Towards a Genealogy of Great Powers and Responsibility
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China in Western Conceptions of Governing the World

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Abstract

The fundamental principles of liberal international order leave little room for the traditional idea of great powers as holders of international authority. Yet, a discourse on great powers has recently made a comeback in response to the rising power of states whose compatibility with that order is in doubt. According to this language of 'responsible power' or 'responsible great power' – present both in the discourse of the practitioners of international politics and in academic literature – growing power comes with correspondingly increasing and special responsibilities set by the international social order, and it is meeting these latter that secures a state legitimate great power status.

The equivalence between greatness and responsibility, however, is paradoxical if the latter stands for accountability for the fulfilment of obligations. Such an understanding of responsibility is fully internal to a pre-given structure of order with its norms, social and functional roles, and criteria of legitimacy. The assertion of greatness, on the other hand, requires an actor to reveal itself outside any pre-given standard, and to have its own standards recognised as equal – hence the historical centrality of war to claiming great powerhood. Asserting one's greatness by fulfilling the required responsibilities therefore seems paradoxical.

The dissertation argues that despite this paradoxical relationship the discourses of great powerhood and responsibility have in fact been reconciled historically in diverse ways, but that in order to see this, we need to move away from an exclusive focus on responsibility

modelled on obligations and we need to include into our account the concept of responsibility as a character trait or disposition. The dissertation examines, in a genealogical manner, how this concept of *being* responsible has come to occupy a fundamental position in modern understandings of social order and how it became a crucial element in re-articulating the concepts of great powerhood and great power management detached from the European legal and spatial order in relation to which they were originally defined.

In three case studies – Sino-British relations in the early 19th century; Washington's opening to China in 1969; and the European Union's invitation of China as a partner in administering African development – the dissertation offers contributions to a genealogy of great powers and responsibility by focusing on how China was understood in the light of Western conceptions of governing the world. The developments traced in these case studies indicate that while the liberal international order might not allow for great power authority, it can still be compatible with a practice of great power management articulated in terms of a neoliberal art of administering the world.

Declaration

I hereby declare that no parts of the thesis have been accepted for any other degrees in any other institution. This thesis contains no material previously written and / or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

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Viktor Friedmann

Budapest, Hungary, 12 November 2014

"Perhaps we all lose our sense of reality to the precise degree to which we are engrossed in our own work, and perhaps that is why we see in the increasing complexity of our mental constructs a means for greater understanding, even while intuitively we know that we shall never be able to fathom the imponderables that govern our course through life."

W. G. Sebald: The Rings of Saturn

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Abbreviations

ACP States	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
CSR	corporate social responsibility
DG DEV	Directorate-General for Development and Relations with ACP States
EC	European Commission
EIC	East India Company
EP	European Parliament
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
IFI	international financial institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SSC	South-South cooperation
TDC	trilateral development cooperation
TDiC	EU-China-Africa Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation
UN	United Nations

Introduction

Great powerhood is in a certain sense an anachronism. We might, in a purely quantitative meaning of the term, continue to talk of great powers but as formal status differentiation associated with special rights and responsibilities it has hardly any space left outside the institution of the Security Council of the United Nations. The traditional trappings of great powerhood – spheres of influence and prerogatives of authority – have but little legitimacy in an international order characterised by the claimed universal authority of science and of liberal political and economic principles, by a general rule of sovereign equality, and by the continuing, if waning, hegemony of the United States.[1] 'Great power talk' is regarded as regression to a 19th century mentality that has no place in contemporary world politics.[2]

Great power discourse has, however, recently been revived in one particular form. Through a discourse on 'responsible powers' or 'responsible great powers,' practitioners and students of international politics have sought to address the range of questions raised by the rise of new powers – China, Brazil, India, Russia and others – of questionable compatibility with the existing order. Growing power, this idea suggests, comes with a corresponding increase in responsibilities, and it is meeting these latter that secures an emerging state legitimate position in international order.

1 Hast, Spheres of Influence in International Relations; Keene, Beyond the Anarchical Society, 136; Lake, Hierarchy in International Relations, xi–xii; Patrick, 'Russia Assaults Ukraine—and the Liberal World Order'.

2 Bisley, *Great Powers in the Changing International Order.*

Academic and policy reflections have taken up this concept by placing it in a framework of norms, according to which "states are deemed not merely actors in some quasi-mechanical international system, but also the bearers of responsibilities in international society."[3] Being a great power cannot be reduced to a mere measure of (relative) quantitative capacity. Any attribution of power in a social setting is always simultaneously an attribution of mechanical responsibility for the corresponding effects and it always calls for a justification of those effects.[4] Such a justification, it is argued, invokes, or refers to, a background normative order that specifies the responsibilities – as ethical obligations and relations of accountability – of the actors in that order. The fact of power is hence always evaluated in terms of a set of responsibilities specified by the norms of international order.

Although all states are constituted as participants of an international society, the normative structure of which attaches to their status as members a number of obligations or responsibilities,[5] the most powerful states have special responsibilities reflecting their superior capacities and justifying their special rights.[6] In order for a state to become recognised as a great power, it must fulfil the adequate responsibilities; it must be a 'responsible power.' According to this generalised direct equation of greatness with responsibility in a language of norms, great powerhood combines material capacity and legitimacy. The term 'responsible

3 Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*; Ikenberry, *After Victory*; Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 1; Foot, 'Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State'; Narlikar, 'Is India a Responsible Great Power?'; Dormandy, 'Is India, or Will It Be, a Responsible International Stakeholder?'; Etzioni, 'Is China a Responsible Stakeholder?'; Xia, 'China: A Responsible Great Power'; Richardson, 'A Responsible Power?'; Breslin, 'China's Emerging Global Role'; Johnston, *Social States*; Gao, 'China as a "Responsible Power": Altruistic, Ambitious or Ambiguous?'; Hughes, 'China and Global Liberalism'; Jin, 'From "China Threat" to "China's Responsibility"'; Chen, 'International Responsibility and China's Foreign Policy'; Gill and Schiffer, *Rising China's Rising Responsibilities*; Blumenthal, 'Is China at Present (or Will China Become) a Responsible Stakeholder in the International Community?'; Gill, 'China Becoming a Responsible Stakeholder'; Hachigian, 'Conduct Befitting a Great Power: Responsibility and Sovereignty in U.S.-China Relations'.

4 Guzzini, 'On the Measure of Power and the Power of Measure in International Relations'.

5 Frost, *Global Ethics*.

6 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 196; Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*.

power' thus frames the responsibility for the effects of one's power in terms of the responsibilities set by international order.[7]

In this dissertation I challenge this account by re-opening and re-examining the question of the relationship between great powers and responsibility in response to a theoretical puzzle to which the following empirical puzzle provides an entry point.

The empirical puzzle is presented by the European Union's invitation of China around 2007-2008 as a partner in cooperating over Africa's development in the framework of EU-China-Africa Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation (TDiC).[8] At first sight, the proposed cooperation resembled a practice of great power management in accordance with the above described idea of great powers as responsible powers: two major powers coordinating their activities for the purpose of both managing relations among themselves and exercising their shared managerial responsibility. The initiative was clearly a response to China's rapidly growing influence in Africa since around 2000. It concerned a field of international politics – development – that is generally considered a special responsibility of great powers, a public good to which they should contribute and in whose provision they should cooperate.[9] Moreover, it also set up a hierarchy with only Africa appearing as a participant to be managed.

Interpreting this invitation along the lines of the 'responsible power' discourse runs, however, into a major difficulty. The invitation was formulated in spite of fundamental differences between the EU and China at the level of political values and governing practices, and despite the concerns these differences generated about China's influence in Africa.[10] In terms of development policy, the EU's self-image as an ethical actor guided by principles of

7 Scott, 'China and the "Responsibilities" of a "Responsible" Power—The Uncertainties of Appropriate Power Rise Language'.

8 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641'.

9 Watson, *The Limits of Independence*, 64.

10 Alden, *China in Africa*; Mawdsley, 'Fu Manchu versus Dr Livingstone in the Dark Continent?'; Hirono and Suzuki, 'Why Do We Need "Myth-Busting" in the Study of Sino–African Relations?'.

good governance, human rights, economic freedoms and liberal democracy meant that, from Brussel's – and the liberal international order's – normative perspective, China must have been seen as an irresponsible power.[11] China was hence invited into a practice of co-managing special responsibilities despite being seen as an irresponsible power.

That interpreting the initiative as a practice of great power management cannot be sustained on the basis of the idea of 'responsible power' suggests it might be better understood in terms of two alternative possibilities. First, it might have been launched as an exercise in *pragmatic problem-solving* over presumably value-neutral questions of reducing transaction costs and increasing efficiency. China's distance from the EU's norms therefore simply was not seen to matter. Alternatively, it could have been understood as an attempt to socialise China into the practices and values of the European Union through cooperation, and hence eliminating over time the relevant differences.[12]

Both of these rationalities have their limitations, however. Efforts at socialisation and action on the basis of normative principles must reckon with the pragmatic context of China's increasing influence in the field of development. Pragmatic empiricism, on the other hand, presupposes that the participating actors share a common perspective, the terms of which allow them to define, and then resolve, coordination problems and maximise a shared interpretation of efficiency.[13] It is unclear whether such a domain of problem-solving can be totally detached from a shared normative framework of actions, and problems and their solutions derived directly from facts about the world. Indeed, if liberal principles are fundamentally constitutive of the current international order, it can be expected that

11 European Parliament, Committee on Development, 'Draft Report on China's Policy and Its Effects on Africa (2007/XXXX(INI))'.

