own policies to a global audience. My primary argument in this paper is that China, as a result of increases in their relative position of power within the international system is likely to have undergone a change in perceptions, motivations and ambitions. I argue that the China of today is likely to portray themselves as a different actor than the China of the 30 years ago. Such changes, I argue, can then be traced through changes in which ideas are expressed in official communication.

More specifically I intend to explore whether (and to which degree) China's official communication on the subject express ideas that can be categorised within the ideal types from the theoretical framework I outline in the next chapter and whether this can be understood as reflecting a change in self-perception and self-presentation. Through my analysis I want to explore the prevalence of Westphalian and Post-Westphalian ideas, the

degree of general satisfaction, and whether there has been a change over time. By doing this, I am hoping to provide insights into how China chooses to frame their own policies, and thus also what sort of international actor the Chinese leadership sees it as legitimate to position itself as.

The central question of this thesis is therefore:

1. *"What ideas on power politics in international relations have been prevalent in the Chinese government's turn towards participation in peacekeeping operations?"*

Of course, this is a broad and relatively open question that requires clarification. In order to narrow down the analysis, I will also operate with an underlying assumption expressed in the following sub-questions:

- a. *"Does China's increased participation in international peace-keeping operations constitute a turn towards post-Westphalian norms?"*
- b. *«Have there been any significant changes in Chinas emphasis on traditional sovereignty and non-interference? »*
- c. *«How do potential changes manifest themselves in line with China's rise as a global power?"*

### 1.5.1 Idea-analysis

Idea-analysis in political science assumes that ideas are present and observable within all forms of political communication. Ideas represent beliefs and thought constructions about society and the world in general and can be descriptive or normative.<sup>22</sup>

There are many ways to approach the analysis of ideas in text. I have chosen the approach of idea dimensions. Ideal dimensions function as an analytical tool used to construct and analyse larger sets of ideas as a single unit expressed along a dimension. By using a set of ideas as a

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<sup>22</sup> Lieberman, R. C. (2002).



frame for analysing more large-scale systems of ideas you get a concrete foundation for processing documents. In this way you have a filter with which to process ideas in text, sort them into categories and to remove ideas that are not relevant.<sup>23</sup>

### 1.5.2 Sources of data

For the material that will serve as a source of data for my analysis, I will mainly focus on the series of China defence white papers that were made from 1995 until 2021, specifically the ones directly addressing participation in peacekeeping operations, such as the 1998 and 2020 papers. These papers on Chinese participation in UN peacekeeping operations is of primary importance. The selected documents are extensive, have a chronological distance and contain sections directly addressing peacekeeping. In addition to this, I have also chosen to include a small selection of speeches on peacekeeping. This will allow for a thorough analysis on the subject at hand. In these papers and speeches can be found outlines of the goals, ambitions, and perceptions of the Chinese leadership regarding UN PKOs.

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<sup>23</sup> Chen, D., Pu, X., & Johnston, A. I. (2013).

# Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

## 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I outline the theoretical framework for my thesis. I have chosen a combination of two theoretical frameworks from IR literature. I have chosen theoretical contributions that in some ways represent two different traditions within IR. By using concepts from the world of sovereignty, norms and legitimacy and the world of hegemony, rising powers and power dynamics I attempt to create a framework that can highlight the ideas and idea-dynamics that are present in the selected documents.

The first part of my framework utilizes the proposed distinction between Westphalian and post-Westphalian norms regarding sovereignty in international relations. This is an old and well-established part of IR, concerned primarily with the nature of sovereignty and state vs. non-state actors. I outline the general concepts of this field, alongside some of the debates and challenges associated with it.

For the second part of my framework, I turn to the theoretical literature on hegemony, rising powers and power dynamics in the international system. I outline the concepts of Revisionist and Status quo powers and present a set of ideal types of revisionist and status quo states.

Finally, I outline how I intend to combine these theoretical frameworks and apply them to the subject of my thesis. I will draw upon this framework and establish clearly defined ideal types for my analysis. I can then focus my analysis on exploring the degree to which these ideas are present in documents, speeches, and other sources of text.

## 2.2 Choice of framework

With the primary guiding questions for this analysis as presented in chapter 1, being focused on ideas, the main point of my theoretical framework is to highlight the ruling ideas surrounding Chinas participation in PKOs with a focus on two primary dimensions. As I presented briefly in the first chapter, I tie my analysis back to the writing of Stähle and Fung, and attempt to differentiate myself from them with an emphasis on changing ideas. Whereas Stähle makes the argument that Chinas increased willingness to participate in peacekeeping is primarily rooted in a change in both Chinese experience with and understanding of

peacekeeping, as well as reforms of the peacekeeping system<sup>24</sup>, I argue that much of the change can also be explained by several key factors, primarily rooted in changing ideas that has been brought about as a result of China's increase in power (both perceived and in actuality) relative to other major powers. My writing does in some ways align with the writing of Fung, who makes the argument that identity serves as a key causal variable, and that Chinese (self-perceived) identities as both a Global South state and a Great power makes it importantly different from the other permanent members of the UN security council, being more receptive to social influence from other global south states.<sup>25</sup> I do however differ from Fung in that I focus specifically on importance of ideas, and changes in ideas as the central element of my analysis. I see ideas as essential explanatory variables for understanding China's peacekeeping participation. While China might indeed perceive itself as an actor with a different identity that is more tightly linked to the global south, and therefore also seek to act accordingly, I see this as being driven by their perceptions of not only themselves but also with the international order. As China continues to rise, I therefore expect them to exhibit different attitudes and behaviour, both as a result of a strategic will to gather more global influence, but also as a result of self-imposed roles and identities. I believe that these attitudes, behaviours and changes in them can be explored through an analysis of ideas.

In this way I see my framework as well suited for delving into what I see as the aspects that have been important in driving China towards participation in UNPKOs. I believe that as Chinese power and influence has risen, it is likely that China has become more willing to integrate itself with international institutions and show greater acceptance for ruling norms. With increased distributive satisfaction, I see it as likely that normative satisfaction follows. As Chinese power grows, the willingness to accept breaches in sovereignty is also likely to become greater. So while I see other actors such as identity, material conditions and changes in UNPKOs to be important, I see this as primarily crystalizing in the form of ideas based in the framework I have chosen to apply. These ideas can then be traced in the selected documents through a systematic operationalization and application of this framework.

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<sup>24</sup> Stähle, S. (2008)

<sup>25</sup> Fung, C. J. (2016).

## 2.3 Westphalia and post-Westphalia

The idea of a Westphalian order has its origins in the settlements that followed the end of the European Thirty Years' War, which saw many a coalition of states, with France and Sweden in the forefront, engage with an alliance led by the Habsburg monarchy and Spain (1618 – 1648). The series of settlements and treaties that ended the war have often been seen as representing the beginning of a new form of international order, establishing a series of political rights for the state, the most important being perhaps the idea of political sovereignty. The concept of a Westphalian order is associated with the state holding a variety of powers. These powers included:<sup>26</sup>

1. The monopoly of the means of violence.
2. The monopoly of the right to tax collection.
3. The monopoly of the right to adjudicate (legal) disputes within the state.
4. The exclusive right to representation within international society.

The establishment of these rights (in Europe) can to some degree be said to reflect the emergence of the sovereign state as the most commonly accepted political entity when compared to other entities or forms of political organization, such as supranational religious communities (such as the Catholic church) or nomadic societies.<sup>27</sup>

While the concept of a Westphalian order is an established strand of IR literature, the idea that the treaty of Westphalia was the birth of modern international order is a simplification which can be quite misleading.<sup>28</sup> Some scholars have argued that the theory of Westphalia as an origin point for international relations is a myth with little to no historical backing. The ideas of sovereignty and sovereign rights have been established not because of a single resolution, but rather organically because of several treaties and the flourishing of certain norms. It can be argued that many of the ideas attributed to Westphalia had already been established with the treaty of Augsburg, which had been signed almost a century earlier than the treaty of Westphalia.<sup>29</sup> Regardless of its exact historical origin, what has become known today as the idea of the Westphalian order still holds heuristic value by providing a simplified set of ideas relating to certain aspects of international relations.

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<sup>26</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. & Williams, Paul. & Griffin, Stuart. (2020).

<sup>27</sup> Tilly 1992 – Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990

<sup>28</sup> Osiander, A. (2001).

<sup>29</sup> de Carvalho, Benjamin. (2005).

The idea of a “Westphalian order” is associated with a series of fundamental norms of behaviour in international politics. Primarily, it is known for the notion that the monarch of a realm is not subject to any higher authority, either political or religious. Furthermore, the Westphalian order is based on the idea that no state could interfere in the jurisdiction of a foreign state on political, cultural, or religious grounds. Finally, relating back to the end of the Thirty years’ War and the following decades, the Westphalian order is associated with the development of ideas concerning a “balance of power” in Europe, in which no state should be allowed to establish itself as a hegemonic power on the continent.<sup>30</sup> These norms serve as the foundation for a view on international order in which the nation-state is the central player. State leaders could pursue policies and act according to their own desires as long as their policies did not encroach upon the sovereignty of other states. This is what has been called the Westphalian norms.<sup>31</sup> While the notion that leaders should also be public servants, looking to rule according to the interest of the population at large is not uncommon, nor rejected by these principles, neither are they as emphasized as the principle of complete sovereignty.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the expansion of colonial empires along with increasing international trade created new international dynamics and redefined the relationship between states. Following the two world wars, new states emerged in the ruins of fallen empires and many colonized areas and less powerful states sought to establish their own sovereignty. The establishment of the United Nations and the post-war order also served to strengthen the sovereignty of the state. Weaker states turned to international organizations to protect themselves from being usurped by expansionist powers and sought to protect state sovereignty through international laws.<sup>33</sup>

The defining assumptions of Westphalian norms is state sovereignty. A Westphalian world order is based on the idea that the state stands as the ultimate political actor and that it should be granted protection from outside interference. In their book “*Understanding peacekeeping*”, Alex Bellamy and Paul Williams argue that the cornerstone of the modern Westphalian order was enshrined in article 2 of the charter of the United Nations, pointing particularly to article 2(4) and 2(7).<sup>34</sup> These two articles are written as such:

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<sup>30</sup> Jackson, Robert. (2000).

<sup>31</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. & Williams, Paul. & Griffin, Stuart. (2020).

<sup>32</sup> Kayaoglu, T. (2010).

<sup>33</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. & Williams, Paul. & Griffin, Stuart. (2020).

<sup>34</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. & Williams, Paul. & Griffin, Stuart. (2020).

**2.4:** *All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.*

**2.7:** *Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.*<sup>35</sup>

This highlights the importance state sovereignty and non-intervention plays in a Westphalian world, especially as it relates to peacekeeping. Within the framework of the Westphalian order peacekeeping requires the full consent of all states involved.<sup>36</sup>

Modern peace operations were developed within this order. Peacekeeping originally served not only to resolve interstate conflicts peacefully but also to help facilitate decolonization and to help weaker states deal with uprisings and maintain peace and control within their territory. Peace operations followed the Westphalian notion of sovereignty and were initially only deployed with the consent of a host state.<sup>3738</sup>

### 2.3.1 Post-westphalian norms

An opposing set of norms, which have also influenced the behaviour of many states, have been referred to as post-Westphalian. A post-Westphalian order is characterized by a move away from sovereign states to a system in which structures of authority are far more internationalized and in which actors other than states can have significant impact.<sup>39</sup> In a post-Westphalian world it is “peoples” rather than states that are the primary recipients of rights and protection. As a result of this, sovereign states in a post-Westphalian world are responsible towards its people and the notion of non-interference can come at odds with this notion of responsibility. While both Westphalian and post-Westphalian norms hold shared views on issue of sovereignty, the post-Westphalian outlook is that sovereignty also implies

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<sup>35</sup> United Nations (1945).

<sup>36</sup> Mohan G & Gippner, O. (2015).

<sup>37</sup> Bellamy, Alex J. & Williams, Paul. & Griffin, Stuart. (2020).

<sup>38</sup> Mohan G & Gippner, O. (2015).

<sup>39</sup> Kreuder-Sonnen, C., & Zangl, B. (2015).

sovereign responsibility.<sup>40</sup> Post-Westphalians largely base their worldview in the importance of good and legitimate governance, as well as respect for human rights. They emphasize the importance of international politics as a big picture in which the state is only one of many actors and in which the state is primarily responsible for ensuring that the universal rights of all peoples are respected.<sup>41</sup>

Westphalian norms were influential on the foreign policy of many states throughout the cold war. But post-Westphalian ideas have also motivated international actors, particularly advocates of multilateralism and political liberalism. Following the fall of the communist eastern bloc and the shift towards a unipolar world, alternate worldviews started gaining more ground. Among many major countries, a shift towards the idea of “the international society” was used as a justification for the intervention in conflicts in the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle east.<sup>42</sup>

While the name would suggest that these norms emerged following the decline of the Westphalian order, post-Westphalian norms are not entirely recent ideas, and can be understood better as a system of both old and new ideas on international order. In some sense, the term Pre-Westphalian could also be applied to many of the ideas encompassed by the term. The Thirty Years’ War was fought among other issues on the issue of states’ rights in opposition to the supranational authority of the catholic church. The Holy Roman Empire and the catholic church can indeed be understood as a sort of post-Westphalian authority, in that it overruled the authority of individual sovereigns, and imposed religious duties upon them.<sup>43</sup> The idea of Sovereignty standing in opposition to responsibility to the populace has historical roots that goes back far beyond the treaty of Westphalia. The Augustinian concept of “Just war” (which itself was inspired by Aristotelian ideas) makes the argument that war might be justified to save lives. Even in the period contemporary to the treaty, political philosophers such as John Locke and Niccolò Machiavelli had discussed concepts relating to a Sovereign’s responsibility to his subjects.<sup>44</sup> More recently, a formalized outline of what may arguably be called a post-Westphalian set of norms is prevalent in the covenant of the League of Nations. Specifically, article 23 of the covenant imposes upon any signatory states duties towards their

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<sup>40</sup> Mohan G & Gippner, O. (2015).

<sup>41</sup> Santoro, M. (2010).

<sup>42</sup> Falk, R. (2002).

<sup>43</sup> de Carvalho, Benjamin. (2005).

<sup>44</sup> Kayaoglu, T. (2010).

citizens. These duties include fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children and just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories. While the League of Nations did not have a well-developed mechanism for enforcement it can still be understood as an organization founded (at least partly) on post-Westphalian ideas.<sup>45</sup>

Accordingly, what we today call the “post-Westphalian order” cannot be claimed to be truly *post*-Westphalian. These two concepts are ideas that have developed interchangeably, and that have never been established as “de facto international law” in any major sense. I do however argue that post-Westphalian norms have recently garnered more general acceptance among states and other actors, and that changes in the balance of power on the international stage has pushed the world toward a greater degree of post-Westphalianism. If article 2 of the United Nations charter can be seen as representing the cornerstone of Westphalian norms, then *the Responsibility to Protect* (R2P) can be seen as representing the cornerstone of post-Westphalian norms. R2P is a political doctrine of international relations which has its origin in the 2005 United Nations World summit, where it received endorsement from all UN member states. The idea behind R2P was to establish a global commitment in order to deal with the most serious forms of international crime; genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.<sup>46</sup> R2P imposes several responsibilities upon the state, primarily concerned with protecting its population from the above-mentioned crimes, while also committing assistance and “capacity-building” to the international community in order to assure that such crimes are prevented universally. Where any state fails in these responsibilities, then the rest of the international community of states should act collectively to protect the population from harm.<sup>47</sup> The doctrine has garnered broad support, and some evidence has suggested that since the 2005 world summit there has been some behavioural changes in the way states collectively respond to serious international crimes and in the way political actors publicly address such issues.<sup>48</sup>

As I have previously touched upon, the concept of a Westphalian or Post-Westphalian order has been subject to debate, and the idea of Westphalia as a point of origin of modern international order is certainly a simplification of history. Nevertheless, the term has become an established part of modern IR terminology and carries with it understandable connotations.

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<sup>45</sup> *The Covenant of the League of Nations*. (1920). UN GENEVA.

<sup>46</sup> "What is R2P?". Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

<sup>47</sup> Welsh, Jennifer M (2019).

<sup>48</sup> Bellamy, Alex. J. (2009).



The dichotomy of Westphalian and Post-Westphalian norms still serves as an excellent basis for idea-analytical dimensions. A major point of interest for my analysis is what I perceive as contrasting values, both rhetorically and in action, as they relate to Chinese participation in peacekeeping operations. The leadership of the PRC has often made statements in support of a more traditional (Westphalian) understanding of sovereignty, where it has emphasized the rights of national leadership and petitioned against non-consensual interventionism.<sup>49</sup> China has however also often expressed support for multilateral, liberal measures when faced with various global challenges.<sup>50</sup> I argue that this prevalence of opposing ideas relating to concepts such as sovereignty, sovereign responsibility, multilateralism, internationalism and paternalism can be encapsulated well by a Westphalian – Post-Westphalian idea-dimension. The fact that China has often been a staunch critic of breaches in state sovereignty and yet has become increasingly willing to engage in various, sometimes intrusive activities (with peacekeeping being among them) is ripe for analysis along such a dimension.

## 2.4 Revisionist and Status Quo powers

For the second part of my theoretical framework, I have chosen to draw upon a part of the literature which more directly relates to the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China. Since the middle of the 2000s there has been an increased debate within both media and academic circles concerning whether the international behaviour of the PRC reflects that of a revisionist power. This debate has been particularly common in the US.<sup>51</sup> The concept of revisionism is part of a greater subfield of international relations which concerns itself with hegemony and power transitions within the international system. This theoretical field has roots back to the early writings on the field, with certain aspects mirroring Thucydidian ideas concerning great power rivalry. Lately however the concepts of this theoretical field have been increasingly used in scholarly debates surrounding the rise of China.<sup>52</sup>

The debate concerning the nature of the rise of China draws on both academic and non-academic participants. The debate has touched upon several aspects of Chinese foreign policy and attempts to characterize the international behaviour of the PRC have led to a variety of

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<sup>49</sup> Lampton, D. M. (2014).

<sup>50</sup> Jerdén, B. (2014).

<sup>51</sup> Christensen, T. J. (2011).

<sup>52</sup> Johnston, A.I. (2003).

arguments. Some observers have argued that although Chinese foreign policy has become more clear-cut and China is increasingly willing to make itself heard internationally, and to enforce their claims more actively, whether by the threat of or actual employment of force. it has still shown that it is willing to abide by established norms. Others argue that Chinese foreign policy for the past twenty years has changed drastically, and that China has moved away from a status-quo oriented stance to a more assertive and revisionist one.<sup>53</sup>

The terminology of revisionist and status-quo power does not have clear-cut or unanimously accepted definitions and has been subject to academic debate. Early writing on the subject was directed primarily at military and economic capabilities. Hans Morgenthau has characterized status quo policies as aimed at maintaining the distribution of power and revisionist policies as attempting to challenge this distribution.<sup>54</sup> In traditional power transition theory, status quo states have been defined as those states that have participated in writing “the rules of the game” and which stand to benefit from these rules. Revisionist states are those states which are dissatisfied with their own position within the “game” and thereby have desire to “rewrite the rules”.<sup>55</sup><sup>56</sup> There is however no clear outline for how revisionist powers may choose to act in order to achieve this or what constitutes revisionist ideas. While rising powers may indeed become dissatisfied with their own position, different states will employ different strategies in order to achieve this. While some rising powers, such as Wilhelmine Germany or Imperial Japan adopted policies that can be characterized as radical and outright hostile to established order, many rising powers will adopt long term strategies and attempt to “bide their time”, often actively working towards development and peace within the current “set of rules”. Such states will have little incentive for direct conflict with the status quo power, as they perceive the need for stable and peaceful environments within which to grow their own capabilities.<sup>57</sup>

Revisionism can be understood as a general rejection of parts of or the whole international status quo. This notion will be reflected in a strategic orientation which rejects or challenges the status quo at its most basic aspects. This can include a rejection of hegemonic leadership, a rejection of constitutive norms or a rejection of the institutionalized rules that form the

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<sup>53</sup> Johnston, A.I. (2013).

<sup>54</sup> Morgenthau, H. J. (1973).

<sup>55</sup> Johnston, A.I. (2003).

<sup>56</sup> Goddard, S. (2018).

<sup>57</sup> Ward, S. (2013).

structure of the system.<sup>58</sup> The question of why and how revisionism takes form is subject for much debate. What it is that drives states to challenge institutional order and what determines the intensity and form of revisionism is subject to debate. In some sense all states might be referred to as revisionist in one way or another, but revisionists are as I have already touched upon not all equal. Some revisionists may only harbour limited goals, whereas others may seek to destroy existing institutions through war.<sup>59</sup> One might therefore distinguish between limited revisionists and more extreme or “revolutionary” revisionists. This distinction implies a dichotomy which might simplify a far more complex system of state behaviour.