12 Gallagher, 'Ruthless Player or Development Partner?'.

13 Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theories', 208; Hasenclever, Mayer, and Rittberger, *Theories of International Regimes*, 136–9.

coordination with China cannot be contained at the level of pragmatic empiricism.[14] These tensions within and between socialisation and problem-solving do not mean, of course, that either or both of these rationalities could not have provided a motivation for the initiative. Actors might act on problematic motives and, in the context of any organisation, decisions are outcomes of a combination of motives and of the negotiation of differences and tensions between them.

I want to propose that these tensions nevertheless indicate that an interpretation of the initiative as great power management – as a mode of maintaining order in the context of multiple centres of power – distinct from both socialisation and pragmatist empiricism should not be too quickly discarded. Salvaging it, however, requires questioning the adequacy of the relationship between great powers and responsibility as it is currently presented in academic reflections. Indeed, while subsuming the fact of power under a framework of legitimacy or right might sound plausible in times of settled norms and a settled circle of great powers, the emergence of new powers and their quest for a relation of equality with the established power unsettles such an equation of greatness and responsibility.

This is so because understanding responsibility on the model of obligation and corresponding accountability stands in a paradoxical relationship with the sense of horizontal equality between actors that is implied by the idea of multiple great powers. Responsibility as obligation is internal to an already given concept of order, to a settled way of politics, with its norms, social and functional roles, and criteria of legitimacy. In contrast, the assertion of equality implicit in the idea of greatness requires an actor to reveal itself outside the pre-given standards of the established order, and to have its own standards and, indeed, itself recognised as equal. The historical centrality of waging war – as a way of disrupting the settled order – to

14 Reus-Smit, 'The Constitutional Structure of International Society and the Nature of Fundamental Institutions'; Ikenberry, 'The Liberal International Order and Its Discontents'.

claiming great powerhood indicates this much. But for the same reason, the idea of responsible great power seems paradoxical, since it claims that the only way to achieve equality is to fulfil standards drawn up by others. It is left stranded between an empiricism of power and socialisation.

In response to this paradox, the dissertation addresses the following research questions: *What is the relationship between great powers and responsibility? Under what conditions can a relationship between the two concepts provide a foundation for a practice of great power management?*

The main argument I put forward in the dissertation is that, despite the above mentioned paradox, the discourses of great powerhood and responsibility have in fact been reconciled historically in diverse ways. In order to see this, however, we need to move away from an exclusive focus on responsibility modelled on obligations and to include into our account the concept of responsibility as a character trait or disposition. Thus, I propose to take seriously the often virtue-like character of the responsibility invoked in the responsible character discourse. Responsibility as a character trait becomes especially valuable when there are no clear rules of action, when institutions and settled practices and standards break down. Thus, it can by definition operate outside given frameworks of order and, consequently, it can establish a relation of equality between actors in terms of their shared character identifiable independently of any substantive understanding of order. I demonstrate that one can in fact detect in the formulation of the EU's TDiC a rationality that belongs to the genealogy of great power management and that is based on a particular version of responsibility as an internal quality: China's perceived pragmatic character identified from a perspective of neoliberal governmentality. This, I further argue, suggests that while the liberal

international order might not allow for great power management at the level of authority, there might be space for it at the level of administering the world.

Underlying my investigation is the ontological assumption that to talk of great powers and responsibility, and to understand these concepts in a particular way, is always related to a specific form of reasoning about order. International order and the practical activity of international politics can only be properly understood by interrogating the situated reasons characterising human conduct rather than causal relations describing human behaviour.[15] Human conduct is not determined by forces acting on the agent, or by external stimuli, but is guided by (normative) reasons that are the outcome of a deliberation about, and choice between, different characterisations of the situations and various options facing the agent.[16] To act in some way is, hence, to possess certain concepts that, in turn, are rooted in particular forms of social life that defines their function and makes them effective.[17] Concepts and corresponding practices are re-articulated when transformations in that broader order require it, while such redefinitions are themselves constitutive of those changes. Thus new discursive contexts disable certain practices while opening up the possibility for the articulation of new practices or for the re-articulation of old ones. Only actualised as a result of human decisions and deliberations, such practices are not necessary but potential elements of international order, and their actualisation changes the nature of that order. The categories of international order are specified by the practitioners whose activity it informs.[18] They can be accessed in speeches, memoirs, policies and their justifications, treaties, opinion pieces, and so on, in which the reasoning of practitioners can be captured.

15 Jackson, 'International Relations as a Craft Discipline'; Bain, *Between Anarchy and Society*, 9.
16 Nardin, *The Philosophy of Michael Oakeshott*, 77–79.
17 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*; MacIntyre, 'Practical Rationalities as Forms of Social Structure'.
18 Navari, 'Introduction: Methods and Methodology in the English School', 3; Jackson, 'How to Think about Civilizations', 189.

As my references to the essentially historic nature of the relationship between great powers and responsibility indicate, I do not seek to provide a transhistorical definition the relationship between responsibility, order and greatness. Instead, as "only something which has no history can be defined,"[19] I offer elements of a genealogy of their co-articulation.[20] Genealogy is the writing of a history of the present,[21] a tool of re-evaluation that begins with a problematisation or diagnosis of the present – here in terms of the invitation of China to participate in a co-managerial arrangement over Africa – and looks back to the past in order to understand the present from the perspective of this diagnosis.[22] Genealogy is a historical inquiry concerned with the past from the perspective of the present, seeking to understand how that present "became logically possible […] in terms of its past."[23] Thus it is neither the investigation of the 'real' history of concepts for its own sake nor the recovery of lost meanings or true origins. It offers a history without determining laws and without teleology, a narrative of contingent transformations of concepts resulting from actors' choices made in the course of political struggles and as they confronted questions of order and meaning.[24] Its goal, accordingly, is to arrive at a better understanding of the present by bringing to light the latter's complex historical heritage, since the present is the product of that heritage as much as it is of ongoing struggles and developments.

In Part I of the dissertation, I explore the relationship between great powerhood and responsibility and begin to sketch elements of its genealogy in Western political thought. In Chapter 1, I lay out in detail the above described paradox between greatness and

19 Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 53.

20 Thus my project also picks up Astrov's argument that "'great power management' is not a fixed practice in need of precise theoretical definition, but a research programme focussed on unpacking the complex relationship between the three terms involved." 'Great Power Management without Great Powers?', 22.

21 Hence my use of the word 'genealogy' does not strictly correspond to a Foucauldian micro-analytical lens, although it shares with it the underlying spirit of Nietzsche's genealogical inquiries.

22 Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, 189–190; Owen, *Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morality*, 71; Julian Young, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, 483–484.

23 Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, 7.

24 Bevir, 'What Is Genealogy?'.

responsibility in current IR literature, and present my argument for including the role of responsibility as a character trait in our understanding of great powerhood and great power management.

Both the concept of responsibility as a character trait and the institution of great power management appeared in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In Chapters 2 and 3, I show that both responded to a characteristically modern recognition that neither divine or traditional morality, nor the empirical science of society or of the balance of power provides adequate criteria for action and a foundation for order. This placed the problem of human self-legislation at centre stage, as a ground or alternative to both morality and pragmatic empiricism.

In Chapter 2, I trace the historical process through which a concept of *being* responsible came to occupy a fundamental role in modern understandings of the relationship between social order and practical rationality, and I identify two major modern varieties of responsibility as a virtue. The first of these – articulated with important differences by Kant and Weber – is maturity, a disposition of autonomy by which the actor takes responsibility for its condition of having to give law to itself. The second – first formulated explicitly by John Stuart Mill – retains the centrality of choice, but relates it to a calculable space of utility, thus moving towards an economic conception of responsibility.

In Chapter 3, I trace the emergence of the idea of Great Powers and great power management as a form of collective sovereign authority in international order, and show the crucial role responsibility as a virtue played in diverse ways of re-articulating these concepts once they got detached from the European legal and spatial order in relation to which they were originally defined.

In Part II of the dissertation, I present further contributions to the complex genealogy of the relationship between great powers and responsibility as a character trait by narrowing the scope of investigation to the context of Sino-Western relations. China has not only been seen in the West as a continuing problem for international order since the beginning of these relations, but is also the major addressee of the current 'responsible power' discourse. Chapters 4 to 6 provide genealogical snapshots of how conceptions of responsibility and greatness featured in periods of major transformations in the way China was understood in light of Western conceptions of governing the world.

In Chapter 4, I turn to the first attempts at understanding China in a global conception of order, undertaken by British statesmen whom between 1792 and 1842 tried to secure and expand their country's commercial links with China. I show that, having failed to extend the European model of great power diplomacy outside the boundaries of the European territorial order due to Beijing's disinterest, British statesmen inserted China into a common order from the perspective of liberal governmentality, in relation to which China was understood as an irresponsible actor endangering the natural operation of commercial circulation. This liberal problematisation of China's greatness ultimately led to the forced imposition of the norms of responsibility on it and to its century-long subjugation to liberal imperialism.

In Chapter 5, I investigate the conditions of possibility for China to appear as a great power in the course of the Nixon-Kissinger opening, in a radical break with the dominant view of Beijing as an irresponsible power at odds with the 'natural' or legitimate rules of international order. I argue that this was made possible by Kissinger's prioritisation of character over order, and by the corresponding shift in the concept of responsibility he used. Kissinger regarded the Cold War as being in a state of disorder, out of which he sought to construct a new order by setting aside the established but dysfunctional standards of

legitimacy and of bureaucratic action. To this end, he required a major partner possessing an autonomous, mature character, capable of exercising choice in such an exceptional space. Kissinger treated China as a great power primarily because he regarded its leaders as exhibiting such a Kantian-Weberian responsibility.