Revolutionary revisionists may for a multitude of reasons choose to avoid outright conflict and seek to transform institutions and norms from within the international order, while still harbouring revolutionary ambitions. Likewise, revisionists who harbor visions of limited change might turn to war, while still not seeking to destroy the established order in its entirety.<sup>60</sup> It may indeed be likely that revolutionary revisionists will seek positions of strength or brokerage within institutions to gain influence and soft power between subgroups of states and other actors within the international system. Such positions may grant a revisionist power much entrepreneurial power and access to resources that can be mobilized in pursuit of limited or revolutionary change.<sup>62</sup>

The concept of revisionism involves a rejection of the current international status quo and can range from limited goals to seeking to destroy existing institutions through war. The reasons why states become revisionist as well as the intensity and form of revisionism are subject to debate. However, it is likely that even revolutionary revisionists will seek positions of strength within institutions to gain influence and power to orchestrate change. This context is relevant to understanding China's rise as a world power as well as its peacekeeping participation, as some scholars argue that China's assertiveness in contested territorial areas and establishment of its own institutions may be seen as a revisionist turn, while others suggest that China's integration into international institutions and embrace of multilateral cooperation may ultimately strengthen the current order.

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<sup>58</sup> Ward, S. (2013).

<sup>59</sup> Goddard, S. (2018).

<sup>60</sup> Goddard, S. (2018).

<sup>61</sup> Cooley, A., Nexon, D., & Ward, S. (2019).

<sup>62</sup> Goddard, S. (2018).

### 2.4.1 China as a rising power

There is broad scholarly acceptance to the idea that China is a rising power, but there is less consensus about the nature and consequences of its rise. The debate is particularly polarized when it comes to the question of how an increasingly powerful China will seek to impact the institutional order which has to a large degree been led by Europe and the US.<sup>63</sup> It seems that some revisionist challenge to current institutions may be inevitable, as China has already shown willingness to put pressure on such institutions within its immediate geographical “neighbourhood”. Scholars have argued that the political presence of China in areas such as the south China sea and central Asia, where it has contested territorial norms, pressured security institutions and established its own institutions for trade and economic development may well be understood as a more assertive and revisionist turn. Others argue that this conclusion may be too pessimistic. Over the past decades China has actively worked to integrate within many international institutions and embraced multilateral cooperation and free trade as a pathway to development. China’s rise might only come with small challenges towards the status quo, and ultimately lead to a strengthening of the current order.<sup>6465</sup>

In the decades following the end of the Cold War, China found itself in a precarious geopolitical situation. The balance of power had collapsed, and China was faced with being geopolitically isolated and outmatched in terms of military and economic power. China had to adjust its foreign policy according to this and adopted policies which took in the fact of US dominance on the international stage. The foreign policy doctrines of China in the early post-cold war era have been called *taoguang yanghui* (“low profile”) and were based around hiding its capabilities, focusing on building up strength internally and generally biding its time.<sup>6667</sup>

As Chinese power grew throughout the 1990s and 2000s Chinese foreign policy gradually shifted towards embracing its newfound position and taking a more active role in foreign affairs. Scholars have argued that while the low-profile approach still motivates some aspects of Chinese foreign policy, Chinese leaders have shifted their rhetoric towards a proactive

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<sup>63</sup> Goddard, S. (2018).

<sup>64</sup> Johnston, A.I. (2003).

<sup>65</sup> Goddard, S. (2018).

<sup>66</sup> Qingguo, J. (2005).

<sup>67</sup> Ward, S. (2013).

approach where China will more frequently look to engage in diplomacy and push to achieve their goals diplomatically.<sup>68</sup>

Proponents of the notion that China is a revisionist power argue that as China continues to increase its power and international standing, it will continue to become increasingly assertive and attempt to challenge the status quo. China became the world's second largest economy in 2010 and is widely expected to surpass the US within the next 30 years.<sup>69</sup> As the balance of power between China and the US shifts this may also upset the ruling norms and perceptions of international relations theory. There is some evidence that Chinese leaders have increasingly expressed that they feel the need to leverage their international standing to push forwards their own ideas, norms, and values and to take a more active role in expanding their influence.<sup>70</sup><sup>71</sup>

Abanti Bhattacharya has argued that Chinese assertive foreign policy is strongly linked with the new form of Chinese Nationalism that has developed since the end of the cold war. Bhattacharya states that the current Chinese nationalism is characterized by a conception that while China is a large and powerful state with long historical roots of power, it is also part of the “global south”. A large part of Chinese nationalist rhetoric contends with increasing national strength and unity to remove the stigma of being a victim of colonialization. This idea is present in Chinese relationship towards formerly colonized, industrializing states. China has adopted a paternalistic and proactive relationship towards such states. Bhattacharya makes the argument that this national identity has led China to the pursuit of building a new international order, one which might directly Challenge the current established order dominated by the west.<sup>72</sup>

#### 2.4.2 A typology on revisionism and status quo

To structure the theories on revisionist and status quo power into a framework which makes textual analysis feasible I have chosen to use the typology presented by Cooley, Nexon and Ward in their 2019 article “Revising order or challenging the balance of military power? An alternative typology of revisionist and status-quo states.” In this article the authors seek to

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<sup>68</sup> Chen, D., Pu, X., & Johnston, A. I. (2013).

<sup>69</sup> THIES, C. G., & NIEMAN, M. D. (2017).

<sup>70</sup> Chen, D., Pu, X., & Johnston, A. I. (2013).

<sup>71</sup> Lampton, D. M. (2014).

<sup>72</sup> Bhattacharya, A. (2007).

address a perceived problem of “unidimensional accounts of revisionism”. They argue that the standard dichotomy of revisionism and status quo does not adequately reflect the variety of political behaviour that falls within these concepts. They propose the idea that revisionism exists within a two-dimensional space, where states may seek to alter either the balance of military power, other elements of international order or both. With this two-dimensional typology they divide status quo and revisionist orientations into four ideal types:

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1. Status quo actors, who are satisfied with both the general order and the distribution of power within it.
2. Reformist actors, who are satisfied with the current balance of power, but dissatisfied with elements of the order.
3. Positionalist actors, who are satisfied with international order but dissatisfied with the balance of power.
4. Revolutionary powers who are dissatisfied with both the current order and the balance of power.<sup>74</sup>

Cooley et al. state that this framework allows for a more structured analysis of hegemony, revisionism, and rising powers. With a multidimensional approach to revisionism and status quo one might better understand the broader dynamics of power politics and explain phenomenon such as revisionist hegemons and cooperative revisionists. They further argue that unidimensional approaches make it difficult to consistently categorize revisionist and status-quo orientations in a less arbitrary manner.<sup>75</sup>

While I believe that the framework of Westphalian - post-Westphalian and Revisionist – Status Quo will provide a framework that is sufficient for exploring the areas of interest for this thesis, they originated in theoretical fields that do not directly relate to Peacekeeping operations. I will therefore need to adapt this combined framework in a way that allows me to operationalize it for the topic of peacekeeping.

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<sup>73</sup> Cooley, A., Nexon, D., & Ward, S. (2019).

<sup>74</sup> Cooley, A., Nexon, D., & Ward, S. (2019).

<sup>75</sup> Cooley, A., Nexon, D., & Ward, S. (2019).

I have chosen to approach the framework of Westphalian – post-Westphalian within the typology provided by Cooley and combined it with the dimension of Pro-order and Anti-order. As such, in my framework the “order” will be represented by those norms and institutional conditions that currently regulate much of the (western) consensus on Peacekeeping operations and other forms of foreign interventions. While the subject of whether certain norms can be said to represent an established order is open for debate, I would argue that much of western world has shown increasing support for ideas that can be characterised as post-Westphalian. Such ideas include R2P, support for liberal democracy, human rights, free trade, and the responsibility for a sovereign towards their citizens. Peacekeeping would not only be limited to the cessation of hostile actions and the protection of human rights, but also towards achieving political changes within conflict areas. Sovereignty would also play a less important role, with the protection of human lives being considered of higher value.

Anti-order would then be represented by the more traditional, Westphalian understanding of sovereignty. Peacekeeping operations motivated by such ideas would primarily be based around the cessation of conflict, protection of civilians, provision of logistics for basic services and peacebuilding in the long term. Regime change or other forms of political influence would not be part of such a mission and the importance of consent from the warring parts would be greater.

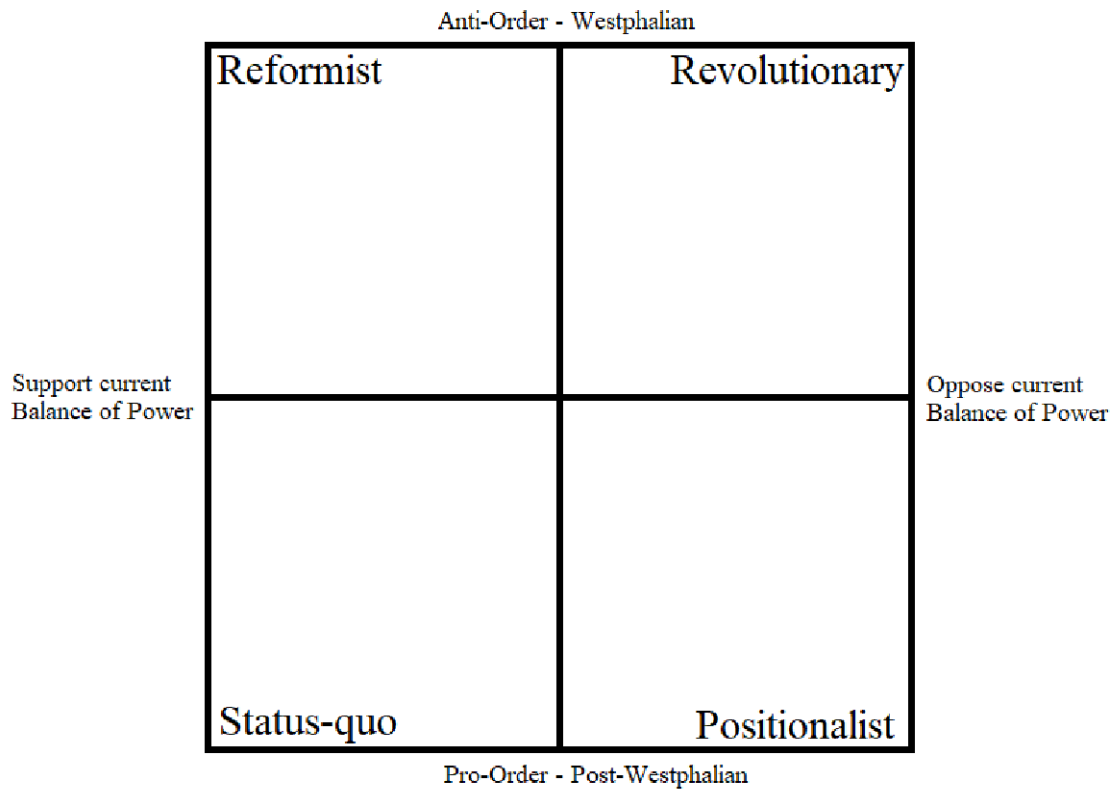


Figure 1. Typology of revisionist and Westphalian actors

To apply it to the context of peacekeeping, the dimension of balance of power must also be redefined so that it is understood in a slightly different way. For my typology I use the dimension balance of power to reflect the degree to which China expresses satisfaction with its current levels of commitment, influence, and leadership in UNPKOs. This is similar to the dimension as established by Cooley et al. but it is not directed at balance of power on a grand strategic scale, but rather at the power to influence the nature of how, why and when PKOs are undertaken. Opposition to the balance of power will in this case be reflected by ideas that communicate that China believes it is their duty or right to take a more active role in peacekeeping operation and that desire greater leadership and control over PKOs. Support will be reflected in those ideas that indicate satisfaction with the current regime of PKOs and their own economic and political participation.

This way of redefining these theoretical fields to suit my analysis is naturally prone to certain challenges. By dichotomizing Westphalian and post-Westphalian in this way, I indicate both that these norms have been unanimously accepted within the west and it is the



western norms that have dominated international relations in the post-war period. This is obviously a simplification. As I have previously touched upon, these are ideal types, with no states being unanimously committed to one side or the other. I do however make the argument that these norms have been highly influential within western states during the past few decades, and that the US and western European countries have been some of the most active states when it comes to participating in and forming the norms surrounding both peacekeeping and foreign intervention.

## 2.5 Operationalization

I have chosen to approach the practical analysis of the texts by utilizing idea-dimensions. Idea-dimensions are a well-suited tool for tracing and analysing ideas that exist along a continuum. This makes dimensions preferable to ideal types when it comes to tracing both opposing sets of ideas and changes in ideas across time. Since both elements of my theoretical framework can be conceptualized in a dichotomous manner and because I am dealing with chronologically separated documents, I believe that dimensions are the most suited method of operationalization. A potential drawback of dimensions is that ideas are rarely expressed in a dichotomous manner in political documents. Dimensions do however allow for a broad interpretation, and there are no major issues in defining ideas as belonging to a “middle category” along a dimensional axis.

### 2.5.1 Satisfaction

Table 2 illustrates how the theoretical concepts of normative and distributive (dis)satisfaction may be traced through formulations in the texts. The two dimensions I operate with are conceptualized through the terminology presented in my theoretical framework and then further operationalized through specific beliefs and ideal formulations associated with those concepts.

DIMENSION	CONCEPTS	OPERATIONALIZATION
<b>NORMATIVE SATISFACTION</b>	Pro-Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressed acceptance for what is presented to be “ruling norms” of international relations.</li> <li>- International law presented as positive and important.</li> <li>- Emphasis of multilateral cooperation and participation in international organizations (UN, WTO, HCCH, IMF, etc.)</li> <li>- Foreign policy is based in central treaties and norms of international law</li> </ul>
	Anti-Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressed interest in either reforming or repealing what is perceived as ruling norms of international relations</li> <li>- Negative attitudes towards existing international institutions</li> <li>- International law is framed as a legitimization of a specific (and negative) order or balance of power.</li> <li>- Central treaties and norms are seen as being to the benefit of specific actors (or constellation of actors) and to disadvantage others.</li> </ul>
<b>DISTRIBUTIVE SATISFACTION</b>	Pro-Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressed satisfaction with the current balance of power.</li> <li>- Expressed satisfaction with the power structures and institutions of modern peacekeeping.</li> <li>- Willingness to cooperate on issues of peace and development within the current balance of power.</li> <li>- Balance of power is not discussed as the most important challenge to security or lack of peace</li> </ul>
	Anti-Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressed beliefs that point to the existing balance of power as detrimental to peace, (national, regional or international) security and stability.</li> <li>- Specific actors and their actions or power are highlighted as detrimental to peace and stability.</li> <li>- Emphasis on a redistribution of power to strengthening specific actors and weakening others.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Normative and distributive satisfaction – idea dimensions

### 2.5.2 Westphalian – Post-Westphalian

As mentioned above, I also operationalize Westphalian and Post-Westphalian ideas through the use of idea-dimensions. This is an operationalization that I feel is somewhat less sound, as these two categories might be thought of more in the terms of different sets of values and beliefs about the nature of international relations and less in the terms of “ideologies” held by specific actors that motivate their actions. Despite this, I still argue that these concepts might be applied to foreign policy analysis, in that they serve as a frame of reference for categorizing specific and related values in foreign policymaking and international behaviour.

The ideas are formulated in table 3 as a set of ideas that can be traced through formulations and expressed values within text.

Dimension	Operationalization
Westphalian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regime type and economic policy are viewed as internal affairs.</li> <li>• Respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, national unity, and independence are highlighted.</li> <li>• Intervention into another state requires explicit consent of that state.</li> <li>• Interventions may still be legal if there is no functioning regime to acquire consent from</li> <li>• Any form of intervention requires security council authorization.</li> <li>• Hostility towards interventions with no UN mandate.</li> </ul>
Post-Westphalian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State sovereignty must be weighed against those duties a state holds for its citizens.</li> <li>• Human rights are highlighted above other principles of international law when considering intervention.</li> <li>• UN mandates are seen as important, but not always necessary in cases of great humanitarian crisis.</li> <li>• Humanitarian interventions are the last option in cases where other means, such as diplomacy has failed.</li> <li>• Interventions without the consent of states may sometimes be legitimate.</li> </ul>

Table 3: Westphalian and Post-Westphalian values – idea dimensions

With this framework I believe I can thoroughly explore the ideas present in the various official communication on peacekeeping that will serve as the material of analysis for this thesis. With the four ideal types i can structure my analysis and categorize ideas within a well-defined set of categories. The dimension of Westphalian and post-Westphalian will allow me to highlight ideas about sovereignty, non-interference, and state responsibility. The dimension of power balance will help me explore Chinas perceptions on its own role as a

peacekeeper and its expressed goals and ambitions. Together I believe this will help me thoroughly analyse Chinese policy on peacekeeping.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

I have chosen to approach my research question with an idea-analytical case study. Case studies are thorough and detail-oriented studies of specific units of analysis, or cases. Case-studies are an excellent method for empirical analysis of specific phenomena, especially where a high degree of external validity is not part of the objective. Case studies compensate for this by instead focusing on internal validity. As the objective of my thesis is to examine Chinese foreign policy with a focus on peacekeeping, this is a suitable choice for my purposes.

In this chapter I will define and discuss some of the methodological choices I have made in my research design. I start with a discussion on the role of ideas in foreign policy analysis, and how they can be understood as important aspects of policymaking. The chapter then continues with a discussion of idea analysis. I will begin with a thorough definition of the term “idea” as it applies to political science, and then present some of the primary attributes of idea analysis. As interpretation plays a major role in idea analysis, a section of this chapter will be dedicated to the function and application of interpretation, with a focus on logical inference. I conclude my discussion on ideas with a short discussion on how I apply ideas to my analysis. Finally, I conclude the chapter by highlighting some of the methodological challenges inherent in my research design.

## 3.2 Ideas and foreign policy

The primary point of this thesis is to explore Chinese policy on peace and peacekeeping, with a focus on the driving ideas behind UNPKO participation. The study of how ideas shape foreign policy is rooted in constructivist approaches to political science, and has gained popularity in the last few decades, which incidentally coincides with the timeframe for this analysis. The baseline assumption for my approach is that ideas matter greatly, both as a structural frame for policy creation and as a driving force for individual decision making. While I do not fully refute the assumption that groups or individuals make choices based on their interests, I see these interests as influenced by the societal ideas and ideological structures around them.

Traditionally, foreign policy analysis has often been characterized by an actor-specific focus, with the underlying assumption being that decision-making within and between states is grounded in rational, interest-motivated human decisionmakers. This approach has a basis in both realist assumptions of power-maximising states as well as economic assumptions of self-interested, utility-maximizing individuals. The focus is more on actors and less on structures. All that takes place between states is grounded in human decisions. Ideas then, come to be viewed as tools in the hands of rational actors.<sup>76</sup>

For my analysis, I understand ideas as significant forces in themselves. While I do see individual and group actions as important and accept the notion that human actors can have significant impact on the formation of policy, I hold the assumption that ideas serve as structural factors that impact these actions. Ideas serve both as contextual frames and as personal motivators (in the form of beliefs, assumptions and preferences) that define the “space of action” for actors. While actors make strategic choices, and often seek to achieve complex, specific and changing goals, these goals and choices are influenced by context-given perceptions on what is preferable and how best to achieve this. Actors do not always have access to complete information and might have goals that do not always align with what is rationally sound. Ideas matter because they serve as both a normative and logical frame that shapes preferences and actions.<sup>77</sup> So while I reject the notion of actors having rational interests, I accept that ideas or constructions of interest’s impact actors to a great degree. Normative ideas on what is good exist on both a collective and individual level. Actors hold ideas on what would be of advantage to one’s situations and on how they should best pursue these. Thus, I see rational self-interest not as simply immediate desires, but as idealized assumptions of collective and individual preferences.<sup>78</sup>

Ideas are important in the study of politics, not only because they influence the actions of individuals and groups, but also in the way they might become institutionalized. Ideas are subject to constant change; new ideas emerge to push old ideas out of the “public consciousness”. As ideas become established among political actors, they also become embedded in important political institutions and norms, making them likely to impact political

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<sup>76</sup> Hudson, V.M. (2005). *Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations*. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 1, Pages 1 – 3.

<sup>77</sup> Hay, C. (2011). Chapter 3: Ideas and the Construction of Interests. In Daniel Béland, and Robert Henry Cox (eds), *Ideas and Politics in Social Science Research*, p.68

<sup>78</sup> Hay, C. (2011). p.80

actors to come. In some sense, ideas might indeed become part of the identity of political actors, whether they be nations, political organizations, interest groups or individuals. The idea of Norway as a humanitarian great power or of China as a responsible power must be understood as identities (self-ascribed or otherwise) that shape the way in which political actions and communications are made, framed, presented and received.<sup>79</sup> It is in the nature of both groups and individuals to define themselves with regard to others. In this sense, the collective entity of China understands itself as a specific actor, with a specific cultural, historical, and ideological heritage that separates it from other actors. Ideas and ideologies can thus be understood not just as flexible tools in the hands of crafty and self-interested political actors, but also as a set of collective beliefs, values and understandings that shape the political space within which these actors operate.<sup>80</sup>

### 3.3 What are ideas?

In order to understand the fundamental, underlying principles of an idea-based approach to text analysis, I feel it is appropriate to start with a discussion about the term Idea. What are ideas and how can they be understood in regard to analysis of political communication?

Let us first have a look at some common conceptualisations of the term idea. The Cambridge online dictionary operates with three different definitions of the term:<sup>81</sup>

1. A suggestion or plan for doing something.
2. An understanding, thought or picture in your mind.
3. A belief or opinion.

Common among these definitions is the point that ideas are rooted in thought, and that they exist within the “domain of the mind”. These definitions also clarify that ideas may or may not be expressed through words. The first definitions establish ideas as a link between thought and action. The second and third definition point to the connection between ideas and understanding and beliefs, thereby also implicitly outlining the impact of ideas upon how one

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<sup>79</sup> BRATBERG, Ø. (2011). Ideas, tradition and norm entrepreneurs: Retracing guiding principles of foreign policy in Blair and Chirac's speeches on Iraq. *Review of International Studies*, 37(1), p. 327-328.

doi:10.1017/S0260210510000355

<sup>80</sup> BRATBERG, Ø. (2011). P.329

<sup>81</sup> Cambridge Dictionary. (2023). Idea definition. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/idea>

views the world. All these definitions give us a good understanding of the commonly held understandings (or ideas) we have about the term idea, and shows how ideas can be both descriptive, prescriptive and normative.

One of the first conceptual discussions on ideas can be found in the Platonic theory of forms. For Plato, ideas represented a set of unchanging, eternal imprints of the objects of the physical world.<sup>82</sup> Ideas in the Platonic understanding of the world, can be understood as a metaphysical pattern or principle, reflecting both physical objects, such as the idea of a stone or a chair and metaphysical concepts, such as the idea of “good and evil”. These ideas are eternal and exist outside of both the physical world and of human thought.<sup>83</sup> Later philosophers, such as Descartes, Husserl and Heidegger contested this understanding of ideas as a separate, metaphysical concept. They argued that it made little sense to speak of ideas as separate from human understanding and instead connected ideas directly to humans and human perception of reality.<sup>84</sup> Regardless of which conception one feels is more applicable, it still seems clear that ideas can be conceptualized as a form of thought construction, usually characterized by some degree of continuity and internal coherence.

Having now discussed some of the common and philosophical conceptualizations of ideas. Let us turn to a more modern, scientific understanding of ideas, within the context of text-based analysis methodology. In the field of social science text analysis, an idea is often viewed as individual or collective thought-construction concerning reality. More specifically, ideas can be understood as a set of thoughts that are connected and coherent. Ideas are pliable and can be applied in new ways or connected to new ideas.<sup>85</sup> In this way, ideas are assumptions and beliefs held by humans, that shape actions and attitudes.

This can be exemplified in the idea of a welfare state or the idea of non-intervention. These ideas are characterized by both continuity, coherence, and some degree of collective consensus.<sup>86</sup> Ideas can be both normative and descriptive. A descriptive idea is a set of characteristics associated with a specific phenomenon, a descriptive idea of the welfare state

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<sup>82</sup> Boréus, K., & Bergström, G. (2000). *Textens mening och makt : Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig textanalys*. P. 150.

<sup>83</sup> Rogers, A. K. “Plato’s Theory of Forms.” *The Philosophical Review*, vol. 45, no. 1, 1936, pp. 61–78. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2179618>. Accessed 27 Jan. 2023.

<sup>84</sup> Boréus, K., & Bergström, G. (2000). P.150

<sup>85</sup> Carstensen, M. B. (2011). Ideas are Not as Stable as Political Scientists Want Them to Be: A Theory of Incremental Ideational Change. p.600

<sup>86</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021) p. 72



could include a large and active state apparatus, a professional and expansive bureaucracy, and institutions of social security, such as universal healthcare or education. A normative idea is based around judgements of value and preference. A normative idea on non-intervention could be the idea that non-intervention is essential in securing global security, and that it must be upheld by all states.<sup>87</sup> Ideas in political science are not just seen as metaphysical thoughts on how society is or should be. Ideas are driving elements in society and can change the outcome of a political processes and thereby shape political development.<sup>88</sup>

Ideas must be understood as part of a larger context, both regarding other ideas, but also political developments and change.<sup>89</sup> A more discursive understanding of ideas points to the fact that ideas cannot be separated from the material or human, because they are a fluid part of it. The idea of peace and peacekeeping exists as part of this world because these ideas can directly impact material reality. When ideas such as cessation of hostilities, peacebuilding, provision of peace-infrastructure and disarmament are discussed in a document on peacekeeping, these cannot be seen as theoretical concepts only, because these concepts are part of a larger idea that directly impacts the material world.<sup>90</sup>

Finally, a baseline assumption for any idea-based analysis in political science is the belief that ideas can be empirically observed and interpreted as they occur in text. Analysing texts with the focus being towards ideas, can therefore provide insights into the thoughts and reasoning behind political decisions, thereby also providing insight into the political assumptions of actors and potentially explain decision-making.<sup>91</sup>

### 3.4 What is idea-analysis?

Idea analysis is a primarily Nordic tradition within document analysis based around a constructivist, qualitative and close relationship to the material of analysis. Methodologically it shares many similarities with the broader method of qualitative content analysis but differs in its specific orientation towards ideas. Like qualitative content analysis, idea analysis is not focused on quantitative measures, such as word counts. Idea analysis is based around a

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<sup>87</sup> Engelstad, F. (2005). Introduksjon til samfunnsfag: vitenskapsteori, argumentasjon og faghistorie. Gyldendal akademisk. p. 365-366

<sup>88</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 82

<sup>89</sup> Lieberman, R. C. (2002). Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change. p. 701-703.

<sup>90</sup> Hansen, L. (2013). Security as Practice (1st ed.). Taylor and Francis. P. 54 - 56

<sup>91</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 79

scientist having a deep and close understanding of the materials of analysis and requires a thorough and detail-oriented approach to reading texts.<sup>92</sup> Idea analysis is well suited for case studies, as its focus on thorough reading and detail-orientation often limits research to a relatively small body of texts.

As I have already touched upon previously, a baseline assumption of idea analysis is the notion that ideas can be observed, described, and interpreted as they appear within texts. There are no firm rules on how this should be done, but there are some general approaches and methodological guidelines that will shape the work of the researcher. Idea analysis is rooted in a constructivist understanding of knowledge and research and is formed by these roots.<sup>93</sup> In line with its constructivist roots, idea-analysis is more structure-oriented, rather than actor-oriented. It challenges the notion that actors can be viewed as fully rational, instead seeing them as formed by their communities and particularly the ideas they encounter in life.

Practically, idea-based analyses will often start by “mapping” which ideas appear in the texts that serve as the material for analysis. This usually involves describing what ideas are present and outlining the general, ideological basis for the text.<sup>94</sup> In some cases it will also be natural to consider the greater body of texts that the text of interest appears in and the general “discursive” context surrounding it. This might imply a statement on the reactions to the text, the expectations for it, or important ideas that surround the text but are not directly expressed within it.

While idea-analysis is specifically qualitatively oriented and rooted in constructivism, this does not imply a direct rejection of quantitatively oriented methods. Quantitative methods may be used to effectively supplement idea-based methods, by providing a statistical summary that can help exemplify how a qualitative interpretation on the prevalence and importance of certain ideas actually appear in the text. This is often a natural choice for a researcher applying idea-based methods. In this way, idea analysis finds itself placed between quantitative content analysis and discourse analysis.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 69

<sup>93</sup> Boréus, K., & Bergström, G. (2000). (2005). p. 176 - 178

<sup>94</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021), p. 74.

<sup>95</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021), p. 69.

### 3.4.1 How to analyse ideas

So how should one proceed practically with an idea-based research design? While there are few clear-cut answers and differing arguments on how it is best to approach idea-analysis, it is also clear that some tendencies have been established. First of all, it is obvious that the theme and area of interest for the study, and particularly the research question should play an important role in the methodological design of the study.

To structure your analysis, clarify what exactly you are looking for in the materials of analysis and to make it possible to track ideas in a meaningful and reliable way it is necessary to be able to operationalize the ideas of interest in an effective manner. To achieve this, a thorough methodological grounding, as well as a firm theoretical framework is required. Within the methodological tradition of idea analysis, it has been common to utilize either idea-dimensions, ideal-types, or both, to structure the analysis and to create a theoretical framework. Idea-dimensions and ideal-types are two similar approaches to idea analysis. These methods provide a way for a researcher to filter, categorize and map those ideas that are relevant for answering the research question.<sup>96</sup>

### 3.4.2 Dimensions and ideal-types

Dimensions and ideal types share many methodological similarities. Both methods require the researcher to construct a set of “core ideas” with basis in a thorough reading of relevant literature and a deep theoretical foundation. On the basis of a systematic review of the relevant literature, a solid theoretical framework can be established and used to place core ideas within a diagram. This diagram can then be used to connect the ideas to specific words, sentences or formulations within text and thereby enable the researcher to connect the text to the theoretical framework.<sup>97</sup> This method allows the researcher to process large amounts of text by serving as a guideline to structure what it is they are looking for. Essentially both methods aim to provide the researcher with a “lens” with which to view the text.<sup>98</sup>

As already touched upon, ideal types and dimensions are generally similar methods. They differ primarily in the way ideas are conceptualized and, in their structure, and in their applicability. Using Ideal types means establishing a set of structured, well-defined ideas and

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<sup>96</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 97

<sup>97</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 98 - 99

<sup>98</sup> Boréus, K., & Bergström, G. (2000). p.160-163

combining them within the frame of a single ideal type and connecting them to words of formulations in the text thus establishing a sort of category with which to interpret the text. Ideal types can be understood as a combination of different ideas that together comprise a certain ideology or worldview.<sup>99</sup> Generally speaking, ideal types are well-suited for establishing or constructing a set of ideas, that can be used to analyse a specific ideological document at a specific point in time.

Using Idea-dimensions similarly involves establishing a set of ideas that can be connected directly to the text. It differs primarily in the level of rigorosity. Developing idea-dimensions is a far less stringent process than developing complete and thorough ideal types.<sup>100</sup> Idea-dimensions can best be understood of a set of ideas that are established as extreme points along an axis. It is therefore useful for tracing ideological differences or change over time. It is therefore a useful method for exploring opposing ideas, for instance in comparing the economic policies of two parties on the opposite sides of a political spectrum.<sup>101</sup>

### 3.5 Interpretation

Interpretation is central to most forms of qualitative analysis. In text-based research especially, interpretation holds a key position. Interpretation is action of searching for and explaining meaning. With a quantitative approach to research, it is possible point to numbers and graphs to establish connections between phenomena, but even with statistical approaches, the numbers must be interpreted to connect them to a research question.<sup>102</sup> With a qualitative approach, such as idea analysis, interpretation lies at the core. Political science is the study of politics and society. A qualitative approach might seek to approach these topics through a thorough analysis of human attitudes, actions, or communication. For this to be viable these elements must be examined and interpreted. A foundational belief of constructivist approaches is that political actors make their choices based on their beliefs, perceptions, and

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<sup>99</sup> Bratberg, Ø (2021) s.83

<sup>100</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 102 - 103

<sup>101</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). p. 102 - 103

<sup>102</sup> Kritzer, H. M. (1996). The Data Puzzle: The Nature of Interpretation in Quantitative Research. American Journal of Political Science, 40(1), p. 1-5.

sense of cultural and societal belonging. In order to interpret actions and beliefs it is therefore important to understand what it is they are based on.<sup>103</sup>

With an idea-analytical approach to research, it is the ideas of actors that are the focus and that must be interpreted. An idea-based researcher will look to interpret what is being communicated by actors to understand what attitudes, beliefs and perceptions comprise the foundation of what is being said or done. In a document analytical research design this will usually be done through examining texts.<sup>104</sup> In this way, it is not only the ideas in themselves that are of interest. In line with constructivist thinking, the role of interpretation is based on the idea that what is being interpreted, whether it be ideas, discourses, rhetoric, or other aspects of text are not only important in themselves, but also in the way they shape actions, institutions, and political behaviour.<sup>105</sup>

All research is based on a motivation for increasing established knowledge within a field. For a document oriented researched this involves utilizing interpretation to discover meaning as it appears in texts. A researcher basing his work on interpretation of texts should, like other researchers, aim to make his work as truthful, precise, accountable, and valid as possible. But a researcher basing his work on interpretations of text does usually not have the opportunity to gather direct, empirical evidence for his research. A single document will be open for a multitude of interpretations based on a researcher's background, theoretical orientation, research question, and a variety of other factors.<sup>106</sup> When undertaking an idea analysis of an official document, a researcher will be limited by the text as it appears to them. No researcher can perfectly reconstruct those ideas in the heads of the author of a text, nor the intended meaning behind it. These are elements of a text shaped by factors such as the culture, current discourse, and the personality of the authors. These factors will simply not be available to a researcher. Without access to such factors or direct, empirical evidence for your interpretation, this limits a researcher to base is interpretations on logical inference.<sup>107</sup> Good interpretations base themselves on well-reasoned assumptions on the contents in a text. To have any claim of validity, an idea-analytical research design must be able to present sound

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<sup>103</sup> HAY, C. (2011), INTERPRETING INTERPRETIVISM INTERPRETING INTERPRETATIONS: THE NEW HERMENEUTICS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. *Public Administration*, 89. p. 175-177

<sup>104</sup> Bratberg, Ø. (2021). *Tekstanalyse for samfunnsvitere*. Cappelen Damm. p. 81

<sup>105</sup> HAY, C. (2011). S. 170

<sup>106</sup> HAY, C. (2011). S. 173.

<sup>107</sup> Lindström, S., Palmgren, E., & Westerståhl, D. (2012). Introduction: The philosophy of logical consequence and inference. *Synthese*, 187(3), p. 817–820.

reasoning on which ideas are behind the words, beliefs, and statements in the text. Good reasoning must consider the beliefs, assumptions and meaning of the creators of the text, as well as the context.<sup>108</sup>

Logical inference lies at the heart of scientific inquiry. Regardless of subject area, a political scientist will rarely (if ever) be able to come to undeniable conclusions. From a constructivist approach, truth comes down to a question of definitions and objective truth is seen as unattainable.<sup>109</sup> A researcher nevertheless should base his work in a thought of truth as a degree of conformity with reality. With this basis, it is the observable reality that serves as arbiter of which interpretations should be accepted, and which should be rejected. To achieve this, a researcher will have to, in lieu of other forms of evidence base his interpretations on logical reasoning. This requires a good degree of openness, justification, and transparency in how a researcher bases and expresses his assumptions. For an interpretation to be valid, a researcher must be transparent, consistent, and logically sound in his inferences and he must base his reasoning in a thorough, theoretical knowledge of the subject matter.<sup>110</sup> In my work I will primarily be utilizing abductive inference to support my interpretations. Abductive reasoning means making probabilistic conclusions based on what you know. By combining logically correct premises with probable premises I can reason my way to conclusions that are logically realistic and probable. This form of reasoning is essential to interpretation.<sup>111</sup>

### 3.6 How I understand ideas

As already mentioned, I primarily understand ideas as comprising structural and contextual frames that shape political actors. For my analysis, an idea can be a concept, belief, principle, or norm that influences the behaviour and actions of individuals, groups, or institutions in a political context. Ideas can be thought of as the building blocks of political thought and action, shaping how people understand and interpret political issues and guiding the decisions they make. This does not mean I completely reject the notion that ideas can be used as tools in

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<sup>108</sup> Richards, B. (1985). Constructivism and Logical Reasoning. *Synthese*, 65(1), pp. 33–64.

<sup>109</sup> Halperin, S., & Heath, O. (2020). *Political research: methods and practical skills*. Oxford University Press, USA. P. 47-50

<sup>110</sup> Malnes, R. *Kunsten å begrunne*, 1. Utgave. Gyldendal, 2012. p.28 - 30

<sup>111</sup> Malnes, R. (2012). p.34

the hands of policymakers, but I focus primarily on ideas in the way they shape the beliefs and assumptions of these policymakers. In line with Carstensen's theory of Incremental Ideational Change, this is a dynamic perspective on ideas that understand ideas as being comprised of a web of elements of meaning that rarely reach a fixed or stable point.<sup>112</sup>

I see the assumption that ideas serve as structural frames that shape actions as natural for the sort of analysis that I am undertaking. The argument is that all individuals require interpretive frames to allow them to understand society and thereby allow them to act effectively. In line with more discursive or interpretivist approaches, this assumption then looks to not only the idea in itself, but also the relation between the elements of meaning that comprise this idea.<sup>113</sup> This assumption rejects the notion of actors as rational and self-interested utility maximisers by pointing to the societal (and ideational) structures around them. The complexity and uncertainty of the society within which actors make their choices necessitates strategies based on experience and assumptions. So, where actors may be able to make critical evaluations and form decisions based on these, they cannot act completely rational and objectively.<sup>114</sup>

Given the purpose and scope of this analysis, I feel the balance between an orientation on actor and structure should lean towards structure. The point of IR analysis of this nature is to understand how humans, in the form of states, institutions and individuals perceive and act within the world around them. With the assumption that actors make their decisions based on their perceptions and values, they are naturally shaped by their surroundings. Therefore, it is not only the actors that are of interest, but also the ideational context within which they operate. I do however firmly stand by the notion that actors have agency, and that they can take actions to fulfil their goals. The Nature of the documents I am analysing, and the purpose of the analysis is of such a character, that this seems appropriate. The style of IR policymaking that this analysis falls within is often characterized by "two level", where policymakers must contend with both foreign and domestic interests. This tension between the "audiences" of foreign policy is of great interest in this analysis. Therefore, the dual relationship means that the way in which actors utilize their ideas in order to present (and justify) their policies to both domestic and foreign audiences means that a complete

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<sup>112</sup> Carstensen, M. B. (2011). Ideas are Not as Stable as Political Scientists Want Them to Be: A Theory of Incremental Ideational Change. *Political Studies*, 59(3), p. 595, 600.

<sup>113</sup> Carstensen, M. B. (2011). P. 600 - 601

<sup>114</sup> Carstensen, M. B. (2011). P. 602

abandonment of rational actors cannot be justified.<sup>115</sup> The understanding of ideas that I am operating with is in this way a balance between a focus on rational and strategic actors on the one hand, and the ideas they depend on to act on the other hand. In this way, I do not fully reject the material interests in policymaking, but I focus on the collective ideas which serve as a “filter” for the choice of actions of the policymakers.<sup>116117</sup>

### 3.7 Document selection

The purpose of this thesis is to explore central ideas underlying China’s policies on peace and participation in peacekeeping operations. To do this, I have chosen a relatively broad timeframe, with documents dating from the initiation period of Chinese peacekeeping up to the last few years. I have chosen a selection of texts that either presents a perspective on the importance of peace in international relations or directly addresses Chinese peacekeeping participation. This is a varied set of documents, primarily defence white papers, that address peacekeeping differently in both scale and perspective. While there is naturally some consistency, these texts vary in how they outline the peace/peacekeeping situation as well as motivations, goals and means of action.

The 1995 and 1998 documents serve to illustrate Chinese peacekeeping policy in the “initiation phase” of Chinese participation in UNPKOs. These papers were written during what may have been the height of the “Reform and opening up” era. China had abandoned its isolationist policies and started to integrate itself within international society.<sup>118</sup> The 1995 paper, titled “White Paper-- China: Arms Control and Disarmament” is the first of the Chinese defence white papers made public since the opening-up of China. While it does not directly address peacekeeping operations. I have still chosen to include it, due to its subject matter being adjacent to peacekeeping and due to the views presented on peace and international cooperation. The 1998 white paper, simply titled “China's National Defence in

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<sup>115</sup> Hudson, V.M. (2005). P.3

<sup>116</sup> Carstensen, M. B. (2011). p. 603

<sup>117</sup> BRATBERG, Ø. (2011). Ideas, tradition and norm entrepreneurs: Retracing guiding principles of foreign policy in Blair and Chirac's speeches on Iraq. *Review of International Studies*, 37(1), p. 327-328.