In Chapter 6, I return to the case of the EU's TDiC initiative and identify among the different considerations during its formulation a major rationality that continues the lineage of great power management. This rationality, I argue, articulates a relationship between responsibility and great power management by synthesising the Kissingerian image of a responsible China attuned to the problem of order with the requirements of liberal governmentality in light of which China appeared irresponsible. China is identified as a promising partner because of its perceived responsible, pragmatic character, that locates the limits of autonomy in relation to the art of making a social domain governable. This rationality articulates a modality of great power management without the position of authority that defined the 19th century Great Power concert and without its general juridical form. Instead, it is based directly on the art of management and on an inner quality that allows actors to collectively take on this task.

Part I.
Great Powers and Responsibility

1.
Greatness and Responsibility

> *"A rising China is welcome as long as that China wants to engage according to international standards and values." - John Kerry, 2013.*[25]
>
> *"A great power does not wait for recognition; it reveals itself." Alexander Gorchakov, 1867.*

In this chapter, I scrutinize the relationship between great powers and responsibility. The concept of 'responsible power' that has appeared as a descriptor of the status available to powerful states in contemporary international order articulates this link in a radically direct manner, making responsibility the quasi-equivalent of true greatness. If, however, responsibility is taken to mean accountability for performing obligations specified by some framework of order – that is, by a framework of norms that define actors' rights and obligations[26] –, its relation to greatness as it pertains to the practice of great power management – that is, to a practice of managing the international order by multifarious great powers embodying different norms – appears problematic. Reviewing the extant literature on great powers, I argue that an immediate relationship between greatness and responsibility remains paradoxical so long as responsibility is reduced to a matter of fulfilling obligations. Instead, we need to investigate its use in current political discourse as a disposition, character trait, or virtue.

25 'Japan Seeks Tough Stance, U.S. Pushes Cooperation in Dealing with China.'
26 Alagappa, *Asian Security Order*, 39–40; Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences."

1.1. ‘Responsible power’

After the end of the Cold War, a curious new discourse on responsibility emerged as part of various attempts to articulate a role for major powers in the new international order. The latter was perceived to combine the hegemonic power of the United States[27] with a triumphant liberal order that consummated history,[28] or at least provided categories for an order universal in its scope and increasingly globalised in its operation.[29] As a consequence, earlier ideas of superpowers and great powers no longer seemed adequate. With widespread belief in a new order of shared prosperity, common values and a decreasing importance of power-politics, emphasis shifted towards understanding power's role as protecting, entrenching, spreading and representing the values and rules of the new order. Among the many variations on this idea one might list the American concept of “indispensable nation,”[30] the German attempt at finding through “responsible power politics” a space in international relations despite its history blackened by the Nazi regime,[31] or the European Union's discourse of a “civilian,” “normative,” “post-modern” or “responsible power.”[32] The institution of the G7 can be considered as the expression of this new, liberal order.

The appearance at the turn of the millennium of a number of new power centres – a Communist China, a Russia turning against liberal reforms, countries with questionable liberal credentials like India, Brazil and South Africa – disturbed the relative harmony that existed between the distribution of power and the principles on which international order was based. The concept of ‘responsible power’ was also articulated in the context of this

27 Krauthammer, ‘The Unipolar Moment’; Wohlforth, ‘The Stability of a Unipolar World’; Brooks and Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance*.
28 Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man*.
29 Deudney and Ikenberry, “The Logic of the West”; Vrasti, “Universal but Not Truly ‘Global’.”
30 Albright, interview; “Obama”; Witcover, “Should We Continue to Be the Indispensable Nation?”.
31 Bach, *Between Sovereignty and Integration*, 68–70.
32 Diez, “Constructing the Self and Changing Others”; Manners, “The Normative Ethics of the European Union”; Lucarelli, “Introduction: Values, Principles, Identity and European Union Foreign Policy.”

problematic 'fit' between the new powers and the *status quo*. Emerging powers were called upon to become responsible powers, while some of them sought improved international status by reference to their responsible behaviour.

William Perry, Defense Secretary during Clinton's presidency, declared in this vein that the "US and China share a special responsibility" to ensure the prosperous and peaceful future of the Asia-Pacific region, and also that China should become a "responsible member of the international community" – a statement later echoed by the 1997 US National Security Strategy Report.[33] The EU's relations with China have similarly been framed in terms of the latter's responsibilities.[34] Meanwhile, Chinese President Hu Jintao introduced the concept of 'harmonious world' for characterizing the aim of Chinese global strategy and soon the concept was linked to the idea of China's new projected image of "responsible power."[35] Chinese actors made good use of the concept as an integral part of their efforts at the management of threat levels,[36] and the concept is a recurring feature of the op-ed section of major English-language Chinese news organs.[37] The People's Daily, a major media organ of the Communist Party of China, accused the United States of not being a responsible actor in the context of the 2008 financial crisis, but also in connection with Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama.[38] Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, felt it important to declare in 2004 that "we are voluntarily fulfilling all the commitments that go with a responsible power acting with due restraint."[39] President Obama and John Reid, British State Secretary of Defence, both called

33 Jin, 'From "China Threat" to "China's Responsibility"', 272.
34 European Commission, "Communication from the Commission - Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China, COM(1998) 0181 Final."
35 Bergsten et al., *China's Rise*, 50.
36 Suzuki, "Chinese Soft Power, Insecurity Studies, Myopia and Fantasy"; Suzuki, "Integrating into the International Community? Chinese Peace-keeping Operations."
37 For example: "What International Responsibilities Should China Take?"; "China Prepares Itself to Be a Responsible Power." For a quantitative analysis of such articles, see: Johnston, *Social States*, 146–150.
38 "Obama-Dalai Meeting Undermines US Status as Major Power."
39 "Indian PM Says Time Not Right."

India a responsible global power.[40] 'Responsible power' emerged as the dominant idea characterising the status established powers possess and emerging powers may hope to achieve in contemporary international order.[41]

Understood as a matter of norms of legitimate membership in international community, this discourse had its origins in the Cold War (see Chapter 5). In this interpretation, responsibility stands for the fulfilment of a set of standards that define such legitimate membership.[42] In an early analysis of the concept, Rosemary Foot distinguished three phases of the definition of responsible statehood, shifting from the post-Second World War emphasis on respect for sovereignty and the renunciation of the use of violence, to the late-Cold War stress on having good standing in international institutions, to the emerging post-Cold War consensus on the principles of democracy and human rights as the single legitimate form of states' domestic order.[43] As emerging powers were increasing their capacity, they also had to negotiate their way in this shifting normative landscape.[44]

Yet recent usage of the term goes beyond the issue of membership and – as Foot also argued – incorporates the special responsibilities of the most powerful states in maintaining international order. From this perspective, power differentials lead to qualitative differences in states' responsibilities.[45] This is implied in the most elaborate official statement on the concept

40 "India Is a Rising and Responsible Power"; Dikshit, "India Has Proved Itself a Responsible Power."

41 Patrick, 'Irresponsible Stakeholders?'; Scott, 'China and the "Responsibilities" of a "Responsible" Power —The Uncertainties of Appropriate Power Rise Language'; Narlikar, 'Is India a Responsible Great Power?'; Dormandy, 'Is India, or Will It Be, a Responsible International Stakeholder?'; Etzioni, 'Is China a Responsible Stakeholder?'; Richardson, 'A Responsible Power?'; Breslin, 'China's Emerging Global Role'; Black and Hwang, 'China and Japan's Quest for Great Power Status'; Zhang and Austin, 'China and the Responsibility of Power'; Gao, 'China as a "Responsible Power": Altruistic, Ambitious or Ambiguous?'; Xia, 'China: A Responsible Great Power'.

42 Gong, "Standards of Civilization Today"; Bowden and Seabrooke, "Global Standards of Market Civilization."

43 Foot, 'Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State', 2001; Foot, 'Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State', 2001.

44 Hurrell, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order."

45 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*; Hachigian, "Conduct Befitting a Great Power: Responsibility and Sovereignty in U.S.-China Relations."

of ‘responsible power.’ On 21 September 2005 Robert Zoellick, then US Deputy Secretary of State, gave a speech in front of the National Committee on US-China Relations, in which he called upon China to become a 'responsible stakeholder' in the international system. He defined the term as follows: “[a]ll nations conduct diplomacy to promote their national interests. Responsible stakeholders go further: They recognize that the international system sustains their peaceful prosperity, so they work to sustain that system.”[46]

Insofar as the term ‘responsible power’ concerns not merely legitimate membership or normative requirements but, more broadly, the maintenance and management of international order in a context of multi-polarity, it addresses the problem traditionally associated with great power management. Great power management, at minimum, stands for a practice of managing international order by and among a number of great powers, thus implying particular ideas of order, power, greatness, as well as a relationship between these three concepts. Following Hedley Bull's analysis, I take great power management to comprise both a horizontal and a vertical dimension: the management of relations between the great powers, and “exploiting their preponderance in such a way as to impart a degree of central direction to the affairs of international society as a whole.”[47] The first, horizontal dimension includes the preservation of the balance of power among themselves as well as the control and limitation of crises and wars among each other. To the second, vertical dimension belongs the practice of dividing the world into mutually recognised, negative spheres of influence, within which great powers exercise their preponderance unilaterally – with the exclusion of the other powers – for the sake of general order.