<sup>118</sup> Fang, C., Garnaut, R., & Song, L. (2018). 40 years of China’s reform and development: How reform captured China’s demographic dividend. In C. Fang, R. Garnaut, & L. Song (Eds.), *China’s 40 Years of Reform and Development: 1978–2018* (pp. 2-3, 8).



1998” is the second publicly available white paper, and the first to include a chapter dedicated to UNPKOs.<sup>119</sup> These two papers can provide insights into what ideas Chinese policymakers (?) have on peace, and also highlight motivations behind the participation in UNPKOs in the “beginning phase”.

To get an overview of Chinese peacekeeping policy during what may be called the Hu Jintao-era I have chosen a selection of white papers and speeches from the period of 2000 – 2009. The 2000, 2006 and 2008 white papers all contain short chapters or appendices on Chinese peacekeeping. I have also chosen to include the short “Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the 2005 Security Council Summit in New York”<sup>120</sup> and Hu Jintao’s address to the 64<sup>th</sup> United Nations general assembly session in 2009.<sup>121</sup> This collection of texts will provide insights into what ideas characterized the peacekeeping policy during Hu Jintao’s presidency.

Finally, to explore the ideas behind Chinese peacekeeping policy in the Xi Jinping-era, I have chosen a selection of one white paper and two short speeches. The 2020 white paper “China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations” will serve as the primary text from this period. I will supplement this paper with two speeches. The first speech is the 2015 speech “China is Here for Peace, Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping”, it was given on the 2015 United Nations Peacekeeping Summit in New York.<sup>122</sup> The second speech was given by General Wei Fenghe, State Councilor and Minister of National Defense on the 4<sup>th</sup> peacekeeping ministerial in Seoul 2021. These texts will provide insights into both the expressed UNPKO experiences of the PRC, but also allow me to explore any potential changes in ideas. The texts might also provide insights into any future ambitions and goals the PRC leadership hold within the field of peacekeeping.

Altogether, I believe that this selection of texts broad and deep enough to allow me to thoroughly explore Chinese policy on peacekeeping. The chronological spacing will allow for insights into how peacekeeping policy has developed over time, while the variety of the texts will provide insight into the variety of ideas underlining this policy. One potential problem of my selection may be the fact that only one of the texts (the 2020 white paper) is specifically

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<sup>119</sup> <https://www.andrewerickson.com/2019/07/china-defense-white-papers-1995-2019-download-complete-set-read-highlights-here/>

<sup>120</sup> [http://un.china-mission.gov.cn/eng/zt/shnh60/200509/t20050914\\_8413749.htm](http://un.china-mission.gov.cn/eng/zt/shnh60/200509/t20050914_8413749.htm)

<sup>121</sup> [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjb\\_663304/zjzg\\_663340/gjs\\_665170/gjzzyhy\\_665174/2594\\_665176/2596\\_665180/200909/t20090930\\_597974.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zjzg_663340/gjs_665170/gjzzyhy_665174/2594_665176/2596_665180/200909/t20090930_597974.html)

<sup>122</sup> [http://fj.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/topic/xjph/201512/t20151204\\_984450.htm](http://fj.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/topic/xjph/201512/t20151204_984450.htm)

written to address peacekeeping. I still believe that my selection is well suited for addressing this topic. Of all the texts, only the 1995 white paper does not include a part solely dedicated to peacekeeping. I still believe that it, when combined with an analysis of the other texts, will provide contextualization and insight into the ideas underlying the rest of the materials

<b>List of documents: 1995 - 2021</b>			
<b>Period</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>
Early	White paper	1995	China: arms control and disarmament.
	White paper	1998	China's National Defense.
Middle	Speech	2005	Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the Security Council Summit.
	White paper	2006	China's National Defense in 2006.
	White paper	2008	China's National Defense in 2008.
	Speech	2009	Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session.
Late	Speech	2015	China is Here for Peace, Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping.
	White paper	2020	China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations.
	Speech	2021	Speech at the 4th UN Peacekeeping Ministerial by General Wei Fenghe

Table 4: Document selection

### 3.8 Analytical approach

The analytical process of this thesis is based on a constructivist approach to political science. As can be understood from the nature of my form of analysis, the analytical approach will be based on a thorough reading of the texts, with interpretation playing a key role. My interpretation of the texts will be based in the theoretical framework presented in chapter 2.

The focus of analysis will be a search for words and formulations through the lens of the idea-dimensions, to map how the ideas manifest themselves and what changes are present throughout the three periods.

The purpose of this thesis is neither to test old theories, or to build new ones. Rather, the focus is to utilize established theoretical concepts on a specific set of texts, and thus to apply them empirically. The thesis can therefore be seen as both an empirical exploration of specific materials as well as further developing of established theoretical concepts. It will also be a novel contribution to both the literature on peacekeeping policy as well as on Chinese foreign policy. The primary assumption of this thesis is that Chinese foreign policy is rooted in a specific understanding of both state sovereignty, the nature of international relations and international norms and power-balance. The increasing support for UNPKOs is thus understood considering a specific ideological understanding, and I seek to examine what the central, underlying ideas are and whether they have changed during the period of analysis.

I analyse the texts in chronological order, starting with the 1995 white paper and then proceeding through the texts. As I have already touched upon above, the texts are treated as part of three “periods” in Chinese peacekeeping policy. With the 1995 and 1998 documents being part of the early period, then 2000 – 2010 I consider the middle period and finally, the post-2010 period is considered the “Xi-Jinping period”. This is obviously an arbitrary categorization, and it is primarily done to structure the analysis. In reality, policymaking is far more fluid and interrelated. The point is not to say that each period represents a clear-cut difference in policy, but rather to provide a structure to the analysis and to highlight to which degree Chinese policy on peacekeeping has evolved in the timeframe of this analysis.

## Chapter 4: Analysis

### 4.1 1995 – 1998: Chinese peacekeeping policy in the early era

The first two documents I have selected are meant to provide an insight into the ideational framework of the “early period” of Chinese participation in peacekeeping. The fact that these documents come from an era in Chinese international relations in which UNPKO participation was a relatively novel concept means that the documents are not as specifically oriented on this subject. It also means that there is less experience built up regarding peacekeeping than later periods. This is obvious, as the first document I have selected, the 1995 White paper “China: Arms Control and Disarmament”, does not address peacekeeping directly. It does however provide valuable insights into China's view on the importance of peace, stability, and multilateral cooperation in international relations. The 1998 National defence white paper is the first of China's yearly defence white papers in this period to contain its own section dedicated to peacekeeping. As a result of this, in this early period I have chosen to focus not only on the ideas surrounding peacekeeping, but also the broader views on peace and international cooperation. I feel this will provide an understanding into the ideational basis for China's participation in UNPKO's and thus also a context for analysis of the later documents.

Generally, both documents are anchored in the ideas that peace is a defining characteristic of the period, and that armed conflicts must be avoided at all costs. War and aggression are presented something that have impacted the Chinese people on a deep and substantial level, and almost seem to be presented as a form of devastation that is still part of the ideational memory of Chinese foreign policymakers. Both texts seem to show a sort of emotional aversion to war. This seems to be rooted in Chinese experiences with colonialism during what is often termed the “century of humiliation” as well as the second world war. The first sentence in the 1995 document reads as follows:

*“As the world marks the 50th anniversaries of the victories in the global anti-fascist war and China's War of Resistance Against Japan and the founding of the United Nations, it must not*

*be forgotten that twice in this century mankind has suffered from the enormity of world war, that war 'has repeatedly brought man catastrophic suffering. ”<sup>123</sup>*

Much of the basis for Chinese support for different peacebuilding initiatives thus seems to lie in their own historical experiences. This is naturally not a surprise, given the massive losses in life and the grand stage destruction suffered during this period. It is however interesting that the founding of the United Nations is given such an important role, both here and elsewhere in the text. It is also interesting to note that China emphasizes that it has a perceived obligation to be an actor that promotes peace, disarmament, de-escalation, and international friendship, and that the UN and many of its norms are seen as essential to this.<sup>124</sup> China furthermore distances itself from powers that pursue increased armament and/or expansionist powers. It especially emphasizes its disdain for actors that pursue policies of hegemonism, nuclear rearmament and participate in great power rivalry, without ever explicitly specifying any particular actors.<sup>125</sup> The foreword to the 1998 white papers illustrates that China sees itself as part of a period of global change, and that it clearly wishes to be at the helm of a new, peaceful international order:

*“Mankind is about to enter the 21st century of its history. It is the aspiration of the Chinese government and people to lead a peaceful, stable and prosperous world into the new century. ”<sup>126</sup>*

Chinese ambitions of being a responsible actor that promotes and safeguards peace, international stability and “mankind’s common development” is illustrated through several policies and projects. The primary subject of the paper is disarmament, and this is highlighted as one important facet of securing peace.<sup>127</sup> It also underlines its dedication to peace by making the argument that in comparison to other great powers, China has generally pursued limited armament, and opposed arms races, spheres of influence and hegemonism. It stresses that it has «solemnly undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons” and that it will never use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. It also jabs at the United States and the former Soviet Union by stating that their policies led to arms races, regional wars and global

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<sup>123</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). China : arms control and disarmament. Beijing. P.1

<sup>124</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.3

<sup>125</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.2

<sup>126</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). China’s National Defense. Beijing. P.1

<sup>127</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.1

instability and opposes pursuing such policies itself.<sup>128</sup> This is interesting because it can be understood as a reflection of Chinese self-understanding during this formative period. China had largely found itself in a neutral “middle position” during the cold war, caught in an odd place between the two superpowers. This seems to still be a part of the rhetoric of the 1990s documents. China is presenting itself as some sort of champion of the non-aligned world and thus sees itself as having aligned interests with developing countries. It also seems clear, that China sees peace and stability as integral to its own modernization and development. Several portions of the two papers are dedicated to the fact that because China is undergoing a period of modernization, global peace and especially “a favourable peripheral environment” is essential.<sup>129</sup> This highlights the fact that peace is justified from an ideological viewpoint, but also from an economical and security-oriented one.

As I have already touched upon the documents do indeed point to China’s unique historical experiences as a reason for its support for peacebuilding initiatives. It does however understand peace, development as well as “happy life and advanced culture” to be “lofty ideals held by all the world’s peoples.”<sup>130</sup> In this way, China seems to be presenting its motivations as aligning with a global majority. Still, these are ideals that seem to be presented as having fertile ground in China, owing to its historical experiences:

*“The Chinese nation loves peace dearly and has made major contributions to peace and other progressive causes for all of mankind. Modern history has served as grim witness to China's great sufferings and the humiliation of the Chinese people as the result of imperialist and colonialist invasion and partition. Countless Chinese sons and daughters shed -their blood or laid down their lives to free the nation from this cruel bondage and plundering, advancing wave upon wave, until national liberation and independence were finally won under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The Chinese people know only too well the true value of independence, sovereignty, and equality.”<sup>131</sup>*

Chinas historical experiences thus seem to serve as a basis in which their support for UNPKOs is rooted. The fact that they have themselves experienced imperialist aggression makes them qualitatively different from many other major powers, and thus they see peace in a different way. The “century of humiliation” is a term that still holds relevance in China to

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<sup>128</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.15

<sup>129</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.1

<sup>130</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.1 - 2

<sup>131</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.2

this day, and one that shows how deeply rooted in the collective memory of China the period of colonization is and how it impacts China's policymaking. A lot of the reasoning also seem (understandably) to be based in a socialist, revolutionary, and anti-imperialist understanding of world politics. War and instability seem to be understood as often emerging directly or indirectly from the actions of major powers, whether currently or in the past. China's policy on peace is thus part of a project of solidarity with the developing world. But the need for peace is also seen as a prerequisite for their own "socialist modernization programme".<sup>132</sup> Nationalist ideas tied to the "century of humiliation" is made alongside socialist ideas of global development and solidarity. It is also interesting to see that so long after reform and opening up, these almost Maoist-akin ideas of perpetual war on imperialism as well as anti-colonialism are still a part of official Chinese communication. It seems then, that peace is understood with the basis in both historical experiences as well as ideological perspectives. Furthermore, peace is presented as something of a necessity for the functioning of international relations. It is not taken for granted, and the major powers are presented as having a particular responsibility for guaranteeing peace for both themselves, but especially for the smaller states of the international system.

#### 4.1.1 Normative satisfaction

In general, both papers show a degree of support for what is perceived to be many of the ruling norms of the day. It is made clear that China believes that all actors should treat each other in fairly, rationally and equally, and that international relations should be based in "the universal principles for safeguarding international peace and security contained in the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant international legal norms."<sup>133</sup> The argument is made that peace is best obtained when countries promote mutual understanding and trust, and this is again achieved through multilateral dialogue and cooperations. China thus presents itself as seeking the settlements of conflicts and differences through peaceful means, with the UN holding a key position in achieving this.<sup>134</sup>

The documents present a very positive view of the UN. The organization is seen as a key institution in all facets of International Relations, and much of the norms discussed are in

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<sup>132</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). p.1

<sup>133</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1995). P.3

<sup>134</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). P.4

different ways anchored to the UN. Especially with relations to peace and peacebuilding initiatives such as peacekeeping, arms control, conflict resolution and mediation, the UN and what are presented as its ruling norms are presented at principles that must be followed by all states:

*“All nations should follow the purposes and principles for safeguarding international peace and security contained in the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant international legal norms. At the same time arms control and disarmament is worked for, aggression must be curbed. Regional conflicts must be fairly and rationally resolved and force or threat of force should not be used in international relations. Hegemonism and power politics should be eliminated in international relations, so as to create an international environment and conditions favourable to disarmament.”*<sup>135</sup>

It is also made clear that China has a “rightful seat” among the United Nations leadership, and this seat is seen as coming with both rights and responsibilities. The documents state that China takes the overall mission of the United Nations seriously, by “conscientiously” attending meetings, participating in several of the most important branches of the organization and actively supporting it financially and materially.<sup>136137</sup>

All in all, the documents present a view of the UN as an excellent platform for building peace, stability, and international cooperation. Many of the ruling norms of the UN seem to be internalized in the ideas presented by China in these documents. It is stated outright that China will continue to promote the UNs norms on peacekeeping, arms control, and other peacebuilding initiatives, while still leaving open the possibility for promoting its own visions and ideas within the UN.<sup>138</sup> It is also made clear that China sees peacekeeping as part of its own responsibilities. It acknowledges risks of participation in UNPKO operations, but seems to view the responsibility of participation as outweighing these risks:

*“23 Chinese personnel assisting UN peace-keeping operations have conscientiously fulfilled their responsibilities and made great contributions to world peace. Some of them have even*

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<sup>135</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.3-4

<sup>136</sup>Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998) p.22

<sup>137</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.12

<sup>138</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.17



*sacrificed their lives. In the years to come, China will continue to participate in UN peace-keeping operations in a positive and down-to-earth manner.*”<sup>139</sup>

With specific regard to peacekeeping, it seems that the UN and its ruling norms are seen as the natural (and indeed only legitimate) basis for which to carry these out. The charter of the UN, as well as the other documents of the organization, seems to be the primary rooting point for China's principles on peacekeeping. The documents do however show, as I shall discuss in the next section, that China also hold their own set of national principles that they are prepared and willing to push for within the UN. As already touched upon, a lot of the reasoning is rooted in socialist, anti-imperialist and specifically Chinese ideas, and the documents present an interest in introducing these norms on the international stage.<sup>140</sup> The documents also give the impression that China holds an accepting, yet careful and limited view on how and when peacekeeping operations should be carried out, and these visions might indicate a degree of dissatisfaction with parts of the current peacekeeping regime:

*“A peace-keeping operation should not be undertaken when conditions are not yet ripe, nor should a peace-keeping force become a party to a conflict, which would be a deviation from the fundamental purpose of peace-keeping operations.”*<sup>141</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Normative dissatisfaction

Despite the extensive support for the UN and acceptance of its most important norms as expressed in the UN Charter, there are still many aspects of the two documents that point toward a general dissatisfaction with important norms of international relations. First of all, both documents point to specific elements that they believe comprise a source of instability and a threat to peace. Hegemonism, military bloc-politics, cold-war mentalities and armed intervention without consent are all seen as prevalent elements of the global order, that are believed to pose a threat to peace.<sup>142</sup> More interestingly, the documents argue that the world wants peace, nations want development, and society wants progress, and that these desires have become an "irresistible tide of the day". However, the document implies that the current international political and economic order is not conducive to achieving these goals, as it has

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<sup>139</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). P.23

<sup>140</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1995). P.2

<sup>141</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). P.22

<sup>142</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). p.3

not resulted in a long-lasting peace. The solution for this seems to be a greater rooting of international relations within the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence;

*“As long as the peoples of all nations work together, adhering to the road of peace and development, continuing to unflaggingly promote the arms control and disarmament process, and sparing no effort to establish a new peaceful, stable, fair and reasonable international political and economic order on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and other commonly recognized standards for international relations, a long-lasting peace is possible, and the righteousness of peace and development will ultimately and veritably triumph over the evils of war.”<sup>143</sup>*

The Five Principles are promoted as “natural” principles of international relations, not just for China, but also for all other countries. It is made clear that the relations among states should increasingly be established based on these principles, with special focus on the combination of mutual respect and benefit with sovereignty, and non-interference.<sup>144</sup> It is stated that the Chinese government follow an independent foreign policy, outside of any bloc or alliance, with the primary goal of establishing and developing relations of friendship and cooperation. This policy is based in primarily the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, but also in other “international relationship norms”. China states that it is willing to make “unswerving efforts” towards global peace and friendship in cooperation with all other states<sup>145</sup>, but it seems clear that it does not view the current international order as sufficient:

*“China advocates establishing a new fair and rational international political and economic order, and developing relations of friendship and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.”<sup>146</sup>*

It seems clear to me that this call for the establishment of a new international order that is peaceful, stable, fair, and reasonable, based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and other commonly recognized standards for international relations must be taken as a sign of normative dissatisfaction. Such a call for action suggests that the current international order is not perceived as meeting these standards. By calling for the establishment of a new international order based on these principles, China is expressing the view that the current

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<sup>143</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). P.17

<sup>144</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.4

<sup>145</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.5

<sup>146</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.6

international order does not adequately reflect these values and principles. The quote may imply that China believes that the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence should be more widely adopted by the international community and should form the basis for a new, more peaceful, and stable international order. Overall, while there is broad support for the UN and its central norms the documents express a desire for change and improvement in the current international political and economic order in order to achieve long-lasting peace and promote development.

Altogether, i find that while China does showcase a great degree of support for many aspects of the international orders in the documents of this early period, it still places well within an anti-order position. While there Is strong support for the United nations and other normative elements of the international order, there is a general degree of revisionism, by calling for the establishment of a new order based on the Five Principles of Peaceful coexistence, China positions themselves as an opponent of the current system, and thus as an anti-order state.

#### 4.1.3 Distributive satisfaction

In general, the documents do not show any signs of major distributive dissatisfaction, neither in general nor with regards to peacekeeping. The international security situation is described as being characterized by relaxation, especially following the end of the cold war. The documents further describe a tendency towards multipolarity, both regionally and internationally, in fields such as politics, economics and the military. This tendency is generally described as being positive and conducive to peaceful development.<sup>147</sup> With regards to peacekeeping, China seems generally satisfied with the current institutional arrangements, viewing the other participants as partners that are more than willing with sharing their knowledge and experiences. The relations among the major powers on this field is characterized as a cooperative community, where each country is willing to coordinate efforts towards the challenges they are facing.<sup>148</sup> Special attention is also given to developing countries, with the point being made that as their overall strength is growing, they are

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<sup>147</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). p.1 – 2.

<sup>148</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). p. 22-23

becoming more important on the international stage, and that this is viewed as conducive to effective peace-keeping.<sup>149</sup>

While the documents do not make any definitive statements that show signs of distributive revisionism, the general theme apparent in both documents seem to suggest that issues of hegemonism and power-concentration within specific military blocs are not conducive to peace and stability. It is also made clear that China's modernization and development efforts are going to be integral to a more stable international environment.<sup>150</sup> This is however nuanced by the fact that China sees it as essential to maintain a relatively small military budget, and by stating that it has no interest in extensive military build-up to counter these threats. In fact, China makes it clear that it sees maintaining a "rationally scaled expenditure on defense" as essential in providing security, not only for itself, but also for other states. It stresses that it has gradually lowered defense spending and that it intends to continue to do so, by focussing on qualitative effectivization rather than quantitative expansion.<sup>151</sup>

It seems that China, in these documents, stresses economic development to a far greater extent than it does military expansion. This must indicate some degree of satisfaction with regards to the distribution of military capabilities. The strengthening of China's economy, and thus the strengthening of its distributive position seems to be understood as essential in securing peace and prosperity for the world:

*"The forces for world peace have grown rapidly since the 1980s, and peace and development have become the two major issues of the day. China's scientific analysis of the development trends and characteristics of the International situation has produced the conclusion that with the concerted efforts of people throughout the world, a new world war can not only be deferred but it can possibly be avoided as well. In the new era of peace and development, the task of first importance facing the Chinese people is to develop the economy and change the poverty and backwardness of the nation. With this in mind, China has focused its development strategy on economic construction."*<sup>152</sup>

It also seems clear, that China understands itself as being part of something of a "distributive elite" with regards to military and economic capabilities, even if it does define itself as

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<sup>149</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). P.3

<sup>150</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1995). p2.

<sup>151</sup> 1998 p 12 – 13.

<sup>152</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1995). p2.

economically “backwards”. It is further made clear that the most powerful states, “possessors of the largest and most sophisticated and conventional arsenals” are viewed as having a particular responsibility for providing global peace and development.<sup>153</sup> This falls in line with what some scholars have defined as “responsible power” ideas, wherein the major powers are viewed as key players in shaping global affairs and should therefore act in a responsibly, almost paternalistic manner towards the smaller powers.<sup>154</sup>

If there is any point in which a sign of distributive dissatisfaction can be found, it is the views on military alliances and military build-up. In both documents it is made clear that trying to attain security through alliances is viewed as dangerous and that it was not conducive to peace during the cold war. It is particularly with regards to the expansion of military alliances and the search for new spheres of influence that this becomes apparent. China makes it clear that it views such policies as “running counter to the tide of the times” and providing peace at the cost of others.<sup>155</sup> It is however made clear that China will not counter such policies with equal policies, as it states that it does not seek hegemonism, and is reluctant to establish military presences in regions where such a presence is not natural. It also makes it clear that it generally views these challenges as limited, and that relations with the other major powers is viewed as cordial and respectful. I see this as an indication of a certain degree of satisfaction. It could however also reflect a notion that China is not yet powerful enough to be a significant international actor in the face of perceived US hegemony, and that they are therefore choosing a more passive, cooperative strategy. The documents indicate that China may have found themselves to be disempowered or “squeezed” between two superpowers during the cold war, and that they are now starting to reevaluate their own position.<sup>156</sup>

In summary, I find that China in this early period occupies a more subtle, middle-position when it comes to distributive satisfaction, leaning towards pro-balance in certain ways. The emphasis on not strengthening itself to the detriment of others, maintaining relatively low spending on defence and rather focusing on qualitative, technological improvements and economic growth highlight a relatively indifferent or even satisfied position.

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<sup>153</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1995). p3.

<sup>154</sup> Foot, R. (2001). Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State. P.8

<sup>155</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.3

<sup>156</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.8

#### 4.1.4 The Westphalian – Post-Westphalian dimension

Generally, I find that both papers express ideas that align more with the Westphalian part of my Westphalian – Post-Westphalian dimension. As already discussed, the rooting in the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence is present throughout the documents of this period, and these principles largely coincide with a more Westphalian orientation. This orientation is made clear early in the 1995 document:

*“It (China) resolutely protects its national independence and sovereignty and opposes foreign interference; seeks to establish and develop extensive, friendly relations with all the world's countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, strengthen unity and cooperation with developing countries and actively develop good-neighbourly relations with bordering nations; stands for the proposition that all nations, big or small, are equal and opposes hegemonism and power politics in any form; advocates the settlement of international disputes through peaceful means; and opposes the threat or use of force in international relations.”<sup>157</sup>*

This is further made clear by the argument presented that the relations among all nations should be based on these principles, with territorial integrity, sovereignty and non-interference being viewed as the political basis of both global and regional security.<sup>158</sup> With the anchoring of international relations in these principles, China makes it clear that peacekeeping cannot be successful without respect for sovereignty and multilateral cooperation. As already discussed, China makes it clear that it promotes not these principles not only in its own conduct, but also believes they should be integrated into the current international order, thus “establishing a new fair and rational international political and economic order”.<sup>159</sup> With specific regards to peacekeeping, the documents make it clear that all peacekeeping operations should be undertaken with specific standards and principles taken into account:

*“-- The aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations must be adhered to, especially the principles of respecting the sovereignty of all countries and noninterference in other countries' internal affairs.*

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<sup>157</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1995). P.2

<sup>158</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). P.4

<sup>159</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1998). P.6

*-- Disputes must be settled using peaceful means, such as mediation, good office and negotiation. Compulsory means should not be adopted indiscreetly, nor should military means be resorted to even for humanitarian ends.*

*-- Double standards should be opposed. The policies and views of any one country or a few countries should not be imposed on the UN Security Council, and military interference by a small number of countries under the guise of the UN should not be allowed.*

*-- In peace-keeping operations, the following principles, which have proved to be effective in the past, should be adhered to: obtaining agreement from the country concerned beforehand, strictly observing neutrality and prohibiting the use of force except for self-defense.”<sup>160</sup>*

These principles seem to directly reject many of the more post-Westphalian principles. These guiding principles for peacekeeping run contrary to the norms underlying more post-Westphalian approaches, such as the Responsibility to protect (R2P), and outright shuts down the idea of any form of intervention based on regime change, liberalization, or other ideologically based interventions. The anchoring within the UN security council, alongside the demand for host-country consent must be understood as a rejection of intervention outside the UN and a defence of state sovereignty. Still, there is something of a contrasting, and sometimes even ambivalence present in how the different ideas are balanced in these texts. The Charter of the United Nations and the Five Principles seem to be the primary ideological rooting for both documents, and this is interesting when one considers the fact that despite many similarities, these two sets of norms differ significantly on the notion of intervention. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence emphasize the importance of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, while the Charter of the United Nations has often been interpreted as providing the right of the international community to intervene in certain circumstances (such as in cases of genocide or other grave human rights abuses). While Article 2(7), explicitly prohibits the United Nations from intervening in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state, this provision has often been interpreted narrowly and does not preclude the United Nations from intervening in cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. The anchoring of these two normative frameworks together might be seen as an attempt to promote a “stricter” interpretation of this article, thus emphasizing a more Westphalian norm on state sovereignty.

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<sup>160</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (1998). P.22

Still, the white papers do contain some ambivalence that might suggest acceptance for some more post-Westphalian values. Both documents emphasize the importance of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. These principles are consistent with the Westphalian dimension, which emphasizes state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. However, the documents also call for establishing a "new mutual respect and friendly relationship between nations",<sup>161</sup> which could be seen as a departure from the Westphalian dimension. This notion might indicate a departure from a rigid, state-centric approach to international relations, and indicate a turn to what may be deemed more post-Westphalian values emphasizing a more cooperative and interconnected global system that emphasizes shared interests and mutual respect among nations.

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<sup>161</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (1995). p.17



#### 4.1.5 Summary

In table 5 i summarize some of the key ideas prevalent in the documents of this period, and place China along the three idea-dimensions. I find that China in the early position occupies a reformist position with strong support for Westphalian norms.

Idea Dimension	Key ideas	Position
<b>Normative satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The UN and its ruling norms are highlighted as important aspects of international relations. The UN charter promoted as the only legitimate normative basis for peacekeeping.</li> <li>- Opposition to hegemonism, bloc-politics and armed intervention without consent. All which are described as being prevalent.</li> <li>- A call for the establishment of a new order rooted in The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.</li> </ul>	Clearly anti-order leaning, yet still support for elements of the current order.
<b>Distributive Satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The international security situation is described as being characterized by relaxation, especially following the end of the cold war.</li> <li>- Clear opposition to hegemonism, which is described as a threat to peace.</li> <li>- Other peacekeeping states described as partners.</li> <li>- Relations with other powers described as cooperative.</li> <li>- No expressed interest in challenging distributive balance. Understands itself as part of a distributive elite.</li> </ul>	More ambivalent – A middle position, leaning towards pro-balance in certain aspects.
<b>Westphalian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Five principles of peaceful coexistence presented as a normative basis for international order</li> <li>- Respect for sovereignty strongly emphasized.</li> <li>- Peacekeeping requires consent from host countries.</li> </ul>	Westphalian
<b>Post-Westphalian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on multilateralism – but rooted in state leadership.</li> </ul>	
<b>Combined position</b>		Reformist – Westphalian.

Table 5: Summary Chinas position on the idea-dimensions in the early era

## 4.2 Chinese peacekeeping policy in the 2000s

As outlined in the methodology chapter, the selected texts for this period are two defence white papers from 2006 and 2008 as well as two speeches from 2005 and 2009. The selected documents present an outline of Chinese peacekeeping policy that follows in a similar line from the documents of the previous period. Interestingly though, the documents give an impression of a somewhat more self-assured, proactive (and perhaps even assertive) China. The outlined challenges and opportunities, as well as the general impression presented of the international system and peacekeeping operations are clearer, and China is more willing to emphasise its own role in these issues.

The texts make it clear that China is still pursuing a peacekeeping policy based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality of participants and effective coordination. Multilateralism and multi-polarity are presented as desirable developments in international relations, and hegemonism, concentration of peacekeeping capabilities as well as power politics are viewed as challenges to this. China also advocates for the UN charter as ruling norms in peacekeeping, and for the strengthening of the Security council. The five principles of peaceful coexistence are still prevalent in the texts of this period, but it is emphasized less as “universal norms” that should be adhered to by all states and more as national guidelines defining Chinese behaviour.<sup>162</sup>

China also emphasizes a greater involvement of regional actors in providing peace and security. While explicitly stating that the UN security council is the only legitimate source of peacekeeping operations, it also highlights the importance of regional organizations playing a role in the resolution of regional conflicts. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is praised as an increasingly important forum for resolving regional security issues and other actors such as ASEAN and the Commonwealth of independent states are also given significant dues as it relates to such issues.<sup>163</sup> Interestingly, as I shall discuss below, China also stresses the “democratization of international relations” and the greater involvement of “global south actors” in peacekeeping. This represents an fascinating development when compared to the documents of the previous period.

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<sup>162</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 1 - 3

<sup>163</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 54

All in all, the chosen texts of this period do in many ways continue the general themes and ideas found in the previous documents, but some significant changes do seem to reflect China's increased economic and geopolitical position.

#### 4.2.1 Satisfaction and dissatisfaction

The general “course” in Chinese policy found in the “middle era” documents seem to be consistent with much of what could be found in the early documents. The development trends of the international system are characterized as being under “major changes”, and this is generally presented positively.<sup>164</sup> In the documents and speeches, the Chinese leadership continue to highlight the international system as one defined by peaceful development, economic globalization, cooperation, multi-polarity and multilateralism.<sup>165</sup><sup>166</sup> This is described as a trend that should be welcomed by all states, and one that China will continue to pursue. It seems however that China, through the ideas in these documents and speeches, has become conscious of its own developing power, and thus also more prepared and willing to position itself among the major powers. The documents highlight a more proactive position on peacekeeping policymaking, and China seems to have grown more comfortable with its position as a “major player” on the international stage:

*“China's future is more closely interconnected with that of the world. A more developed China will make greater contribution to the world and bring more opportunities to the world. We are committed to the path of peaceful development and the win-win strategy of opening up. We will develop friendly relations and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. China has always been and will continue to be a positive force for world peace and common development.”*<sup>167</sup>

The idea that Chinese development is tied to the development of the rest of the world in a significant manner is one that is prevalent in all the documents of this period.<sup>168</sup> In this line of reasoning one can trace several important ideas. First, it seems to show the signs of a great power becoming more aware of its own significance and at the same time “maturing” with regards to its perceived responsibilities and its relationship with other major actors. Secondly,

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<sup>164</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2008). p. 3

<sup>165</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2006). p. 17.

<sup>166</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2006). p. 24

<sup>167</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2008). p. 3

<sup>168</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2006). p. 6

this notion that Chinese development cannot continue without a positive relationship with the outside world, shows that the impact of “reform and opening up” has seemingly become internalized in this period. These ideas stand in somewhat contrast with the more “careful” and “uncertain” ideas on China’s role in the early period, and fully in contrast with the isolationist policies of China prior to the period that this thesis covers. One can trace the roots of what some have called the “assertive” China, a great power ready to accept and take its place in the world, though usually expressed in a more cooperative manner. It is also useful to note that throughout all these texts the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are still given an important position as guiding principles for Chinese peacekeeping policy.

Another interesting finding present in the two speeches of this period is the allusions made to “democracy in international relations”. It is made clear in both the selected speeches that the democratization of international relations, with specific regards to UN decision-making is a trend of the time that should be pursued and hastened.<sup>169</sup> This allusion is of interest to both the analytical dimensions of this thesis, and I will touch upon the significance of this idea in greater detail in the following sections.

Generally, as with the texts of the previous period, the texts of this period exhibit a general sense of satisfaction with the international order. As I will touch upon below, there are aspects of the texts that do show a degree of revisionism, particularly when it relates to peacekeeping and intervention outside of the United Nations, and coercive use of force. It is also clear that China makes its vision to take a more proactive and extensive role in peacekeeping operations (and global affairs more generally) more apparent in this era than in the previous. The concept of IR democratization is also ripe for interpretations that suggest a degree of dissatisfaction with the current normative and distributive order. Altogether though, there is little in the texts that give a sense of China as a revolutionary actor. China’s expressed acceptance of and willingness to operate within the norms of the current order seems to place it towards in the pro-order side of the dimension.

#### 4.2.2 Normative satisfaction

Like with the early texts, the texts of this period anchor Chinese peacekeeping policy to the norms of the UN. Throughout the speeches and white papers, effort is made to highlight the

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<sup>169</sup> Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session. (2009).

fact the UN charter is at the heart of Chinese peacekeeping policy. It is made clear that China sees itself as having specific obligations to the international community:

*“China observes the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, honors its international obligations, and participates in UN peacekeeping operations, international counterterrorism cooperation and international disaster relief operations. It plays an active part in maintaining global and regional peace and stability.”*<sup>170</sup>

There is a continuity in ideas from the early period, with China emphasizing multilateralism, international cooperation and a system of peacekeeping rooted in the UN charter. But the texts of this period also seem to indicate that China to a greater degree than the previous period sees itself as an integral actor to the international system, and that it has a responsibility not only in promoting international rules and norms, but also in policymaking on the international stage. Large portions of the two white papers are dedicated to emphasizing not only which the duties armed forces have in the international stage and how they are going to act to fulfil them, but also to how China, with its increasingly important position must provide capabilities to aid less powerful actors.<sup>171</sup> Falling in line with the notion of responsible power (at least rhetorically), ideas such as collective security and the responsibility of great powers in providing this is a red line throughout the speeches and documents.

From the way the international system is discussed in the texts, with elements such as increasing globalization, interdependence and multilateral cooperation being described in a positive manner, I interpret this as China coming into its own as an increasingly powerful actor on the international stage and positioning itself as a “normative vanguard”.<sup>172</sup> Generally speaking, the texts go a long way in confirming and upholding specific international norms, while also containing a slightly reformist attitude, for example with regards to the references made to the five principles. Though where these references are made, they are never explicitly presented as an exemplary framework for all nations to abide by, but rather as guiding principles for Chinese policymaking. The manner in which these norms, principles and the nature international system is discussed does however contain hints of dissatisfaction. Where China pursues a cooperative and internationalist line of reasoning, it also implicitly seems to

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<sup>170</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 3

<sup>171</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 56 - 60

<sup>172</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 10

be making the argument that its own pattern of behaviour is a template for other states. And certain aspects of the texts give the impression that other major actors are being too obstinate and self-centred, risking collective security for national security and not doing enough in the work for “peaceful coexistence”.<sup>173</sup>

The discussion of the role of the security council serves to illustrate this. The UN Security council is repeatedly presented as the most significant institution when it comes to maintaining international peace and security and it is understood as the most important forum for discussing the most important issues of the international system. The texts praise the security council as having an “irreplacable role” in resolving all major issues relating to peace and security, whether globally or regionally.<sup>174</sup> This expressed favour for the UN and its security council is interesting, not just because it indicates a general acceptance of ruling norms of international relations, but also because when contextualized with other parts of the texts it may indicate an expressed desire of standardizing international behaviour. When one considers the vocal support given to growing multipolarity and multilateral cooperation and development outside of the major powers given in the documents, the support for the UN can be understood as China defining the security council as the only legitimate platform of IR decision making on peace and security. It is made clear through texts that a varied set of norms and approaches to peacekeeping is useful and often necessary, and that the security council thus serves as an important tool to avoid hegemonism.<sup>175</sup> In both the 2005 and 2009 speeches, the strengthening of UN security council decision making and a discouragement of “coercive measures” and peacekeeping or interventions outside of the UN are emphasized.<sup>176</sup> When looking at the historical context, the NATO campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the earlier intervention in former Yugoslavia would have been fresh in memory. Given this, the vocal support for the strengthening of the Security council may be interpreted as an attempt by China to condemn such actions and break what is perceived as hegemonic, extra-judicial powerplay. Support for UNPKOs with a basis in Security council decision making would thus serve to dissuade future extra-UN operations while simultaneously serving to create a balanced and standardized set of behaviour for issues relating to peacekeeping and security.

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<sup>173</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2008). p. 6 - 10

<sup>174</sup> Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the Security Council Summit. (2005).

<sup>175</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2008). p. 26-28

<sup>176</sup> Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the Security Council Summit. (2005).

In summary, while traces of reformism and dissatisfaction to current norms can be traced, these are generally subtle and implicit. There is little trace of vocal revisionism. The primary issues concerning norm dissatisfaction are presented as “common challenges” that are best served by increased multilateral cooperation, strengthening the UN security council, and bolstering support for the norms established by the UN charter.<sup>177</sup> This leads me to see the China of this period as placed firmly on the pro-order side of the normative dimension.

#### 4.2.3 Distributive satisfaction

When it comes to the dimension of distributive satisfaction, the white papers and speeches are far less ambiguous than the normative dimension. In both the speeches and the papers, it is made clear that China sees the current balance of power as un conducive to handling current security issues:

*“The international community is increasingly facing comprehensive, diverse and complex security threats. The world is not yet peaceful. Political, economic and security problems and geographical, ethnic and religious contradictions are interconnected and complex. Hegemonism and power politics remain key factors undermining international security.”<sup>178</sup>*

Both the way this quote is formulated, as well as the context of other formulations in the texts leads me to the conclusion that whereas China sees the issues of hegemonism and power politics as undermining international security, it does not see itself as contributing to these factors in any significant way. Looking back to the issue of strengthening the security council and making more efforts to enforce the UN charter, as discussed in the previous section, I believe this also signifies Chinese dissatisfaction with other actors having too much influence on important security issues. The emphasis of the only normative legitimator of international security being the UN, and that coercive measures should be reserved to the security council might also indicate a general dissatisfaction with the distributive measures of other actors. It is indeed stressed in the 2008 white paper that no actors can forego China when it comes to issues of security on an international scale.<sup>179</sup> I interpret this to signify Chinese dissatisfaction in two significant ways; Firstly, and relating back to the normative dimension, it signifies that China understands the Security Council to be a platform where it more effectively can

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<sup>177</sup> Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session. (2009).

<sup>178</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 3

<sup>179</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2008). p. 3.

exercise control over international developments and help curb unwanted power politics. Secondly, I take Chinese formulations on its increasing connection to the international system and its increased economic leverage as a major economic power to indicate that China believes it should be given a greater “place in the sun”, and that hegemonism, power politics and extra-UN operations are a hinderance for achieving this. In the 2006 white paper outlines are made of what is perceived as the most significant Challenges to Chinese security and to global security in general. While the document presents relations to other major actors as generally favourable, it does also emphasize that it sees strategic manoeuvres, containment and a lack of consultation and cooperation on significant security issues as limiting Chinese capacity to participate in security measures such as peacekeeping and also prevents the development of “optimal” relations with other major powers.<sup>180</sup>

It is indeed stressed that China believes some actors to be too significant in the formulation of peacekeeping policy and the execution of PKOs, with this being do the disadvantage of other actors. While not explicitly stating that China is one of the disadvantaged states it can at least be considered an expression of dissatisfaction in the fact that it indicates that the current balance of power is not optimal. As already touched upon, the documents also prevent a heavily positive view of increased multilateralism, and champion multi-polarity. This is heavily tied to the opposition of hegemonism and “coercive measures” without UN mandates. It is made clear that China does not believe that powerful actors should make decisions affecting global security without consulting other major actors:

*“First, we should uphold the Council's authority by adhering to multilateralism. Only by strengthening multilateral cooperation, enhancing the role of the United Nations and maintaining the authority of the Security Council in particular, can we effectively cope with increasing global threats and challenges and truly realize the universal security. When it comes to major issues bearing on world peace and security, the Council should be left to judge on the merits of the actual situation and act collectively in accordance with the UN Charter.”<sup>181</sup>*

I see this as an expression of distributive dissatisfaction, because it implies the lack of not only a satisfactory “legal” environment in which peace and security can be discussed with the considerations of all relevant actors, but also because it implies that hegemonic or great

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<sup>180</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 1

<sup>181</sup> Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the Security Council Summit. (2005).



powers can enforce their own security policies upon weaker actors. A strong UN is perceived as beneficial for China's own personal development of other actors because it counterbalances the influence of other security organizations such as NATO and allows China to influence global security developments. I thus understand this expressed support for multilateralism and strengthening of the UN security council as an attempt to shift power away from the existing great powers and towards both other great powers such as China and other, lesser powers.