Within this second dimension, Bull also identifies a practice of so-called positive spheres-of-influence, or sphere of responsibility, which is not exclusive but instead “sets up a

46 Zoellick, “Whither China? From Membership to Responsibility.”
47 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 200.

division of labour among the parties to it in the execution of a common task."[48] Bull's examples are the post-Second World War division of occupied Germany into zones between the Allied Powers, and Walter Lippmann's proposal to divide the world into three or four regions under the responsibility and dominance of one of the great powers for the purposes of maintaining international order. Watson provides an earlier example in the 'joint responsibility' the Great Powers undertook in China at the end of the 19th century, which he calls "the most impressive achievement of the international concert."[49] For most of the imperial period, however, the dominant pattern remained the division of the world into clearly delineated colonial empires with their particular *mission civilisatrice*, although including a general responsibility for 'the sacred trust of civilisation.'[50] With decolonisation, the formerly exceptional practice of joint responsibility expanded into promoting order in the developing world through great power action and global multilateral institutions.[51]

With the extension of spheres of join responsibility, one in fact approaches the last item on Bull's list of vertical managerial practices. Great power concert or condominium stands for a form of joint government in which great powers agree "not upon a division of the world into spheres of influence, interest or responsibility, but to join forces in promoting common policies throughout the international system as a whole."[52] The Holy Alliance, the Concert of Europe and the United Nations Security Council are embodiments of this form of great power management for Bull. In order for such joint government to be possible, he argues, they must share a "theory or ideology of world order" on the basis of which the great powers collaborate.[53]

48 Ibid., 215.
49 Watson, "European International Society and Its Expansion," 31.
50 Gong, *The Standard of "Civilization" in International Society*, 76.
51 Watson, *The limits of independence*, 64; See also: Keene, *Beyond the anarchical society.*
52 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 218.
53 Ibid., 219.

Regarding the horizontal dimension, Hedley Bull argued that the existence of a plurality of great powers is crucial to the concept, at least insofar as it is understood as an institution of international society, since only a pluralist, collective form of hegemony can be reconciled with the pluralist constitution of the states system.[54] In recent works the tendency has been to eliminate the distinction between great powerhood and hegemony, taking the first only as a special case of the second, and arguing that the existence of a single great power can be compatible with the goals of international society.[55] While the latter may be true, it removes a crucial aspect of Bull's conception of great power management. Whereas in the case of hegemony only vertical relations between the hegemonic power and the rest need to be considered – that is, the imposition of order from above and its perceived legitimacy from below –, in the case of a number of great powers an additional problem of horizontal relations also appears. Great power relations must always imply not only a principle of differentiation from the rest, but also some principle of equality within the circle of great powers, as well as additional problems of managing relations among great powers and coordinating their policies towards the rest in such a way as to maintain international order. The inclusion of multiple great powers and a single hegemon under a unitary framework is, therefore, at least questionable. While such recent emphasis on hegemony was perhaps understandable in light of the unipolar dominance of the United States, a shift towards a problem of multi-polarity requires paying closer attention to the horizontal dimension of great power management in terms of both the recognition of great power status and the problems of providing for international order in the context of multiple centres of power.

Many works have established a direct relation between great power status and being recognised as a 'responsible power,' in the sense that if the emerging powers want to be

54 Ibid., 194.

55 Ikenberry, *After Victory*; Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*; Clark, "China and the United States"; Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*.

recognised as great powers, they must become responsible powers.[56] A state seeking great power status would understand, or would be made to understand, that it requires "not simply its increased material resources, but its acknowledgement of the responsibilities that they bring, and its willingness to act according to them."[57] The idea that 'with great power comes great responsibility' is often bandied about as an explanation of this relation between great powers and responsibility. Yet at first sight such a link is not without complications. For being a great power implies a position related to setting the norms, either by example or by imposition. Being responsible, in contrast, refers to some already existing standard or framework of norms that specifies obligations and duties one is expected to perform.[58] Thus, from the perspective of the established states, this raises questions about the extent to which this actually opens the possibility of a genuinely equal status for the new powers. From that of the emerging states, it creates the paradoxical task of asserting their equality by accepting standards drawn up by others. It is for this reason that China's response to calls to become a responsible power was itself ambiguous: positive about being invited to be a player equal to the United States, but wary of the possibility that it stands for the requirement of unconditionally accepting the rules of an international order not of its own making.[59]

Historically, the surest path to becoming recognised as a great power was by way of self-assertion,[60] primarily through a war that neither expressed nor merely breached the

56 Deng, *China's Struggle for Status*; Suzuki, 'Seeking `Legitimate' Great Power Status in Post-Cold War International Society'; Suzuki, 'Integrating into the International Community? Chinese Peace-Keeping Operations'; Wu, 'Sovereignty, Human Rights, and Responsibility'; Li, 'Social Rewards and Socialization Effects'; Black and Hwang, 'China and Japan's Quest for Great Power Status'.

57 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 47.

58 As I further discuss in Chapters 2 and 3, this paradoxical relationship between greatness and responsibility seems to be a specifically modern problem, related to a new historical condition in which an epoch "has to create its normativity out of itself" as order and the criteria of legitimacy become understood as outcomes of human agency and human choice. Hence, for instance, Hegel's identification of the great actors as those who transcend "the calm, regular course of things" and instead "appear to draw the impulse of their life from themselves." This understanding of greatness is central to modern thought. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 7; Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 30–31.

59 Washington and Dean, "Untranslatable Word In U.S. Aide's Speech Leaves Beijing Baffled."

60 Wight, *International Theory*, 175.

existing norms and rules, but instead aimed at questioning and transforming them. As Gorchakov, state chancellor of the Russian Empire, stated in 1867, "a great power does not wait for recognition; it reveals itself," doing so in particular through the act of war against a great power.[61] The ability and willingness to break with the existing rules and act in the exceptional space of great power war was seen as a prerequisite of being recognised as a great power in an order that was meant to exclude precisely such a war.[62] States that were included into the circle of the great powers without such an act – such as Italy and Turkey – were considered only 'courtesy great powers,' lacking the essential core of great powerhood.[63]

A particularly prescient illustration is provided by Japan's pursuit of great power status in the face of racial prejudice and perceived civilisational differences.[64] From the late 1870s Japan had been attempting to gain a status equal to that of the Western Great Powers. As part of this endeavour, it undertook extensive domestic reforms, accepted the frameworks of Western diplomacy and international law, engaged in imperialist policies in East Asia, participated in the Eight-Nation Alliance intervening against the Boxer insurgency in 1900, and waged a war against Russia in 1904-5.[65] The significance of its early imperialism, however, was questioned in Europe on the ground of the lack of resistance China could offer. Its significant role in the Boxer intervention – an act considered to be undertaken to safeguard the values of civilisation – was put in question by Britain's insistence on paying for the costs of Tokyo's participation, as if the latter was merely a policeman in the service of British interests. This created a certain level of ambiguity: while Japan was welcome in a typical

61 Quoted in: Wight, *Power Politics*, 46.

62 Russia's Permanent Representative to the UN, for instance, recently invoked this aspect of being a great power in defence of his country's right to apply its veto power in the Security Council against those who confronted Moscow with its international responsibilities, saying that that prerogative was not won in "lottery, but as a result of a battle." "Churkin on Russia's UN Veto, Its Use in Zimbabwe & Myanmar, 'Minority Defense'."

63 Best et al., *International History of the Twentieth Century*, 9; Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 235–6.

64 Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality*; Suganami, "Japan's Entry into International Society."

65 Suzuki, "Japan's Socialization into Janus-faced European International Society."

great-power intervention, and at the same time it was also given to understand that a merely executive role does not equal that of the Great Powers. Even a successful war against an established Great Power failed to clearly establish its own place in the club. During the Russo-Japanese war, the Japanese acted with exemplary courage and conducted their war in strict compliance with the recently accepted rules of war. Yet, precisely for this reason, Japan's status remained in doubt: its eagerness to receive recognition and its great efforts at acting as a virtuous and rule-following power earned the mockery of the Western audience.[66]

1.2. Great powers and responsibility

These preliminary considerations provide a *prima facie* case for the complicated relationship between great powerhood and responsibility and, hence, for the paradoxical nature of the idea of 'responsible power,' insofar as the fulfilment of responsibilities and meeting of standards does not a great power make. In the following, I explore the different ways in which greatness and responsibility are reconciled in the existing literature in International Relations. I begin by discussing two pure positions: power as material capability for which considerations of responsibility are external, and power as right for which they are absolutely constitutive. From here I consider different possibilities for relating the fact of power to right – and great powers to responsibility – in terms of standard-setting, diplomatic norms, functional roles and institutionalised collective hegemony.