This support for multilateralism, multi-polarity and the strengthening of lesser actors is also apparent in the way the texts address "the global south". Particularly in the 2005 speech, then President Hu Jintao positions himself as something of a "champion of the global south". He makes the argument for a "democratic reform" of Security council decision making and makes it clear that the current peacekeeping regime has not taken the concerns of the global south sufficiently into account:

*"Third, we should improve the Council's decision making by giving greater expression to democratic principles. The democratization of international relations represents the trend of the times, which ought to be reflected in the Security Council. Developing countries, which make up over two thirds of the UN membership, are obviously underrepresented in the Security Council. China stands for an enlarged Security Council based on a broad consensus, and increased representation of developing countries, African countries in particular, thus giving more countries, especially the small and medium-sized countries greater access to its decision making."*<sup>182</sup>

Chinese support for the democratization of international relations is interesting for several reasons. First, as I will touch upon to a greater degree in the next section it is significant because of the implications of China, an authoritarian one-party state advocating for democracy (though explicitly in international relations). But to the point of distributive dissatisfaction, it is interesting because it can be read as China positioning itself as an advocate for increasing the capabilities of "southern" states in order to achieve greater distributive balance. It is made clear in the same speech that the Security Council should "renew its commitments to Africa" and "listen more attentively to the concerns and positions of African countries" on the matter of peacekeeping.<sup>183</sup> The other texts further make it clear that China sees the global economic development is uneven. And that this lack of capabilities

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<sup>182</sup> Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the Security Council Summit. (2005).

<sup>183</sup> Statement by President Hu Jintao of China at the Security Council Summit. (2005).

in certain parts of the world is contributing to destabilization and conflict. China's solution to this is an increased shift of capabilities from the North to the South.<sup>184</sup> It is not made explicitly clear whether China considers itself part of the "north" or "south". But based on other formulations in the text pointing to the fact that China sees itself as a significant actor that cannot be bypassed, I see the text as making the argument from somewhere in between.

China is not dissatisfied in the way that it is making the explicit argument for more capabilities to be shifted towards itself. China stresses that China has the economic and military strength to guarantee its own security, and that it is increasingly capable of countering security threats and maintain peace in other parts of the world. China argues that it must continue to increase its capabilities, and that this will benefit global development<sup>185</sup> This implies to me that it is not revisionist in the sense that it believes that "all the pieces are on the other side of the board", but rather it is dissatisfied with a specific concentration of capabilities among specific actors which is taking itself out of the picture when it comes to security policymaking.

Altogether, I see China in this period as falling within the pro-order, positionalist category. China not only makes it clear that it sees the UN charter as central set of IR norms, but it also frames the Security council as the only legitimate source of peacekeeping policy and advocates for strengthening its institutions. Furthermore, it makes it clear that hegemonism and extra-UN security operations based on "coercive measures" are detrimental towards effective peacekeeping, and advocates for the rebalancing of power and influence towards the global south. I see this as a combination of satisfaction with the ruling institutions and norms of peacekeeping with a dissatisfaction of the capabilities that enable peacekeeping and with its lack of influence over extra-UN operations, such as the NATO-led campaigns.

#### 4.2.4 The Westphalian dimension

When comparing the texts of this period to those of the previous period, there is a general sense of continuity on the westphalian – post-westphalian dimension. The documents and speeches still emphasize the importance of sovereignty and national self-determination. And the view that peacekeeping interventions should require host-nation consent and should not

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<sup>184</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2006). p. 3 - 4

<sup>185</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2006). p. 7 - 8

intervene in “internal affairs” is still clear. Even so, there seems to have been a slight shift towards the post-Westphalian side in some respects. The texts of this period are generally more ambivalent on these issues, not making as concise and explicit statements on sovereignty. The anchoring in the UN charter, as well as the five principles is still present, but the five principles are no longer framed as universal norms that all states should abide by. The texts of this period are also somewhat more open to the idea that national sovereignty does not always have a primary position and leave open the possibility (though very ambivalently) that other concerns might be significant enough to sacrifice sovereignty to some degree. While never explicitly favouring a weakening of sovereignty, the texts to some degree give indications of a more flexible concept of sovereignty.

The texts all refer to the UN Charter as the ruling set of principles for questions of peacekeeping and security policy. With this as a basis, and with the context of other norms prevalent in the texts such as the five principles, the texts still maintain a quite Westphalian orientation. It is made clear that peaceful solutions to regional and international disputes, a rejection of the use or threat of force and national self-determination are seen as central to maintaining international order.<sup>186</sup> The two white papers make it clear that China is pursuing a “security environment conducive to China's peaceful development.” and that this is best achieved through military and economic relations that are “nonaligned, non-confrontational and not directed against any third party”. It also still firmly abides by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence as the ruling principles of its foreign policy.<sup>187</sup> As already discussed, these principles are quite unambiguous in their defence of a more traditional concept of national sovereignty, and this concept is indeed still prevalent in the texts of this era. National self-determination still emphasized, and it is often framed in a way that indicates a more westphalian conception. China, while advocating for peacekeeping and security cooperation to achieve peaceful coexistence still stresses the importance of such measures not interfering with any state’s internal affairs. Whether it be peacekeeping operations, economic projects or the exchange of military equipment, such measures should be limited to achieving national and international stability, without imposing duties or sanctions upon the recipient states.<sup>188</sup> Interestingly, the 2009 speech seems to root this support for sovereignty in an idea of both

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<sup>186</sup> Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session. (2009).

<sup>187</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p. 10

<sup>188</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2008). p. 62

diversity, tolerance and independence while also making an explicit statement in support of human rights:

*“We should acknowledge differences in cultural tradition, social system and values and respect the right of all countries to independently choose their development paths. We should vigorously promote and protect human rights, increase dialogue and remove misunderstanding. We should advocate a spirit of openness and tolerance and let different civilizations and models of development draw on each other's strength through competition and comparison and achieve common development by seeking common ground while reserving differences.”<sup>189</sup>*

This quote is interesting primarily because while it makes it clear that political diversity is important and that all countries must be free to choose their own development, the reference to human rights leaves a fair bit of ambivalence about what this notion of sovereignty entails. China has often been viewed as quite reserved on matters of human rights and other humanitarian matters. The explicit support for human rights leaves us with the question of what sort of understanding lies behind the use of this term. The early era texts, and part of the texts of this era seem to be operating with the term's “humanitarian” and “human rights” as material and economic concepts. The focus is thus on providing citizens with increasing economic prosperity and covering basic needs. But the context the term is used within in this specific instance, with an emphasis of tolerance, openness, and dialogue (though specifically referring to interactions between states) might indicate a broader conceptualization. The choice of such words bears some parallels to more liberal-democratic conceptualizations of human rights, where non-material factors such as personal liberty, cultural and religious diversity, political inclusion, and limits on government powers are emphasized. While I find it unlikely that the quote (and the rest of the texts) reflects a conceptualization of the term that aligns with this, I still find the choice of words fascinating because of the ambivalence that can be inferred from them. Regardless of intentions, when coming from a major power such as China such a choice of phrasing will contribute to establishing a normative standard for dealing peacekeeping and security issues. When issues such as human rights and humanitarian violations are addressed in this manner it is likely to contribute towards a shared understanding that might indeed legitimate sanctions or even interventions. And while it is made clear that the defence of national sovereignty still holds a significant space in Chinese

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<sup>189</sup> Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session. (2009).

foreign policy, it is also made clear in the texts (both explicitly and implicitly) that both humanitarian and security might sometimes be severe enough to require a limitation on individual states.<sup>190</sup>

It is also interesting to note that the text of this period stresses the importance of co-existence and mutual development in a different manner than those of the previous period. The white papers of this period highlight how the increasingly intertwined and globalized society has fostered a security environment in which no major state can “free ride” on the efforts of others.<sup>191</sup> In cases such as economic or humanitarian crises, the documents do indicate (though often not very explicitly) that all states must be willing to sacrifice freedom and short-term gain to achieve peace and security for all. China points to its own development and highlights that it has previously made the mistakes of striving for isolation and autarky and that this is a policy that proved conducive to its own or to global development. It is stressed that all states work must establish a future based on win-win cooperation and that globalization and economic interdependence has led to a world in which the internal affairs of states might heavily impact other states.<sup>192</sup> Security challenges are now presented as requiring multilateral solutions. The solution to this, as already discussed above, seems to be a strengthening of the UN. The UN, and particularly the security council is presented as the key institution in dealing with this with future challenges, because it is the only institution that can handle the complexity of international security cooperation.<sup>193</sup> I do find this to reflect a shift away from a more Westphalian outlook, but it is a relatively subtle one. The notion that the nation-state cannot exist as a solitary actor and that international actors must sometimes restrict internal, national policymaking based on the impact it has on other states is certainly at odds with a strict interpretation of Westphalian sovereignty. More interestingly, the voiced support for strengthening the UN and for multilateral security policy does represent a shift away from the idea of national sovereignty. A strengthened UN, with a greater room for action does imply a weakening of aspects of traditional sovereignty. To achieve effective policymaking through the UN and limit free-riding issues, the room of available actions for individual states would have to be limited to some degree.

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<sup>190</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2008). p. 3

<sup>191</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). p 5 – 6.

<sup>192</sup> Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session. (2009).

<sup>193</sup> Hu Jintao Addresses the General Debate of the 64th General Assembly Session. (2009).

There is also some ambivalence in the previously discussed ideas concerning “democracy in international relations”. The choice of words might leave one with the conclusion that this is a different way of framing increased multi-polarity and greater balance of power. But it is also important to remember that China does consider itself to be a democratic republic, and thus the phrase might imply democracy in the sense of greater formalized control over security issues, or even the advancement of some form of party-based political system. Regardless of intended meaning, the phrase is still interesting, because it indicates to me that democracy is perceived by China to be more legitimate than other systems of government. While terms such as democracy and human rights likely are not understood or intended in a manner that is equal to a western, liberal-democratic understanding of the terms, they are still significant in their effects. First, the fact that such words are used so freely by such a major factor will likely set a normative standard for other, smaller actors. Furthermore, it might indicate that China believes it to be important to position itself on the “right side” on with regards to these issues to be perceived as a legitimate actor. And whether such motivations are truly underlying, the choice of language does entail a somewhat more post-Westphalia orientation.

There is much ambivalence in the texts of this period, specifically regarding the normative aspects of peacekeeping and security policy. Often, I find the implications, intended or otherwise, of what is written to be the most significant. Generally, there is a degree of continuity from the previous period, but also change in significant ways. It is interesting to note that the issues of multilateralism, peaceful development, democracy, and human rights are explicitly supported, indicating that it is important for China to (verbally) champion such ideas. It is however unclear what the intended meaning of these terms are, but taking the statements at face value, it seems clear that China has undergone a significant ideological reorientation during this period. While the notion of national sovereignty is still given much emphasis, the texts of this period still exhibit a greater degree of flexibility (and vagueness) when it comes to this issue. All in all, I see the texts of this period primarily as reflecting Chinese “maturing” and coming into its own as a major power. Having become much more integrated and experienced as a major international actor, it is to some degree natural for China to nuance its views and assume more moderate views on these issues. While these texts do indicate a significant change in many ways, I still place as falling more towards the Westphalian side of the dimension. Despite these texts including normative ambivalence and might implicitly open for some post-Westphalia ideas, they still exhibit adherence to a more

traditional concept of sovereignty, rooted both in the UN charter and in China's Five principles of Peaceful coexistence.

#### 4.2.5 Summary

Table 6 summarizes some of the key findings from the documents of this period. I find that China has moved towards a positionalist position. On the dimension of normative satisfaction China is far more willing to show support for the current order, yet on the distributive dimension it has shifted clearly towards an anti-order position. The Westphalian dimension is more ambivalent, with China showcasing a more flexible concept of sovereignty, and is even willing to show some sense of support for democracy and human rights, though subtly so. I still find that China generally leans more towards the Westphalian side of the scale.

<b>Idea Dimension</b>	<b>Key ideas</b>	<b>Position</b>
<b>Normative satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More subtle in advocating for reform</li> <li>- The UN charter is promoted as central to Chinese peacekeeping policy.</li> <li>- Un Security council highlighted as the most significant international institution. Advocacy for strengthening.</li> <li>- Extra-UN peacekeeping and intervention dissuaded.</li> <li>- Less emphasis on the Five principles.</li> </ul>	Pro-order
<b>Distributive Satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current balance of power indicated to be negative for international security.</li> <li>- Documents presents relations to other major actors as generally favourable.</li> <li>- Strategic manoeuvres, containment and a lack of consultation and cooperation on significant security issues presented as limiting Chinese capacity to participate in security measures.</li> <li>- Certain actors argued to be too significant in the formulation of peacekeeping policy and the execution of PKOs.</li> <li>- Emphasis on strengthening smaller actors.</li> </ul>	Anti-balance
<b>Westphalian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis that peacekeeping interventions should require host-nation consent and should not intervene in “internal affairs”.</li> <li>- Un charter emphasized</li> <li>- Five principles still emphasized – yet not as significantly</li> </ul>	More ambivalence - Westphalian
<b>Post-Westphalian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unclear advocacy for human rights and Democracy in international relations</li> </ul>	
<b>Combined position</b>		Positionalist - Westphalian

*Table 6: Summary Chinas position on the idea-dimensions in the middle-era*



### 4.3 Chinese peacekeeping in the current era

For the final period of this analysis, I will be addressing one white paper and two speeches dating from 2015 up until 2021. The documents thus stretch from the mid-2010s and until the past two years, while also outlining prospects for China's participation in peacekeeping. The 2020 white paper is unique, because it is the only white paper that specifically addresses peacekeeping. It serves as both a summary of China's experience with UNPKOs, a presentation of both strengths and flaws of the current peacekeeping system as well as an outline for China's future goals and ambitions in peacekeeping. In this way the documents of this era serve not only to highlight Chinese policy on peacekeeping, in the present, recent past and future, but also to provide insights into China's own experiences with and rationale for participating in UNPKOs.

A prevailing theme in the texts of this period is the notion that China is "Contributing to Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind". In a chapter of the 2020 white paper, bearing this title, the current landscape for peacekeeping and the general security situation is summarized:

*«The world is going through profound changes unseen in a century, and the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating such changes. Uncertainties and destabilizing factors in the international security situation are on the rise, and there are diverse threats to world peace. The UNPKOs are faced with multiple challenges, including increasing constraints, heavier tasks, and a more complex security environment. China will continue to play its part as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, firmly support and participate in the UNPKOs, actively respond to the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative, and support reasonable and necessary reforms in the UNPKOs.»<sup>194</sup>*

The theme of a "shared future for mankind" is, as I have discussed previously, an oft repeated point in Chinese official communications. This concept, or similar ones can be found in a wide range of Chinese official documents, and it can to some degree be understood as a central slogan of Chinese foreign policy.<sup>195</sup> Regarding China's role in peacekeeping, this suggests that China finds peacekeeping important because it is committed to maintaining world peace and stability. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China

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<sup>194</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2020). China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations. Beijing. p. 16.

<sup>195</sup> Zhang, F. (2019). The Xi Jinping Doctrine of China's International Relations. Asia Policy, 14(3), p. 10 – 12.

recognizes the importance of UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) in achieving this goal. Furthermore, China is willing to actively respond to the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative and support reasonable and necessary reforms in the UNPKOs. This implies that China sees peacekeeping to promote its foreign policy objectives, including enhancing its international standing as a responsible global power and contributing to a stable and prosperous international system.

Indeed, much emphasis is placed on the fact that China has historical and cultural heritage that is unique among the major powers. China continues to position itself as a nation that values peace and harmony in their very way of life. The pursuit of peace, amity and harmony is stated to be the primary aspiration of the Chinese nation, and this is presented as being rooted the culture and biology of the Chinese people:

*“The philosophy of upholding peace, harmony, cooperation and common development has been passed down from generation to generation in China. For millennia, peace has been in the veins and the DNA of the Chinese nation. It is a consistent goal of China's armed forces.»<sup>196</sup>*

Chinese participation in peacekeeping operations is thus framed as an aspect of the cultural identity of China. China draws on themes and formulations from both Confucian, Buddhist and Socialist writings to establish a peacekeeping policy rooted in “harmonious among all nations”. Chinese participation in peacekeeping operations is thus said to be rooted in a pursuit of peace that is part of the “genes of the Chinese nation”.<sup>197</sup> China adopts a paternalistic attitude, emphasizing that it’s because of its own cultural heritage, as well as its power and important geopolitical position, it has a responsibility to work towards a peaceful, stable, and prosperous international society.

#### 4.3.1 Normative satisfaction

When comparing the texts of this period with those of the previous period, there is generally a great degree of continuity in terms of language and ideas. Both the 2020 white paper as well as the two speeches exhibit a general support for what is perceived as ruling norms, as well as to operate within the current normative order. Specific dedication is given to emphasizing the

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<sup>196</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 4.

<sup>197</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 4.

importance of the UN charter, as well as the Hammarskjold principles of peacekeeping. China continues to position itself as a champion of peace and mutually beneficial development, and stresses that it remains dedicated to a UN centred international system. The basic rules and norms that govern international relations are seen as being underpinned by the “purposes and principles of the UN charter” and China reaffirms its dedication to these by arguing that it has worked diligently to uphold these.<sup>198</sup>

There is also a clear continued support for increased multilateralism. Global unity in development is stated as one of China’s primary ambitions for the following decades. Despite facing challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, increased great power-rivalry and other security challenges such as terrorism and piracy, the texts state that China remains committed to cooperation and mutual development.<sup>199</sup> Chinese development is presented as beneficial globally. The argument is made that as China continues to develop and enhance its capabilities, the rest of the world will reap the benefits. The texts further states that its forces are committed to strengthening multilateral communication, and building trust and that military cooperation is a means of achieving this. Peacekeeping is thus presented as a platform for achieving greater trust and confidence, both in conflict areas as well as in the major powers. In this way, China continues to position itself as a responsible and peaceful actor whose interests are global development and a cessation of conflicts.<sup>200</sup>

In the 2020 white paper, China expresses a “vision of global governance that emphasizes extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits.”<sup>201</sup> While China remains supportive of the UN system, it still makes it clear that there is room for improvement. This implies a level of dissatisfaction with the current ruling norms of international relations, which often prioritize individual nation-states' interests and power struggles over collaborative problem-solving and shared benefits. The phrase "global governance" is interesting, because when taken as it is it suggest support for a greater degree of supranational control, with nation-states seeing limits to their own room of actions. This is specifically of interest to the question of national sovereignty, which I discuss further in the Westphalian dimension. Given the context of this white paper specifically addressing peacekeeping and

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<sup>198</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 3.

<sup>199</sup> Speech at the 4th UN Peacekeeping Ministerial General Wei Fenghe, State Councilor and Minister of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China (2021).

<sup>200</sup> China is Here for Peace, Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China at the United Nations Peacekeeping Summit. (2015).

<sup>201</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 5.

China's extensive support for multipolarity, I take it to suggest a desire for more multilateralism and cooperation on a global scale, rather than a system based on unilateralism and dominance by a few powerful nations. Additionally, the emphasis on "dialogue and consultation" and "win-win cooperation" falls in line with Chinese rhetoric in the previous periods, in which coercion and hegemonism are highlighted as major challenges to global security.

One of the significant changes found in the texts of this period is that the expressed ruling principles of China's participation in peacekeeping, and in its general security policies are now rooted in the UN. China makes it clear that it strictly abides by the principles of the UN charter, and with regards to peacekeeping, the Hammarskjold principles. These principles are highlighted as the most fundamental guidelines for peacekeeping operations, and China makes the argument that they should be strictly adhered to.<sup>202</sup> China strongly makes it clear that no country should act beyond their mandate, and that all missions should be carried out with the will of the local people in mind. Though it is not made clear whether these "local peoples" are local civilians, local governments or both.

A striking difference in the texts of this period when compared to the previous two periods, is the complete lack of reference to the Five Principles of Peaceful coexistence. This is interesting, because the five principles are prevalent in other Chinese official documents of this period. The fact that China, when discussing peacekeeping, has specifically chosen to exclude these principles and instead anchor their policies in the UN charter and the Hammarskjold principles does indicate that they have become less reformist and more satisfied with the established norms. It could also indicate that their own five principles may not be the best ruling principles for peacekeeping, or not the best normative groundwork to justify their peacekeeping policies to an international audience.