66 For all of the above, see: Zachman, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period*, 43–5, 128–146.

1.2.1. Power as fact and power as right

Much of the existing literature on great powers converges around the distinction, as well as the relationship, between power as fact or capacity, and power as right or legitimacy, two concepts of power that "have dominated Western political thought in the modern period."[67] Power as capacity refers to "a notion of power as a kind of quantitative capacity to realise an actor's will," whereas power as right is concerned with the legitimacy of power and, in fact, with power stemming from such legitimacy, in the sense that the consent of the governed is constitutive of the capacity to govern.[68] This duality of meaning is present in Bull's presentation of great powerhood. On the one hand, to be a great power is to possess front-rank military capacities as well as to have a "global strategic reach."[69] On the other hand, such a status is established by the recognition, by itself as well as by others, of its special rights and obligations, which themselves presuppose the common rules and institutions of a shared international society.[70] Similarly, others discuss the distinction between great powerhood as a matter of fact or status, capabilities or legitimacy, political or material power, or quantitative against qualitative approaches.[71]

Both everyday discourse and International Relations literature are dominated by an understanding of great powers in terms of capacity, according to which "[g]reat powers are the most powerful states in the international system."[72] Kenneth Waltz, for instance, takes states to be functionally equivalent and "distinguished primarily by their greater or lesser capabilities for performing similar tasks."[73] The quintessential capability in the realist

67 Hindess, *Discourses of Power*, 1.
68 Dean, *The Signature of Power*, 6; Hindess, *Discourses of Power*, 13.
69 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 198.
70 Ibid., 196.
71 Watson, *The Limits of Independence*, 102; Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*; Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 69; Neumann, "Russia's Quest for Recognition as a Great Power, 1489-2007."
72 Lemke, "Great Powers," 349.
73 Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 97.

universe of anarchy and self-help is military power,[74] and "the ability to wage war."[75] Mearsheimer thus identifies great powers as those states whose military capabilities allow them to "to put up a serious fight in an all-out conventional war against the most powerful state in the world."[76] The economic, demographic and social resources of a state provide the basis for maintaining a high level of such capabilities, and are hence thought to be integral elements of being a great power.[77] Under conditions where the use of military power is restricted – for instance as a result of the existence of nuclear weapons or economic interdependence – these capabilities might in themselves gain significance in terms of the international distribution of capabilities.[78]

The actual effect of the possession of these capabilities depends on a state's will and willingness to mobilise them as well as on the degree to which they enter into other states' calculations. Hence, international activism,[79] a system-wide definition of interests, and a similarly system-wide exertion of political force[80] are all thought to be important attributes of a great power. The responsibility of the great powers from this perspective is essentially mechanical, that is, while states are all considered equal in a juridical sense, "[i]n practice some states are much more responsible for what happens internationally than others, simply because of their weight in the purely mechanical sense."[81] A further, ethical understanding of responsibility might then be added externally, but this is secondary to greatness defined in terms of the weight of material capabilities.

74 Aron, *Peace and War*, 98; Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 195; Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 31.
75 Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, xxiv.
76 Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 5.
77 Waltz, *Realism and International Politics*, 170–1.
78 Kissinger, "The New Goal of Foreign Policy."
79 Lemke, "Great Powers," 350.
80 Wight, *Power Politics*, 50–52.
81 Watson, *The Limits of Independence*, 101; See also: Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

This way of linking power, greatness and responsibility is made more complex, however, by the fact that the exact form of calculations on the basis of which such weight is established and comes to matter remains prior to any identification of relative power. As Guzzini argues, no objective measure of power is available, and hence no objective interpretation of greatness on that basis.[82] States exercise their influence in a great variety of fields, without their power resources being fungible. Thus, in order to establish which of these matter, and thus what the nature of power relations is, international political actors must first come to an agreement or intersubjective standard on what will count. Moreover, any attribution of power over others is also the attribution of responsibility for whatever can be said to be produced or obstructed by that power. Any definition of power relations thus inserts the actors into a framework of legitimacy that calls for the justification of the power positions so identified.

One consequence of the importance of legitimacy is that not all states perceived to have sufficient power as capacity have in fact been recognised as great powers. States outside the core of Europe, for instance, found it either impossible or difficult to gain such recognition. This was the experience not only of Turkey[83] or Japan,[84] but also of the United States, Prussia and Russia.[85] Similarly, despite their unquestionable military power, Napoleon's France or Hitler's Germany were not regarded as great powers.[86] In all of these cases, recognition was denied because the state in question was thought either not to conform to certain norms regarding the appropriate moral character of a state (Christianity, belonging to the white race, being civilised), or to be incompatible with the basic principles of

82 Guzzini, "On the Measure of Power and the Power of Measure in International Relations"; Guzzini, "The Enduring Dilemmas of Realism in International Relations."
83 Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 20.
84 Zarakol, *After Defeat*; Zachman, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period*.
85 Neumann, "Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007"; Wight, *Power Politics*, 64–5.
86 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 196.

international order. In great powerhood the fact of power is hence related to power as right through a conception of international order.

Legitimacy is hence understood to be constitutive of both power and society. Social and political power can be exercised by a legitimate agency through securing the voluntary compliance of others.[87] In a sense the capacity of the modern sovereign, for instance, exists only because of the consent of the governed and is, in this sense, a power very different from that of a machine. Actors are generally "constituted as actors of a certain kind within specific global social practices each with its own internal ethical structure (constitution)."[88] Failing to conform to the norms of that structure leads to a loss of standing and, hence, to a loss of power. Actors with enough capacity might still choose to disregard the ethical expectations facing them, but they can only do so at some reputational cost, as "vulnerability to ethical appraisal by the other participants is not dependent on the actors' power."[89] Responsibility understood as accountability is thought to be an essential component of legitimacy, at least in cases where the legitimacy of an actor is connected to expectations about its behaviour or performance – a "distribution of responsibilities" – for which the actor is held accountable by others.[90] Actors of a society are related not only by common interests and institutions but also by a "structure of generally agreed rules setting out [actors'] rights and duties in relation to one another."[91]

Legitimacy, of course, is a notoriously elusive term,[92] and the literature on great powers is itself beset with ambiguities. It is, for instance, unclear whether legitimacy is a matter of shared social norms primary to the great powers, of the consent of the governed, or

87 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 70.
88 Frost, *Global Ethics*, 19.
89 Ibid., 26.
90 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 52, 61.
91 Bull, "The Emergence of a Universal International Society," 117.
92 Kratochwil, "On Legitimacy."

of the great powers' keeping to the rules that they themselves set.[93] Is it more a question of abiding to social norms or successful management of global problems?[94] Is it a matter of empirically observable shared understanding or of a normative frame separable from the existing state of affairs?[95]

Having set out in some detail the differences between power as capacity and power as right, as well as the basic form of responsibility they entail, we can see more clearly the way in which the two are related in particular concrete conceptualisations of the idea of great power management. As I have argued, a pure 'material' view of greatness is untenable. At the same time, it is also clear that in the modern international political space there is no natural or traditional hierarchy that could allocate greatness and underpin the concomitant distribution of rights and responsibilities outside conscious human creation and exercise of power. Moreover, as virtually no work suggests to understand great powers completely divested from their material preponderance, the real question to which alternative answers are provided concerns the ways in which relative capabilities are transformed into a relationship that can be adequately described in terms of legitimacy.

1.2.2. Setting standards: hegemony and leadership

A stable and taken-for-granted social order can include hierarchical social roles to which particular responsibilities are attached. In this case the nature of order specifies who counts as a great or greater actor, and such an actor might then be expected to perform certain obligations. Even though the lack of such performance might undermine an actor's status, no actor can claim a particular position simply by enacting what is expected from those occupying it. Thus, greatness is established separately from whether an actor is or is not

93 Clark, *Hegemony in International Society.*
94 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*.
95 Koskenniemi, "The Mystery of Legal Obligation."

responsible, since greatness stands for a social position that exists independent of whether someone fills that position or not.[96] In the absence of such a framework providing standards of greatness, a number of alternatives offer themselves, all of which deal with international order as human artifice. I begin with the view that identifies the greatness of the great powers in their ability to set the standards on the basis of which both themselves and the rest of the states are evaluated.

Understood in terms of leadership or hegemony, power and greatness are concerned not with 'power over' or *potestas* but with 'power to' or *potentia.* "While *potestas* is through which the world is governed, *potentia* is the power through which the world is made."[97] The great power as leader offers a new possible world, a new order. Its greatness is hence related to the performance of this action – to realising a potential good – rather than to an existing set of norms, rules or relations of relative capacity. Its responsibility can be grasped in terms of what is inherent to the *telos* that is implied by the potentiality.[98] Power as potential is thus responsible to itself, to the built-in end appropriate to it. In IR literature such an understanding informs some approaches to hegemony, according to which the power of the hegemon is directly related to its self-restraint, that is, that it presents itself as standing for a potential order and acts according to what that order implies.[99]

A similar relation between great powers and international order characterises the approach adopted by Iver B. Neumann, who argues that recognition as a great power should be understood neither in terms of material power nor of moral greatness, but rather – and bringing the two together – in terms of what is considered good domestic governance.[100]

96 Luard, *International Society*, 136.
97 Ringmar, "Empowerment Among Nations," 202.
98 Krieger, "Power and Responsibility: The Historical Assumptions."
99 Lebow and Kelly, "Thucydides and Hegemony"; Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*; Clark, "China and the United States."
100 Neumann, "Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007"; Neumann, "Russia's Quest for Recognition as a Great Power, 1489-2007."

Being a great power thus implies being exemplary in terms of the norm of good governance, the norm of being a good state. The right way of governing is not only a matter of the moral quality of the state, as it is for Reus-Smit,[101] but is also a significant factor in the assessment of the material capabilities of a power. States locked in an outdated form of governance are considered abnormal, and therefore their status as great powers remains questionable.[102]

But there is a problem with reading greatness through the question of power and normality. Neumann writes that great powers should be understood as those regarded as "exemplary" in the social practices that constitute them.[103] By their exemplary position, they effectively embody the norm for others but – as great powers – they are also able to do something more. They have "the material resources to socialize others into [their] system of governance."[104] This puts the emphasis on an intersubjectively recognised norm of governance, with the great powers having an exemplary relation to that norm. In order to become recognised as a great power, then, a powerful state must adopt the dominant norm of governance.