If there is any sign of normative dissatisfaction to be found in these papers, it is expressed primarily as a desire to improve the system and strengthen the ability of UN peacekeeping operations to curb violence, protect civilians and achieve lasting peace:

*"The peacekeeping system needs to be improved. The peacekeeping operations should be aligned with preventive diplomacy and peace building in sequence and coordinate with*

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<sup>202</sup> China is Here for Peace, Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China at the United Nations Peacekeeping Summit. (2015).

*political mediation, rule of law, national reconciliation and improvement of livelihood at the same time. The UN Security Council should be more attentive to opinions of parties directly involved and troop-contributing countries.*”<sup>203</sup>

This quote does imply some dissatisfaction with the current system of peacekeeping. The notion that the Security Council should be more attentive to involved parties and to troop-contributing countries could signify that China believes that the current ruling principle of peacekeeping is too top-down, and that the largest troop-contributing countries are not given enough say when compared to other, less contributing countries. The 2021 speech affirms this, and further signifies that there are some problems with achieving consensus within the security council, and that this is deteriorating the effectiveness of UNPKOs. Interestingly though, Chinas response to this seems to be to root peacekeeping operations even further in the UN Charter and the Hammarskjold principles.<sup>204</sup> This is interesting because it highlights a significant change in the way China discusses peacekeeping. There is no longer an explicit call for reform, nor to change the ruling norms. Instead, the ruling norms are now being openly supported, and even used in a bid to establish greater formalized control within the security council.

In summary, the documents of these period show a great degree of support for the ruling norms of peacekeeping. China shows a greater willingness to “throw its weight around” within international system, and even explicitly states that the ruling norms must be enforced to a greater degree. China specifically states that it is willing to operate within the current order, and points to the UN charter as a primary set of principles for international relations as well as for peacekeeping.<sup>205</sup> Compared to the documents of the previous two periods, there is little discussion of reforming or changing the norms. Where such ideas do come to light, it is explicitly formulating in the terms of improving rather than reforming. This is quite significant, because the notion that something should be improved rather than reformed implies either satisfaction or a more sophisticated and indirect strategy for reform. It would make little sense for China to speak of improving a set of norms that it did not somewhat

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<sup>203</sup> China is Here for Peace, Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China at the United Nations Peacekeeping Summit. (2015).

<sup>204</sup> Speech at the 4th UN Peacekeeping Ministerial General Wei Fenghe, State Councilor and Minister of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China (2021).

<sup>205</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 1 – 3.

support, and this can be seen clearly in the explicit use of the UN charter and the Hammarskjöld principles to legitimize China's own policies.

#### 4.3.2 Distributive satisfaction

On the dimension of distributive satisfaction, there is a great deal of continuity with the 2000 – 2010 period. In terms of language and talking points, all three texts of this period share similarities with the texts of the previous period. The texts of this period show China as relatively satisfied with the distributive balance of peacekeeping, and the few hints of dissatisfaction are tied to the notion of a more “democratic” international system, as well as of building greater capacities for host nations and providing military aid to African peacekeepers.

The 2020 white paper illustrates that China is willing to speak as an authority on the field of peacekeeping. Throughout the document, the point is made that China's peacekeepers have become a majorly impactful force in UN peacekeeping. They see themselves as naturally tied to the international order, and a lot of time is dedicated to outlining the importance of China's role in peacekeeping:

*“Over the past 30 years, China's armed forces have contributed a growing number of peacekeepers across an expanding range of deployments. From a few military observers at the outset of its involvement, China's armed forces are now sending both formed units and military professionals. Chinese military peacekeepers serve on the UN missions in engineer, medical, transport, helicopter, force protection and infantry units, and as staff officers, military observers and seconded officers. Chinese military peacekeepers have left their footprints in over 20 countries and regions including Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Liberia, Sudan, Lebanon, Cyprus, South Sudan, Mali and the Central African Republic. They have made a tremendous contribution to facilitating the peaceful settlement of disputes, safeguarding regional security and stability, and promoting economic and social development in host nations.”<sup>206</sup>*

China generally seems satisfied with their position in the UN peacekeeping regime, and little is said of how the system could be rebalanced. China seems to understand its position as a major power and describes itself as having a key role in the peacekeeping regime. The

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<sup>206</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2020). p. 6.

importance of Chinese personnel is emphasized throughout the document. As one of the largest troop contributing countries, places a lot of emphasis on its own responsibilities and pledges to work to improve the skills and capabilities of its peacekeeping while maintaining limited military spending. In the white paper it is also emphasized that China, as a permanent member of the UN security council has a particular responsibility for overseeing peacekeeping operations, and play an active role in building a peaceful society.<sup>207</sup> The paper further points out that China the largest troop-contributing country of among the permanent members of the UN Security Council and that of all the UNPKO members it has gone the furthest towards forging its security policies in line with the core principles of the UN. This is interesting for a few reasons. First, it could be understood a proud hinting that the other permanent members of the security council are still working to much “outside” of the UN, and that they are not fulfilling their responsibilities towards UN peacekeeping to the best of their abilities. It could thus be seen at an attempt to draw the other members to contribute more to UN peacekeeping. Secondly, it falls in line with the notion of China wishing to present itself as a responsible major power. By comparing its own contribution to the other major powers in this way, China may be trying to paint a picture of itself as a more peaceful and globally responsible actor. Finally, and most importantly, this outright statement of Chinas importance can be understood as an expression of satisfaction. By recognizing that it is a key actor (at least in its own estimation) and pointing to the fact that it exercises a great deal of power and influence in UNPKOs, China is also implicitly recognizing that the current balance of power is favourable.

There are few statements in the text of this period that exhibit any great degree of distributive dissatisfaction. If any is to be found, it is as it relates to the idea that regional and sub-regional actors. Following from the previous period, the notion that a greater degree of rebalancing of capabilities towards the global south, and in particular towards Africa is still present in the speeches and white paper of this period;

*“Greater support and help should be given to Africa. Africa has the biggest peacekeeping needs. In the long run, the international community and the United Nations should support*

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<sup>207</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 6 - 7.

*African countries in increasing their own capacity in keeping peace and stability so that African issues can be addressed in an African way.*”<sup>208</sup>

*“We need to invest more in development and improve the host nations’ own capacity of development to realize sustainable peace and development.”*<sup>209</sup>

The white paper goes on to state that the major powers must work to build stronger and more intricate partnerships for peacekeeping, and that there is a need for the UN to provide enabling capabilities for host countries and lesser powers that wishes to contribute but that lack experience. There still seems to be a belief that a lot is being done, both by the China and the other major powers to achieve this. China points to the fact that they have themselves contributed with military aid, training, and economic support and that they are cooperating well with other countries to build a greater base of experience and capabilities for future peacekeepers.<sup>210</sup> In making these statements, China seems to continue to position itself both as a responsible power and as a champion of the global south. China is stating outright that it desires a more balanced, multipolar system characterized by multilateral cooperation and mutually beneficial development. This way of advocating for the cause of African countries could be interpreted as a part of a bid to gain influence in the region, but it also exhibits distributive dissatisfaction on the part of smaller countries.

In general, China exhibits less distributive dissatisfaction in the documents of this period when compared to the previous documents. While the speeches and white paper express a degree of dissatisfaction with the lack of capabilities among actors in the global south, they generally also present China as a key actor with a great degree of influence over the peacekeeping regime. All in all, I find China to exhibit a degree of distributive revisionism, though specifically, and perhaps strategically often on behalf on other international actors. I would place China in something of a middling position, though tending towards Positionalist in many regards.

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<sup>208</sup> China is Here for Peace, Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China at the United Nations Peacekeeping Summit. (2015).

<sup>209</sup> Speech at the 4th UN Peacekeeping Ministerial General Wei Fenghe, State Councilor and Minister of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China (2021).

<sup>210</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 12.



### 4.3.3 The Westphalian Dimension

When comparing the documents and speeches of this era to those of the previous two periods, it is perhaps on the Westphalian dimension that the most significant changes in ideas and general language can be found. Compared to the texts of the previous periods, and particularly the first, the texts of this period put far less emphasis on the concept of sovereignty and show a far greater tolerance for breaches in sovereignty. While the texts still show adherence to a peacekeeping system based in the UN charter, in which host consent, territorial integrity and political independence are emphasized,<sup>211</sup> they also show support for peacekeeping measures that might clash with these principles.

There is however still a clear Westphalian element to be found in both the speeches and the white paper. China still stresses the importance of equality for all members of the international system, and makes it clear that the host nation to peacekeeping operations should remain free to control social, political, and economic policy:

*“China advocates that the rights of host-nation governments to independently choose social systems and development paths based on their national conditions, and local people's rights to subsistence and development should be respected. Only then will host nations be able to focus on development and reconstruction so that peacekeeping gains and sustainable peace are secured.”<sup>212</sup>*

This quote illustrates that the principle of state sovereignty, is seen as an essential component for Chinese peacekeeping. By advocating for the right of host-nation governments to independently choose their own social systems and development paths, China is promoting the idea that each state has the right to govern itself without external interference, it also seems to suggest a limited role for peacekeepers. This is consistent with the Westphalian principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states. The texts emphasize the importance of respecting the territorial integrity of host nations. By highlighting the rights of local people to subsistence and development, China is essentially promoting the idea that peacekeeping operations should not undermine the welfare and development of local communities. In terms of peacekeeping policy, this suggests that China still supports a more passive role for peacekeeping forces, focused on maintaining stability and preventing violence, rather than actively intervening in the internal affairs of other countries. China's

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<sup>211</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2020). p. 5.

<sup>212</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2020). p. 17.

emphasis on respecting state sovereignty and non-intervention may also make it less likely to support any form of political intervention or regime change efforts.

As previously discussed, much emphasis is placed on presenting peace and harmony as central aspects of a Chinese cultural identity. It is stressed that the culture of China's people makes them desire peace and harmony in the world. It is however interesting that China makes it clear that they are pursuing "harmony without uniformity". This is a Chinese term loaded with cultural connotations. The term, which is often attributed to Confucius, but which is prevalent in religious texts of both Buddhism and Taoism. The term can generally be understood as vision of a society characterized by overall harmonious co-existence on the basis of respecting differences and diversity.<sup>213</sup> It has often been applied in policymaking related to China's national minorities, whether it be in the "Five Equal Peoples" principles of republican China<sup>214</sup>, or the affirmative action policies of the CCP.<sup>215</sup> When applied to international relations, this concept falls in line with a more Westphalian outlook. I interpret the use of this term to imply a desire for an international society in which all countries stand free to develop in line with their own cultural ideas. A rejection of uniformity implies a rejection of supranational imposition of political or economic systems. National leaders, while respecting the norms of the UN charter and remaining peaceful, should also remain free to choose their own paths of development, thus avoiding uniformity.

There is however a remarkable shift in the focus on sovereignty in a strict manner. National sovereignty is generally given less explicit attention than in the texts of the previous two periods. As already discussed, the five principles are absent from the documents of this period, and there seems to be a general acceptance on some peacekeeping principles and measures that might infringe on sovereignty. Perhaps due to the nature of the speeches and white paper of this period, specifically addressing peacekeeping, a more nuanced view on sovereignty is apparent. This is illustrated through China's explicit focus on painting a vision of the Chinese people seeking "the wellbeing of humanity".<sup>216</sup> China stresses the importance of peacekeeping operations pursuing the "common good" by preventing loss of life and providing humans with peaceful and prosperous societies. Functional civil societies and prosperous economies are seen as natural parts of this. And while China is still ardent about

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<sup>213</sup> Li, C. (2006). The Confucian Ideal of Harmony. *Philosophy East and West*, 56(4), 583–603

<sup>214</sup> Chow, Peter C. Y. (2008). The "one China" dilemma. Macmillan publishing. p. 30 – 33.

<sup>215</sup> Bhattacharya, A. (2019). Chinese Nationalism Under Xi Jinping Revisited. *India Quarterly*, 75(2), 245–252.

<sup>216</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People's Republic of China. (2020). p. 4.

non-intervention in internal affairs, there are still some statements that seem to indicate that it is the duty of the state to deliver upon this.

The sixth section of the second chapter in the 2020 white paper bears the title “Sowing the Seeds of Hope”. In this section China explicitly states that the ambition of UNPKOs should not only be to pursue a cessation of hostilities, but also to provide all peoples throughout the world with a better life.<sup>217</sup> While stressing traditional international norms such as opposition to the threat or use of force, the paper also states that upholding humanitarianism should be a goal of all nations.<sup>218</sup> This value-laden imperative marks a clear difference from the more reserved and often ambivalent statements of the previous texts. While the vision of a “shared humanity for humankind” has been present to some degree in all the texts I have addressed, it is given far more substance in the 2020 white paper.

The 2020 white paper is also the first text to address post-conflict reconstruction in any serious regard. While the previous texts have usually reserved themselves to the specifics of during-conflict peacekeeping, protection of civilians and capability building, the 2020 white paper presents more of an outline for post-conflict peacekeeping. And in addressing this, China presents some ideas that fall more clearly on post-Westphalian side of the dimension:

*“To participate extensively in post-conflict reconstruction. In a post-war country or region, when a peace agreement is reached, it is essential to restore livelihoods and social order in order to prevent the recurrence of conflict and achieve lasting peace and stability. Chinese peacekeeping troops have played an active role in post-conflict reconstruction of host nations. They built important infrastructure, monitored elections, trained local doctors and nurses, and promoted environmental protection.”<sup>219</sup>*

This quote serves to illustrate Chinas willingness to influence what may be deemed aspects of the internal order of host nations. Though not explicitly advocating for any major breaches of sovereignty, China still exhibits a willingness to “interfere” with internal affairs through the monitoring of elections and the promotion of policies on areas such as environmental protection. The fact that China is willing not only to recognize the importance of elections to post-conflict reconstruction, but also to participate in monitoring highlights a more comprehensive approach to peacekeeping. The white paper does indeed state explicitly that a

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<sup>217</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 9.

<sup>218</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 16.

<sup>219</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 10.

functioning social order is essential to securing peace, and that peaceful civil societies should be built upon humanitarianism, the rule of law, prosperous economies and trusted public officials. I would argue that this line of reasoning stands in opposition to a more clear and reserved notion of limited peacekeeping based on Westphalian principles, in which the host nation is “left to develop its own” path post-conflict. The fact that China is so open to not only laying out the rules for maintaining peace, but for what societies are conducive to maintaining peace shows that it has developed a more nuanced mode of communication on the subject. The fact that China is also willing to “champion a vision of global governance”<sup>220</sup> in which all states must contribute towards a shared future, does indicate a shift towards more post-Westphalian principles. A strengthening of global governance would require a weakening of sovereignty to some degree. By making the argument that on fields such as international peace, economic development, environmental policies and pandemic management states cannot stand alone, and must subject themselves to some degree of global governance, China does implicitly make a case for a turn towards a system in which state sovereignty holds less importance.

In summary, I find that the texts of this period do exhibit an increased level of ambivalence and are far less clear cut when it comes to the Westphalian dimension. While there are elements of the documents that indicate a shift towards post-Westphalian values, such as a more comprehensive outline for post-conflict reconstruction and a call for greater global governance, I still find that there is a tendency towards the Westphalian side of the dimension. While sovereignty is given less emphasis and there is not as clear cut a call for non-intervention, the texts still emphasize the importance of sovereignty through the emphasis of “harmony without unity and the right of all countries to choose their own social systems. This is however not as clear as the previous periods, China has shifted significantly throughout the three periods, and due to the greater degree of ambivalence as well as the explicit support for peacekeeping measures that break with a more traditional concept of sovereignty, I find that it now occupies more of a “middle space” on the Westphalian dimension.

#### 4.3.4 Summary

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<sup>220</sup> Information Office of the State Council Of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). p. 5.

In summary I find that the documents of this period highlight a shift towards the middle in all dimensions with a greater degree of ambivalence and nuance than the previous two periods. In table 7 I summarize some of the key findings. I argue that China, in the documents of the latest period have shifted significantly, particularly in the Westphalian dimension. While still falling within the Postionalist – pro-Westphalia position, I find that this is less clear than in the previous period.

Idea Dimension	Key ideas	Position
<b>Normative satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specific dedication is given to emphasizing the importance of the UN charter, as well as the Hammarskjold principles of peacekeeping.</li> <li>- Support for un system – yet room for improvement – but specifically improvement rather than reform</li> <li>- Increased supranational control.</li> <li>- No reference to five principles</li> <li>- Strengthening un security council</li> </ul>	Middle position leaning pro-order
<b>Distributive Satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on strengthening the global south.</li> <li>- Advocacy for more multilateralism, and a more democratic system.</li> <li>- Apparent satisfaction with own position.</li> <li>- Focus on a shift of power away from major actors.</li> </ul>	Middle position, though leaning towards anti-balance.
<b>Westphalian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on host consent, territorial integrity and political independence.</li> <li>- Host nations to peacekeeping operations should remain free to control social, political, and economic policy</li> <li>- “Harmony without uniformity”</li> </ul>	Middle position – though Westphalian-leaning
<b>Post-Westphalian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local people’s rights are given importance.</li> <li>- Absence of the five principles</li> <li>- Emphasis on the “upholding of humanitarianism”.</li> <li>- Willingness to address and engage in post-conflict reconstruction, including election monitoring.</li> </ul>	
<b>Combined position</b>		Positionalist - Westphalian

Table 7: Summary Chinas position on the idea-dimensions in the current era

## 4.4 Conclusion

In my analysis of a collection of speeches and white papers stretching back to 1995 I find that China has undergone significant changes in the way it addresses both international relations in general and peacekeeping operations in particular. China has shifted significantly along all idea-dimensions as established in my theoretical framework. Interestingly, a shift from anti-order towards pro-order coincides with a shift towards anti-balance of power. The early documents showcase a support, or at least an indifference towards changes in the power structure, both as it relates to peacekeeping and international relations in general. At the same time, they are far more willing to reform the international order and change ruling norms.

I see this as reflecting changes in perception of their own relative position across the three periods. In the early period, China is reluctant to engage in power-politics when faced with (perceived) US hegemony. It stresses neutrality, relatively low military spending and multilateral cooperation. Throughout the subsequent periods, China becomes far more willing to make statements in support of a rebalancing of power and to engage actively to take control, both in peacekeeping and otherwise. This coincides with an increased willingness to engage with the internal affairs of host countries of peacekeeping operations, emphasizing such elements as economic development, humanitarianism, functioning civil societies and even partaking in election monitoring. I tie this to a connection between increases in distributive satisfaction, and a willingness to engage in more intrusive behaviors in international policies. I see it as likely that as states become more satisfied with their own distributive position, they also become more willing to “take charge” and argue for greater changes in the international order as well as to engage in more intrusive diplomatic actions.

It is also clear from my analysis that China perceives itself as a qualitatively different actor, often differentiating itself from the other permanent members of the UNSC. China has consistently emphasized its legacy with colonization and its ties to the “global south” to highlight itself as different from the other permanent five. It thus shows a willingness to take a position as a responsible power, and a representative of the developing world.

In the next Chapter I summarize and discuss these findings and relate them to the academic literature.





# Chapter 5: Conclusion and final remarks

## 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this paper has been to explore the underlying ideas behind Chinese participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations and outline how changes in those ideas reflect changes in the way China portrays itself, and communicates its preferences, ambitions and intentions in international relations. My intention has not been to uncover changes in policy, or actual, institutional changes within the Chinese leadership. Rather, the goal has been to highlight changes in the way China “communicates itself and its policies to a foreign audience”. My argument is that such changes may highlight important aspects of China’s beliefs about international relations, most significantly being what sort of behavior China sees as legitimate and what sort of actors it perceives to be legitimate.

In my analysis, I find that several changes have indeed taken place, but there is also a great degree of consistency. In the three periods of analysis, I find that China has shifted from a reformist actor, primarily concerned with changing normative aspects of the international order, towards a positionalist actor. The most recent speeches and documents relatively positively about the current normative orders, to the degree of actively advocating for them. This does however coincide with a shift towards a call for a shift of power towards the global south. An important finding related to this shift is that China has consistently through all three periods portrayed itself as a qualitatively different actors, all of whom are described as carrying a colonial legacy, and therefore seemingly incapable of fully understanding the problems of the global south. It is also significant to note that while China has remained within the westphalian category throughout all periods, it has shifted significantly towards a “middle position”. While China still consequently embraces traditional Westphalian concepts such as sovereign supremacy and an opposition to breaches of sovereignty and non-consensual intervention it nevertheless seems to have adopted a greater degree of flexibility in its understanding of sovereignty and willingness to consider more “intrusive” aspects of peacekeeping as legitimate.