Yet, becoming a great power this way is impossible precisely because being exemplary implies setting the norm in the first place. A great power is then like the International Prototype Metre bar in Paris which, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, is both is and is not exactly one metre long insofar as it is both external and internal to the standard it sets.[105] Being exemplary in this way means to be prior to the norm although at the same time embodying it, and thus no mere adoption from the "inside" of the norm suffices for achieving the desired status. Hence, indeed, what lies behind the non-recognition of a state as a great power is not

101 Reus-Smit, "The Constitutional Structure of International Society and the Nature of Fundamental Institutions"; Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*.
102 Neumann, "Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007," 138.
103 Ibid., 132.
104 Ibid.
105 Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, 80.

failure to meet the standards of governance but the "lack of social power to have its regime type accepted as being on a par with [the dominant] ones."[106] Strictly speaking, the problem is not abnormality but the inability to define the norm.

Neumann thus leaves open the question whether a state could ever become a great power without setting its own norm and have it accepted by others. But it is one thing to say that a state does not get recognised as a great power without meeting the dominant standards of statehood, and another to argue that being a great power is a matter of effectively setting such a standard for others. Whereas the first treats great powers as wholly internal to the measurement set by the norm, the second points out that these states are not only exemplary in the sense of embodying the norm, but also in that they are setting the norm in their own image. This implies that greatness might ultimately reside not in the norm but in the ability of stepping out of it and setting a new one. This ability itself, however, is not part of the norm that is operative within, and is thus a matter of a truly qualitative distinction between the great powers and the rest allowing for no single measure.

This raises the further question of how any mutual recognition among great powers is possible: if greatness lies in being the norm for oneself and for others, how can there ever be multiple great powers? In the language of the leadership model: if responsibility is intimately connected to the particular *telos* of the power that an actor exhibits, how could there be a truly collective leadership without somehow reducing it to singularity? Although these models of hegemony thus provide an immediate relationship between greatness and responsibility, by equating greatness with world-making or standard-setting, they do not in themselves dissolve the paradoxical relationship between greatness and responsibility in the context of a plurality of power centres. In order for this to be possible, we need to turn to approaches that retain

106 Neumann, "Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007," 128.

some separation of international order from the greatness of great powers so that it may provide a ground for the mutual recognition of a number of great powers.

1.2.3. The balance of power and diplomatic norms

One such distinct image of international order centres on the balance of power. For Bull, the management of the balance of power is one of the main ways in which the great powers can contribute to international order irrespective of whether or not this is their conscious policy.[107] The balance of power existed as the outcome of the ad hoc exercise of power in reaction to perceived shifts in threats before it was formulated into a conscious policy at the level of a systematic understanding of the international realm.[108] When becoming conscious, however, the balance of power introduces the new problem of how to imagine its functioning as a human artifice.

I have already discussed the fundamental difficulties that exist for identifying the great powers on the basis of states' relative material capacities. The same is true for operating the balance of power as a calculable practice, as it also presupposes a way to measure such capacity, instruments through which such information can be relayed, and agreement on its interpretation.[109] It is only from the end of the 18th century – with the appearance of the science of statistics and of an efficient diplomatic network – that states appeared as entities whose human and material resources could be adequately compared.[110] Hence for much of history states relied, for a sense of how the balance stands in a context of "an indeterminacy of power ratios," on its only easily observable proxies: wars and their outcome as well as various related assessments of prestige.[111]

107 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 99–101.
108 Sheehan, *Balance Of Power.*
109 Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*.
110 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*.
111 Black, *Great Powers and the Quest for Hegemony*, 237; see also: Aron, *Peace and War*, 57–8; Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 34.

A relationship between great power management and the balance of power has been identified as concerning this problem of finding a sufficiently stable and shared basis for operating a conscious policy of the balance of power. As Ian Clark argued, great power management appeared after the threat of French dominance over the whole of Europe during the Napoleonic Wars, and thus can be seen as stemming from the recognition that the balance of power is "a product of human contrivance rather than […] a gift of nature."[112] The Congress system can, accordingly, be interpreted as "an alternative both to the old aim of domination by one Power […] and to the balance of power as it had operated in the eighteenth century."[113] Yet, even if it was theoretically possible, it was not feasible to base a stable balance on precise calculations of relative power. The system of congresses and conferences emerging after 1815 offered a solution to such uncertainty by, on the one hand, linking the balance of power to the territorial *status quo* and, on the other, by the adoption of a group norm by the winning coalition of major powers according to which any modification to that *status quo* or any crisis threatening that *status quo* must be addressed based on the formal and common agreement of the Great Powers.[114]

The Concert of Europe as an instance of great power management can thus be seen as a development whose main contribution "to diplomatic theory and practice was precisely its modifications of the balance of power."[115] It sought to make the operation of balance of power more reliable through inscribing it in a system of rights themselves defined through great power decision making in accordance with a new set of diplomatic norms.[116] Factual relations

112 Clark, *The Hierarchy of States*, 119.
113 Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 196.
114 Ibid., 225.
115 Clark, *The Hierarchy of States*, 119.
116 Clark strictly delineates the Concert of Europe from the development of a diplomatic machinery leading to the emergence of international organisations, as its core is not an even incipient institutional framework but a diplomatic norm that ties the modification of the *status quo* in Europe to explicit great power consent.

of power were hence displaced by a relation of rights, which itself was dependent on finding an agreement that is satisfactory enough for all the Great Powers to forego the option of war.

As Alfred Zimmern noted, this was "a system of Rights without Duties, and of Responsibilities without Organisation," in which the Great Powers recognised no legal guarantee but only moral responsibility for the maintenance of the territorial order.[117] What made them the Great Powers, however, was not the fulfilment of such responsibility, but their demonstrated ability to unilaterally disrupt the *status quo* if their will was not taken into account, combined with their acceptance of the norm of Great Power agreement. The position of the small powers were defined only by the latter, and it was the former through which a claim to greatness could be made.[118]

1.2.4. Functional roles

Hans Morgenthau also considered the Holy Alliance and the Concert of Europe as institutionalised manifestations of the balance of power. Yet, for him, the efficacy of the balance as well as of this new form rested on the foundation of an "intellectual and moral unity" in Europe. This cultural and moral order provided for Morgenthau the restraints on power politics in 17th to 19th century Europe, of which "the balance of power is not so much the cause, as the metaphorical and symbolic expression or, at best, the technique of realisation."[119] This primacy of the European social order to the status of great powers can also be found in the more usual assertion, according to which the great powers are states that are accorded special rights and responsibilities in order to undertake the task of defending that order.[120]

117 Zimmern, *The League Of Nations And The Rule Of Law, 1918-1935*, 75.
118 I discuss this in more detail in Chapter 3.
119 Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 164.
120 Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States*.

Starting out from a thick conception of international social order in which "agents are identified by their social roles,"[121] it is possible to conceptualise great powerhood as a social role and the responsibilities attached to it as role responsibilities. Social roles are neither reducible to the self-understandings of actors (their role-identities), nor are merely normative precepts. Instead, they are "objective, collectively constituted positions that give meaning to [self-]understandings."[122] Such positions exist as intersubjective understandings reproduced in the discourses and practices of international politics. Responsibilities are "critical in defining the multifarious roles that characterise society,"[123] although certainly not all roles are identified in terms of rights and duties.[124]

Although social roles are present in all societies, it is not clear what continuity can be established between the kind of social order Morgenthau referred to – linking actors together by culturally deeply constitutive shared understandings – and the distinctly modern way of regarding roles, as well as the corresponding rights and responsibilities, as products of human choice. The rise of the language of responsibility as opposed to that of duties or obligations – terms which are all too often used as if they were synonymous – is linked to the rise of modern individualism and hence to the passing of the traditional, divine, or natural images of order and hierarchy that underwrote the distribution of rights and responsibilities in society.[125] If one can still speak of social roles, they thus must be understood on some different foundation.

One such possibility is to argue that special responsibilities – including that of the great powers – are connected to functional roles and status differentiations serving to

121 Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 794; Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, 318.
122 Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 258.
123 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 62.
124 Social roles are primarily linked to expectations, only one variety of which is responsibilities. Consider, for instance, the socially recognised role of a "rogue state". Luard, *International Society*, 137.
125 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 53; Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*, 104–6.

"enhance the efficient working of international order."[126] A number of problems facing contemporary international order – from climate change and global economic regulation to international crises and nuclear proliferation – can be handled neither on the basis of the dominant principle of sovereign equality nor by having recourse to brute power. In such cases social roles and corresponding responsibilities are allocated, on the basis of consent, to actors with the capability to act on the identified challenges. In other words, the special responsibilities characteristic of the management of international order by the great powers are "differentiated set of obligations, the allocation of which is collectively agreed, and they provide a principle of social differentiation for managing collective problems in a world characterised by both formal equality and inequality of material capability."[127]

Although, in a sense, social roles concern the social order as a whole, they are also clearly differentiated in terms of specific functional domains.[128] The relationship of these functional responsibilities to some thicker notion of international order that can be captured by, for instance, pluralist or solidarist norms,[129] remains questionable. The emphasis on functionality and on the efficient operation of the international realm calls into question the distinction between power as fact and power as right. The existence of social roles implies some gap between a role and power, in the sense that responsibilities are attached to the role and do not follow directly from power. In functional terms, however, the fact of having more power immediately comes with different responsibilities without the clear mediation of an intersubjectively understood social role. Yet, the responsibility involved remains understood in terms of obligations or accountability. "When we judge an individual responsible for something, we do so in relation to pre-existing expectations about what constitutes

126 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 5.
127 Ibid., 16.
128 Ibid., 56.
129 Foot and Walter, *China, the United States, and Global Order*, 2–5.

appropriate conduct for a person in that social role in that kind of situation."[130] This responsibility goes beyond formalised institutional or legal frameworks and concern what can be characterised as a moral, social or perhaps political sense of accountability.