Below I discuss the implications of my findings I have made in my analysis both within and across the three periods. I discuss the ways in which these findings could be interpreted with the basis in IR-theory, and which implications these findings might have for our

understanding of China, rising powers, peacekeeping participation. I furthermore make some statements regarding what implications these findings might have for China's future development, both within and outside of peacekeeping operations.

## 5.2 Ideas and peacekeeping

In my analysis I have thoroughly examined five white papers and four speeches, stretching across a period of 25 years. Based on a theoretical framework rooted in revisionist and westphalian – post-westphalian theory I have attempted to highlight how specific ideas have been driving forces behind China's increased support for UNPKOs. I find that throughout these 25 years there has undoubtedly been important changes, both in the way China presents its policies to an international audience and in the way it chooses to legitimize such operations.

In this way I find that ideas have been important both as underlying assumptions for Chinese perspectives of peacekeeping and as a way for China to frame these perspectives. While much of my work has shown me that other assumptions, such as those of Stähle and Fung have been valid and useful contributions to the literature on Chinese peacekeeping participation, I argue that my analysis might serve to outline some of the more basic understandings that contribute to their findings. Stähle's argument that significant changes in Chinese peacekeeping, most significantly the Brahmini report of 2000 does correlate with my analysis in the fact that I find the most significant changes between 1995 and 2000 (the initial and middle periods of my document selection). I still argue that these changes are gradual, and that ideas that were markedly present in the documents of the first are still present in several important ways throughout the latter two periods. By pointing to this I argue that Chinese UNPKO participation must be understood as part of a longer process in which factors such as the Brahmini report have been important, but not altogether deciding. I also see Fung's notion of changes in the Chinese identity as somehow consistent with my findings, but I find that this can better be understood through Changes in both ideologies, international standing and general satisfaction.

I find that significant ideas have been present and continually developing throughout all periods. I also believe that many of these ideas are rooted both in an instrumental application on the side of the Chinese leadership as a result of seeking status and attempting to take part

in the shaping of international norms and institutions, and in significant changes as a result of internal ideological changes and China's development as a global power. I thus see the ideas that I have rooted in my theoretical framework as central for understanding China's participation in UNPKOs because they can tell us something about how China "maturing" as a global power led to changes in the perceived necessity for international renown and thus to changes in the way they present their policies. It also tells us something about how changes in distributive satisfaction might lead to changes in both normative satisfaction as well as in perceptions on sovereignty and the position of the state. For the last three decades China's significant growth have led them to become increasingly integrated to a "global community" both economically and politically. With their own interests being tied to this community to a greater degree than before, and the distribution of capabilities shifting towards China and their neighbouring countries it is likely that China has become far more invested in global developments than before. Stability, relative peacefulness, and economic growth would then be more essential to securing their own interests. Securing global peace and stability may be instrumental to China for securing their own international markets and flow of goods. Such behaviour is also likely to improve China's international standing and to garner international sympathy. Their changing focus when it comes to international sovereignty, and their emphasis on the strengthening of African peacekeepers may thus be seen in the light of both an instrumental emphasis on developing bi- and multilateral connections in the region, a paternalistic desire to portray itself as a champion of global south actors, and a desire for protecting their own interests in the region. I believe that my findings could be taken as indicative of such notions, but I primarily find that China's changing motivations and increased support for UNPKOs, as expressed in the selected documents, highlight how China's developing power has led them to take a more proactive role in shaping global norms and institutions.

### 5.3 Findings and reflections

Generally, I believe that there are some central points that can be taken away from the documents that illustrate both changes and consistencies in Chinese policy during the chosen period of analysis.

First, the documents highlight how sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries are consistently highlighted in all the documents and speeches, but that there nevertheless has been a change in the degree to which these principles are emphasized. China still exhibits a wariness of external interference, supranational governance, and foreign intervention in the affairs of other countries and seeks to promote a norm of respect for national sovereignty. I do however argue that the documents exhibit a change towards greater flexibility with regards to this concept. In the latest documents I have analysed, China shows a greater willingness to take part in operations and tasks that may breach with some aspects of national sovereignty, as well as exhibiting a willingness to legitimize concepts such as international democracy and election monitoring.

Secondly, I argue that my analysis has shown how there has been a degree of shifting ideas as it comes to general satisfaction with the international order. While there are still aspects of the latest documents that might indicate some dissatisfaction, I perceive China to be far more content with its distributive position, as well as the normative basis of international politics. It is however important to note that the promotion of a global society based on specific norms and values is consistent throughout the selected documents.

Some form of promotion of a new international political and economic order can be found in most of the selected documents. And this is usually also connected to a strong and consistent emphasis of multilateralism, multipolarity and cooperation. China's participation in international peacekeeping missions and its support for multilateral institutions such as the United Nations might therefore be understood as an instrumental aspect of a commitment to promoting international cooperation and collaboration. It may suggest that China views cooperation as essential for addressing global challenges and achieving its own goals. I also see this as coming as a result of new perceptions of the state of the international society, as well as of perceived changes in China's own relative position.

Finally, I find that there has been a consistent focus on mutual development and progress. Economic development, societal progress and international stability is emphasized to a much greater degree than factors such as political institutions or internal policy. This suggests that China sees development and progress as more essential for improving the well-being of its citizens and promoting stability and prosperity in the world. This is also tied to Chinese emphasis on such factors in achieving peaceful resolution of conflicts: China's participation in international peacekeeping missions and its support for peaceful resolution of conflicts

suggests a commitment to avoiding war and promoting peaceful solutions to conflicts. The documents also stress that China sees war and conflict as detrimental to its own interests and the interests of the international community.

## 5.4 Implications

The implications of a China that is in some ways positioning itself as a champion of peace and development are significant. When China presents itself as committed to promoting peace and development around the world and even promotes the notion that these are the aspirations of people everywhere it is taking part in establishing a standard for all nations. By presenting itself as a proponent of peace and development, China is positioning itself as a responsible global actor, but it is also implicitly delegitimizing contrasting behaviour. Whether this is what informs Chinese foreign policymaking on the daily is naturally open for discussion. But in taking the stance that it does, China is laying down a framework for which to judge their own behaviour against.

China remains sceptical of certain elements of, yet willing to work within the bounds of the existing international order. Several aspects of the documents I have examined imply, often strongly, that China believes that the current international order is not based on principles of mutual respect, equality, and peaceful coexistence, and that a new order is needed to achieve lasting peace and stability. This could be seen as a critique of what is perceived as a dominant Western-led order and a call for greater diversity in international politics. However, China is still exhibiting a willingness to work within this framework and is willing to reform rather than reject the current order. China is generally promoting a vision based on international cooperation and collaboration: The documents and speeches generally suggest that China sees international cooperation as the key to addressing global challenges. By promoting a vision of international cooperation and collaboration, China is presenting itself as a partner and leading figure to other countries in achieving shared objectives. It thus may be understood as an attempt at improving its own international status by accruing influence and soft power.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Götz, E. (2021). Status Matters in World Politics, *International Studies Review*, Volume 23, Issue 1, 228–247, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viaa046>

Ideas matter not only in how they serve as devices for policymakers in creating, framing, and presenting their policies, but also because they are likely to influence action. As Chinese perspectives on the international order and their views on issues such as sovereignty, government responsibility and territorial integrity changes, China is likely to change its choice of actions as well.<sup>222</sup> China's changing views on and increased participation in peacekeeping operations highlights this. As China becomes more open to participating in peacekeeping operations and accepting international norms, it is likely to pursue greater cooperation with other nations in dealing with conflicts and crises. It is also likely for China to take greater part in international governance and take initiative in other aspects of global order.

This is likely to lead to increased Influence in International Organizations, and in the shaping of future peacekeeping mandates. China's growth combined with its changing attitude towards peacekeeping has already led to increased influence within international organizations such as the United Nations, where China is already a permanent member of the Security Council. By being more willing to participate in peacekeeping missions and accepting international norms, China may gain more influence in shaping global policies and decision-making.<sup>223</sup> China's evolving attitude towards peacekeeping operations and international norms is likely a signal of its desire to play a more active role in global governance. As China's power and influence continue to grow, it may seek to take on a greater leadership role in shaping the global order, including in areas such as peace and security or climate governance.

## 5.5 Understanding China's ideas on peacekeeping

China's historical experiences, including the notion of “the century of humiliation” at the hands of foreign powers and a long history of territorial disputes, has likely shaped China's approach to international relations significantly, and is likely to continue to do so.<sup>224</sup> The emphasis on non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries can be seen as a response to past foreign intervention in China's internal affairs. Similarly, China's territorial

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<sup>222</sup> Hudson, V.M. (2005). P. 7 – 8.

<sup>223</sup> Wohlforth, W., De Carvalho, B., Leira, H., & Neumann, I. (2018). Moral authority and status in International Relations: Good states and the social dimension of status seeking. *Review of International Studies*, 44(3), 526-546.

<sup>224</sup> Callahan, William A. “National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism.” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 29, no. 2, 2004, pp. 199–218.

disputes with its neighbours have led it to emphasize the importance of territorial integrity and sovereignty.<sup>225</sup> China's opposition to intervention without consent and the protection of state sovereignty is likely rooted in China's own experience of colonialism and foreign intervention, as well as the strenuous nature of issues such as Taiwan, Tibet and national minorities for China's internal politics.<sup>226</sup> Despite an increased willingness to adopt flexibility on the concept of sovereignty in certain cases, this principle is still likely to remain a central aspect of Chinese foreign policy for years to come. However, China's participation in peacekeeping operations shows that it is willing to set aside its concerns about sovereignty in certain circumstances. This is likely because peacekeeping operations are conducted with the consent of the host country and under the authority of the United Nations. Its seat among the five permanent members of the security council thus gives China significant influence over UNPKOs. This means that China's participation in peacekeeping operations can be consistent with its commitment to the principle of non-interference, as it is usually done with the agreement and invitation of the host country. Furthermore, China's approach to peacekeeping generally emphasizes the importance of respecting the sovereignty of the host country. This means that China's peacekeeping forces are not there to impose their will on the host country, but rather to support and assist the host country in maintaining peace and stability. China's participation in peacekeeping, and the way it now addresses such operations shows that it has managed to balance concerns about sovereignty with the need to address threats to international peace and security. By participating in peacekeeping operations with the consent of the host country and under the authority of the United Nations, China is able to bear what may be perceived as the responsibilities of a great power, while supporting the maintenance of international peace and stability while also respecting the principle of non-interference and the sovereignty of other states.

Another significant factor that must be considered is the impact of Chinese cultural and ideological values. Political principles, such as The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, are rooted in Chinese culture and tradition. These principles emphasize concepts such as harmony, mutual respect, and non-aggression, which are also central to traditional Chinese

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<sup>225</sup> Shulong, C. (1996). National Unity, Sovereignty and Territorial Integration. *The China Journal*, 36, 98–102.

<sup>226</sup> He, B. (2015). Sovereignty and the Taiwan Question. In *Governing Taiwan and Tibet: Democratic Approaches* (pp. 108–126).

philosophy and thought.<sup>227</sup> While my analysis has highlighted how these principles are less prevalent in Chinese communication on peacekeeping today than 25 years ago, they are nevertheless significant in other aspects of Chinese foreign policy. Ideas relating to a global order based on multilateralism, multipolarity, mutual development and cooperation is likely to continue to play a part in Chinese foreign policy for years to come. This is both because they are part of a Chinese foreign identity but also likely because China sees it as beneficial to portray itself as a responsible and cooperative actor.<sup>228</sup>

Political values rooted in China's Communist ideology are also important factors in understanding their support for peacekeeping. The emphasis on cooperation and collaboration can be seen as reflecting communist ideology, which places a high value on collective action and social harmony. Similarly, the focus on development and progress can be seen as reflecting the goal of building a socialist society that is both prosperous and equitable. Chinese ambitions of presenting itself as a champion of an alternative to a liberal-democratic, capitalist order (and previously also to the eastern-bloc communist system of the Soviet Union) can be traced back to the Mao-era policies of Third worldism.<sup>229</sup> As the distributive balance has shifted more towards China, these ambitions have changed significantly, but they are still prevalent. While China is no longer a revolutionary actor, neither is it a status-quo actor, rather, I find that it falls in the category of being a Positionalist actor. China has adopted a more cooperative and responsible attitude towards international relations because of its greater integration. But still, I find that the vision of an alternative order, with an emphasis on institutional reforms and a shift in power towards global south actors still subtly lingers in the most recent documents and speeches.

## 5.6 Peacekeeping, instrumentality and status-seeking

It is also important to consider the “instrumental aspects” of China's contribution to UNPKOs. As this thesis is primarily concerned with how Chinese ideas on peacekeeping reflect changes in self-portrayal as well as normative beliefs, I see it as natural to consider the fact that much of what is expressed in the documents serves an instrumental purpose in framing China as a

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<sup>227</sup> Paradise, J. F. (2009). China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing's Soft Power.

<sup>228</sup> Foot, R. (2001). Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State. *The China Journal*, 45, 1–19.

<sup>229</sup> Kang, L. (2015). Maoism: Revolutionary Globalism for the Third World Revisited.



particular actor. While the selected documents are naturally likely to reflect an expression of China's true policies, they are nevertheless also interesting in the fact that they may also serve a more "unexpressed" purpose in framing China as a specific, legitimate actor.

In their article *Why States Contribute United Nations Peacekeepers*, authors Bellamy and Williams point out that contributing troops to peacekeeping operations may be a part of a sophisticated strategy for enhancing a country's "national prestige" as well as increasing international renown.<sup>230</sup> Despite several inherent costs and risks, participation in peacekeeping operations can provide states with several utilities, such as diplomatic recognition, access to information and operational experience. It can also allow them to guarantee a stable regional or international order and free flow of goods.<sup>231</sup> Of particular interest to the overall argument of this thesis is the "image-building" aspects of peacekeeping operations. For rising powers, peacekeeping might serve as a useful tool in foreign policy because it can be used to frame the overall "image of a country" in the eyes of the international community. Countries may contribute to peacekeeping because it frames their other policies positively and thus allows them to more effectively serve as norm entrepreneurs. Bellamy and Williams argue that participation in peacekeeping operations also can serve a country seeking to establish themselves as a significant actor, in opposition to great power hegemony.<sup>232</sup> By promoting themselves as "global good Samaritans" or even "responsible stakeholders", such states might see peacekeeping participation as useful in promoting the UN as a multilateral alternative to spheres of influence or great power hegemony. It seems clear to me that much of what is being expressed in my selection of documents and speeches do in fact reflect such notions, while at the same time providing useful insights into China's actual basis for IR policymaking.

### 5.6.1 Status seeking

As already touched upon in the initial part of this chapter, I see changes in distributive satisfaction as an explanatory factor for changes in normative satisfaction, as well as changes in attitudes and values on international relations. Relating this to the literature on status-

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<sup>230</sup> Bellamy, A. J., & Williams, P. D. (2012). *Why States Contribute United Nations Peacekeepers*. In *Broadening the Base of United Nations Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries* (pp. 3–6). International Peace Institute.

<sup>231</sup> Bellamy, A. J., & Williams, P. D. (2012).

<sup>232</sup> Bellamy, A. J., & Williams, P. D. (2012).

seeking and rising powers, I argue that when they are faced with a balance of power in their disfavour, rising powers are likely to maintain a balance between “status-quo attitudes” towards issues such as sovereignty and internal governance, while maintain more “revisionist attitudes” towards other normative elements of the international order. However, as they develop and the balance of power shifts toward their favour, they are likely to reinterpret old principles and set aside traditional values in face with a greater “room for action”. This can be tied to Miles Kahler’s conceptualization of rising powers shifting from a “resilient status quo” towards a more flexible position.<sup>233</sup>

In this way I see distributive satisfaction as leading to increased multilateral connections as well as greater foreign investment, which again may be seen as a driving factor for what may be termed international "maturing". Essentially, as a state becomes larger and more significant within the international order, these “connections” and “investments” makes the state a greater “stakeholder” within the international order, which makes it likely for them to become more content with established international norms and institutions. These states will then be willing to work within the established order, seeking to change or influence unsatisfactory norms gradually, rather than reject them outright. States that are satisfied with the distributive balance are also likely to adopt a more flexible view on sovereignty in cases where their own interests might be at stake.

## 5.7 Responsible power and Chinese paternalism.

In my analysis, I find that China consistently positions itself as a qualitatively different actor. Much focus is given to pointing out that China is a peace-seeking, cooperative state that prioritizes multilateralism, global stability, and common development. At the same time, it is emphasized that China has a history as a colonized state and that they are a member of the collective “global south”.

A large portion of previous academic literature has already addressed the concept of China as a responsible power, and I argue that many of the findings I have made in my analysis could add to this. Previous writing on has outlined the concept of a “responsible power” or “stakeholder” as a state emphasizing reciprocity and common interests, an international

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<sup>233</sup> KAHLER, M. (2013). Rising powers and global governance: negotiating change in a resilient status quo. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 89(3), 711–729

system based on multilateral institutions and the rule of law and the notion that great powers bear specific “responsibilities” for the wellbeing of smaller states. Because great powers can shape institutions, promote norms and set rules, they also have a specific role in upholding global order. Being a great power thus is seen as going hand in hand with being an “upstanding citizen” of the international community.<sup>234</sup> I find that China has consistently presented itself in a manner that reflects this. By advocating for a peaceful, stable and collectively developing order, China projects an image of itself as a peaceful and constructive power. This image-building previous writing has highlighted the fact that this is essential for China to maintain a positive international standing. Yong Deng makes the argument that this concept began to take hold in Chinese thought in the mid-1990s and that it eventually became part of Chinese self-identification.<sup>235</sup>

Some earlier writers have suggested that this may have been a strategical pursuit by Chinese policymakers to distance itself from earlier identifications as a “victim nation” and instead frame itself as a significant actor with a vision for a “shared future”. While I do find some validity to such notions, I also find that ideas connected to being a “responsible power” often appear in company with ideas relating to China’s past as a colony and its relationship with the “global south”.<sup>236</sup> Consistently in the white papers of all three periods, China’s past as a “victim” is presented as one of the reasons for why they seek peace, mutual development and global stability. Chinese self-portrayal as a responsible power is thus often thoroughly connected to their historical experiences with colonialism and foreign aggression and the argument is consistently made that they have a special connection with states that share a similar past. One might therefore trace ideas akin to a notion of Chinese paternalism, or what some have dubbed the “Han man’s burden”. Chinese own history is often promoted at differentiating them from many other great powers, including all other permanent members of the UN security council. This is then used to promote the idea that China shares a burden with other members of the global South, and thus a responsibility for its stability and development.<sup>237</sup> I find the notion that China wishes to promote themselves as a «different sort

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<sup>234</sup> Foot, R. (2001). Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State. *The China Journal*, 45, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3182363> p3.

<sup>235</sup> Yong Deng (2014) China: The Post-Responsible Power, *The Washington Quarterly*. p.119.

<sup>236</sup> Foot, R. (2001). P.9.

<sup>237</sup> Leibold, J. (2007). *Han Man’s Burden: The Communists and the Construction of Zhonghua minzu*. In: *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

of actor” with a link to former colonies and developing states as consistent and see it as a likely part of the basis for UNPKO participation.

## 5.8 Conclusion

In my thesis, I have explored China's evolving engagement in United Nations Peacekeeping operations, considering the tensions between its traditional emphasis on sovereignty and its increasing participation in international interventions. Through an analysis of Chinese white papers and speeches on peacekeeping from 1995 to 2021, I have employed idea-analysis to uncover the prevailing ideas on power politics in international relations within the Chinese government.

While this thesis has provided insights into China's evolving stance on peacekeeping and its implications for international relations, there are several avenues for further research that can build upon this study. First, a deeper exploration of the domestic factors and decision-making processes within China's government could enhance our understanding of the ideational shifts observed. Investigating the role of key actors, interest groups, and policy debates would contribute to a more nuanced analysis of China's engagement in peacekeeping.

Additionally, a comparative analysis of China's peacekeeping approach with other rising powers, such as India or Brazil, could provide valuable insights into the similarities and differences in their normative positions and strategies for self-presentation. Such comparative studies would contribute to a broader understanding of how rising powers navigate the tensions between sovereignty and international engagement.

Furthermore, examining the on-the-ground impact of China's peacekeeping operations would offer a practical dimension to the analysis. Assessing the experiences of host countries, local communities, and the effectiveness of China's peacekeeping contributions would contribute to a more comprehensive evaluation of China's role as a peacekeeping actor.

Lastly, exploring the implications of China's evolving stance on peacekeeping for the broader international system and the dynamics within the United Nations would be a fruitful area of research. Understanding how China's changing normative values and power aspirations influence global governance and multilateral cooperation would contribute to a deeper comprehension of the evolving landscape of international relations.

In conclusion, while this thesis has provided valuable insights into China's commitment to peacekeeping operations, further research along these suggested lines would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of China's role in the evolving international order and its implications for global peace and security.

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