An understanding of greatness in terms of functionally defined responsibility does not dissolve the problematic relation between the two terms. Functional regimes are organised around specific issue-areas with their particular perspective – "special systems of truth" – from which they define the problems of a particular domain.[131] Each have their own "material structures [that] exist within the context of distinctive institutions, sets of formal and informal norms, rules and principles that constitute actors' identities and regulate their behaviour."[132] These characteristics of the domains are not objective facts but are themselves results of decisions and exercises of power.[133] Within a particular regime, the objectives and the rules of what constitutes knowledge and legitimacy are already set, while disagreements are put aside.[134] In order to define specific responsibilities and relations of legitimacy, the relevant stakeholders must be identified, but this itself requires a decision as to who they are and how issue areas are separated and selected to describe a particular situation.[135] Managing a particular field in terms of one rather than another functional regime is a political decision determining which such context is relevant. Merely being responsible in terms of the expectations defined by functional domains, hence, does not make one equal to those that make such decisions.

130 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 61.
131 Koskenniemi, "Miserable Comforters: International Relations as New Natural Law," 320.
132 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 75.
133 Koskenniemi, "Miserable Comforters: International Relations as New Natural Law."
134 Koskenniemi, "The Mystery of Legal Obligation."
135 Bartelson, "Functional Differentiation and Legitimate Authority," 46.

1.2.5. Institutionalised collective hegemony

The social role approach to great powers and their managerial position is conspicuously silent on the ability of the great powers to impose their will on the rest of international society. Its focus is, rather, on the constraints requirements of legitimacy impose on the exercise of power. Yet the dual nature of the great powers' position regarding order is difficult to overlook. Take, for instance, Ian Clark's conceptualisation of great power management as a form of hegemony. On the one hand, he argues that it is shared social norms that "constitute hegemonic power by defining the range of legitimate behaviour that will cause other actors to recognise a state's identity as a leader," and defines hegemony as "an institutionalised practice of special rights and responsibilities, conferred by international society or a constituency within it, on a state (or states) with the resources to lead."[136] At the same time, he also contends that "hegemony should not be associated simply with the exercise of dominant power but with the creation of a distinctive, and acceptable, pattern of order."[137] In other words, hegemonic powers as leaders offer, assert or impose their vision of order on the rest of the world, even if its functioning is assisted by its legitimacy. In this sense the legitimacy and responsibility of the hegemon is provided not simply by the already existing social order but by an order the rules of which are decided by the hegemon.

Great power management in this perspective is thus understood as a special case of hegemony, i.e. of material power and domination transformed into legitimate authority. It is through providing the benefits of order that authority as a right to rule is established by the diffused hegemony of a few powerful states that collectively dominate the rest of international society.[138] "The order they are maintaining [...]" writes Hedley Bull, "is their preferred

136 Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, 23, 4.
137 Clark, "China and the United States," 24.
138 Watson, *The Evolution of International Society*, 15–7.

order."[139] The transformation of dominance into hegemony is supposed to take place through laying down a framework of rules. While some see this as a matter of providing material and security benefits for the rest of the world in exchange for an order serving the interests of the dominant power,[140] or as rules manifested primarily in terms of the self-restraint of the hegemon,[141] great power management is generally understood to formalise and externalise these rules in terms of a legal or institutional order that is founded on and yet remains distinct from the social order. The political fact of unequal power relations, for instance, can be "converted into legal realities" through the imposition of a legal order by the major powers – and its acceptance by the weaker ones – that gives rise "to the existence of certain constitutional privileges, rights and duties."[142] Alternatively, military power can be transformed into more subtle forms of influence through the medium of a more explicitly political constitutional structure in which the special rights of the great powers are accepted by the rest of the world because the same institutional structure imposes restraints on the exercise of preponderant capacity.[143]

In this arrangement, responsibilities are taken to be legally or institutionally specified duties that have their source in the legal or institutional order that the great powers impose. Accordingly, just as in the case of social roles, these responsibilities are understood in terms of accountability, although this time not in a moral sense. Their definition within the order imposed by the great powers, however, also implies that although such responsibilities might be important for turning material power into legitimacy, they do not themselves define the position of the great powers. As Martin Wight noted, "the Great Powers will impose the law,

139 Bull, "The Great Irresponsibles?," 438.
140 Clark, *The Hierarchy of States*, 106; Lake, *Hierarchy in international relations*; Lake, "Escape from the State of Nature."
141 Clark, *Hegemony in International Society.*
142 Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, 68.
143 Ikenberry, *After Victory.*

but are themselves above it."[144] Although the consent of the rest of the world to the framework of rules can assist the exercise of power through legal and institutional mechanisms, from the perspective of formalised hegemony the crucial circle of consent remains confined to the great powers.[145]

1.3. Responsibility beyond accountability

All of the above approaches, with the partial exception of the balance-of-power framework, equate responsibility with accountability for the performance of obligations allocated by a particular conception of order or a framework of norms. Yet all of them retain the problematic relationship between the great powers and such responsibilities in so far as the ability to set the norms remains central to greatness – the ability to lead by setting standards, the ability to break the established order through war, the ability to decide on which functional logic and role is relevant, or the ability to set or impose the institutional framework – in a way that great powers are such precisely to the extent that they exceed the limits set by the order.

This is demonstrated in a particularly acute manner in the idea of responsible power insofar as its referent is not the existing set of rules or norms that constitute international order, but rather the maintenance of a system, i.e. it is defined as potentially related to a sphere beyond any institutionalised framework and relationship of accountability that can be derived from it. Such a broader referent of responsibility is provided by the functional roles approach, according to which actors occupy roles that are partly defined by the responsibilities for which they can be held accountable. The idea of 'responsible power,' however, sits uneasily with this formulation. Lacking clearly articulated social roles with "pre-existing expectations about what constitutes appropriate conduct for a person in that

144 Quoted in: Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, 48.
145 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 250.

social role in that kind of situation,"[146] the functional approach to legitimacy appears as nothing more than the observation of the sociological fact of output legitimacy. Already the idea of 'responsible power' as a social role implies problems with clearly distinguishing power as fact and power as right. Whereas, for instance, it is clear what is meant when one talks about the responsibilities of a policeman, it is unclear and tautological to talk about the responsibilities of a responsible power.

This should not, however, be taken as a sign that the concept of 'responsible power' is simply incoherent. The immediate relation between power and responsibility suggests that, rather than understanding responsibility in terms of relations of obligation and accountability based on pre-existing rules and norms of order, we should see it as pointing to a particular formulation of the problem of power in relation to order. Note, for instance, that in Zoellick's speech on the concept of 'responsible stakeholder,' China's expected responsibility is discussed primarily as a demand for more caution about the effects of its actions.[147] The problem is identified as Beijing's "blindness to consequences", that its actions "can create risks" but also the incalculability of its behaviour: "[m]any countries hope China will pursue a 'Peaceful Rise', but none will bet their future on it." In many of the concrete examples – as for instance in the case of the North Korean nuclear program – the problem is identified in the way China's activities, or even simply its existence as a separate centre of power, change the incentive structure faced by actors who should be managed effectively. Without China's cooperation it is more costly, if not impossible, for the international community to control certain processes and the behaviour of specific actors. The democratization of China's domestic governance is important, but it is not so much the question of entering the

146 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 61.
147 All the quotes in this paragraph are from Zoellick, "Whither China? From Membership to Responsibility."

community of democratic states – of the right moral character of a state – as an inevitable step for sustaining China's growth.

Even though the speech uses the concept of responsibility both in a prospective and a retrospective sense, overall it is grounded in a more fundamental demand. Zoellick did not simply call upon China to accept accountability for its actions or to take on and perform specific responsibilities. He did not refer to any clear legal framework or social order, nor did he relate the demand to an already existing practice between great powers. Nothing else is mentioned as the basis of responsibility than an 'international system' defined in terms of shared risk and a common stake in prosperity. In fact, Zoellick's speech urges China to *be* a responsible power, i.e. to have a responsible character, to develop and exhibit the virtue of responsibility. Here, as in many other instances of using 'responsible power', responsibility stands for more than acting in a certain way, and rather for a general attitude of self-restraint, a readiness to take on responsibilities, a certain moral quality internal to the actor.[148]

I want to suggest that we should take seriously the virtue-like character of responsibility – *being* responsible – in the current discourse on 'responsible power,' and not reduce it to a relation of accountability. Responsibility as a disposition concerns a mode of being in the world, an attitude towards it: a matter of character.[149] A person of such character takes into account and accepts responsibility for the consequences of his or her actions; understands, takes on and fulfils his or her obligations; relates to what (s)he is in charge of with a sense of responsibility even – or especially – when acting with discretion.[150] Having a

148 As Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, stated in 2005: "We are a responsible nuclear power. We act with restraint".

149 My discussion of responsibility as a virtue owes much to Williams, "Responsibility as a Virtue"; Williams, "Responsibility."

150 Thus one could distinguish between "procedural" responsibility defined by institutional roles as distributing both authority and accountability for its exercise, and "prudential" responsibility which is discretionary and concerns "the possible adverse consequences of any contemplated decision, policy or action in the circumstances of time and place in which it must be taken." Jackson, *Surrogate Sovereignty? Great Power Responsibility and "Failed States,"* 5–6.

responsible disposition both includes and exceeds the relationship of the agent to externally given rules and to an audience. The more responsible someone is, the more we might want to trust his or her own assessment of the effects of his or her actions and of what should be done, and the more we might be willing to put him or her in charge of particular domains.

What is peculiar about such a conception of responsibility is that it is most valuable precisely when obligations cannot be specified, when following rules is insufficient, when institutional answers are found wanting. It is only in such cases that a character trait internal to agents becomes central to defining the conditions of social order. This is so partly because, lacking external guidance, we are left to rely on such a virtue of responsibility even to simply know what is required of us. In other words, the more emphasis is put on responsible character, the less certain a society seems to be about the exact range and content of obligations. Our contemporary moral discourse clearly displays such signs when we talk of responsible and irresponsible governments, companies, citizens, states and great powers.

The concept of responsibility is thus similar to that of 'legitimacy,' as it is most pertinent in situations requiring action that cannot be defined in terms of any pre-existing rule.[151] Both function, in fact, more as terms of approbation than of description – calling someone a responsible actor is clearly a form of commendation, a mode of praise. Both concepts provide links between other concepts fundamental to thinking about order, including power, discretion, judgement and rules. Yet responsibility as a virtue also differs significantly from legitimacy. Most fundamentally, while legitimacy relates an actor and a particular audience, and does so primarily in terms of power conceptualised as right, responsibility as a virtue is a disposition internal to the actor, which concerns above all relations of power as capacity.[152]

151 Kratochwil, "On Legitimacy."
152 Power as 'power over' is defined "from a perspective that enables participants and investigators to locate

The legalised collective hegemony and functional role approaches have no such conception of responsibility as a disposition. Although the character of the actor is central to the identification of great powers as standard-setters, it contains no relation to an external element in terms of which responsibility could be defined so as to connect a plurality of such actors. It is only in the balance-of-power framework that something approaching responsibility as a virtue can be located: more important than the moral responsibility they share for the preservation of the territorial order, the position of the Great Powers is characterised by a disposition that becomes important precisely when the contours of that order are re-defined, This disposition connects a readiness for self-assertion – even at the price of war – with an openness to its consummation in a commonly agreed upon re-drawing of the territorial order, reflecting the new balance of will. It is the combination of a shared territorial order to manage and of this particular disposition, that is at the core of the operation of the balance-of-power model of great power management. The successful assertion of such a disposition could in fact constitute a direct claim of greatness, which merely acting according to the existing rules could never have effected.

Conclusion

In this chapter I investigated the relationship between responsibility and the greatness of great powers. I argued that equating responsibility with accountability or with the fulfilment of externally set obligations places it in a paradoxical relationship to greatness, as the former is fully internal, whereas the latter is at least partly external to a pre-given set of rules. I suggested that this paradox can be partly made sense of by paying attention to the use of responsibility as a disposition internal to states and yet defined in relation to an external order.

responsibility for the imposition of limiting conditions by linking those conditions to the decisions people make, or could make and don't." Connolly, *The Terms of Political Discourse*, 101.

Such a character trait is most pertinent in a space of exceptional action that takes place outside of, but is directed towards, a certain order. In the next chapter I investigate this concept of responsibility as a virtue in terms of how its central role in our conception of social order has come about.

This is part of a larger question emerging from this chapter concerning the exact way the disposition of great powers has come to be understood as a central element of international order, and responsibility as a disposition itself has come to be associated with greatness. The above discussed approaches to great powers employ ideas that are most adequate for characterising particular historical periods. Hence a strict social role approach is most appropriate for a state of European order where political actors were identified in terms of an overarching social order with its hierarchical structure such as there existed in the Middle Ages. The balance-of-power approach is certainly most pertinent for the era of the Concert of Europe, and is less relevant for a world in which its central category of self-assertive war has come to be defined as the ultimate irresponsibility in international order.[153] Functional approaches, in contrast, emerged in the 20th century. Zoellick contrasted his concept of 'responsible power' with the 19th century Great Power system of power politics.[154] Consequently, instead of identifying an essential idea of great powerhood and its relation to responsibility, one should interrogate the history of contingent co-articulations of greatness and responsibility in particular projects and images of international order, a task I begin to undertake in Chapter 3.

153 In international law, in fact, war as such is no longer understood to be a legal institution, and is replaced by a distinction between aggression and self-defence, with the latter essentially being the only legitimate form of the use of force. See: Neff, *War and the Law of Nations*.

154 Zoellick, "Whither China? From Membership to Responsibility."

2.
Maturity and Calculability:
A Genealogy of Responsibility as a Virtue

> *"I wrested from myself the denial of all purposes and felt the unknowability of causal connections. And what was this all for? Was it not to give myself a feeling of complete irresponsibility – to place myself outside all praise and blame, independent of all past and present, in order to run after my own goal in my own way?" Nietzsche*[155]

I argued in the previous chapter that a direct relationship between greatness and responsibility is paradoxical so long as we consider it in terms of a set of rules specifying duties, obligations and relations of accountability. Either greatness is identified on the basis of a standard other than responsibility, which then attaches responsibilities to that status, or greatness must manifest itself in laying down the rules, in which case it cannot be specified in terms of responsibility. A way to begin to get out of this paradox, I pointed out, is to take note of the phenomenon that the current usage of responsibility in the phrase 'responsible power' is not exhausted by questions of accountability, obligations and answerability, but includes a concept of responsibility as a virtue. In this form the concept is affirmative, not simply descriptive, and instead of looking for a correspondence between external restraints and behaviour or intention, it specifies the relationship between the agent and the social order in terms of an internal character trait. Responsibility as a virtue is a form of self-restraint that

155 Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, 23, notebook 36, entry 10.

cannot be exhausted by any set of norms or rules. In this chapter I examine this notion of responsibility as a character trait in the context not merely of broader transformations of particular norms or normative frameworks, but of the way in which ethics and practical rationality themselves have been understood, that is, in terms of a genealogy of responsibility as a character trait central to the idea of social order.

2.1. Responsibility as a virtue

Although our contemporary concept of responsibility is often taken to be interchangeable with accountability, imputation, duty or obligation, the term appeared as an innovation in the era of modernity, which signals that its meaning is not exhausted by the above concepts. Responsibility as a noun entered into the vocabulary of moral concepts only in the 18th century, indicating that contemporaries faced a situation in which these earlier concepts were no longer seen sufficient: "[t]he formation and use of an abstract noun marks an effort to define forces which have become operative for the first time or whose operation has, in recent situations or theories, been advanced or thwarted."[156] Earlier uses of the word as an adverb are noted since at least the 16th century, with the meaning 'answerable,' and gaining further meanings of 'accountable for one's actions' and 'reliable, trustworthy' during the 17th century.[157] As an adjective, however, the word was closely connected and secondary to a notion of obligations, thus remaining an essentially descriptive term. The coming to the fore of the concept of responsibility in our moral discourse signals a change not merely in the content of the norms but in the very conceptual scheme in which norms are understood, and thus a transformation of the social life of which moral concepts are constitutive.[158]

156 McKeon, "The Development and the Significance of the Concept of Responsibility," 79–80.
157 *Online Etymological Dictionary,* http://www.etymonline.com/
158 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 1.

The concept of responsibility first entered philosophy during the American and French revolutions, in the context of political debates over representative political institutions and constitutional government.[159] Correspondingly, the first uses of the term 'responsible power' can be located here, in terms of power as right, that is, of an unequal distribution of rights and duties regulated within a constitutional framework.[160] It described the role of the executive power, and referred to the idea that those to whom power was entrusted were answerable to those by whom that power was delegated, to the sovereign people. In the words of the influential liberal philosopher John C. Calhoun, "[t]he essence of liberty comprehends the idea of *responsible power*, – that those who make and execute the laws, should be controlled by those on whom they operate, – that the *governed* should *govern*."[161] To some extent this was a matter of projecting imputation and accountability onto the institution of the executive by emphasising the importance of the rule of law, institutional transparency and answerability. In the context of democratic politics, however, it also signalled the importance for political order of a responsible electorate, of a responsible sovereign power: "responsible government depends on responsible people but a people acquires responsibility only by exercising it."[162] In this respect the question of responsibility exceeded that of adhering to rules, carrying out obligations or answering for one's performance, and became concerned with situations and decisions that cannot be contained within frameworks of rules and institutions, especially with the problem of self-legislation and the character of individuals proper to this new condition.

Apart from referring to the internal working and social context of constitutional politics, the crucial role of responsible disposition can also be located, according to Garrath Williams, in the "distinctively institutional character" of modern liberal societies.[163] The

159 McKeon, "The Development and the Significance of the Concept of Responsibility."
160 Taylor, *An Inquiry Into the Principles and Policy of the Government of the United States ...*, 84.
161 Calhoun, *John C. Calhoun*, 289.
162 McKeon, "The Development and the Significance of the Concept of Responsibility," 81.
163 Williams, "Responsibility as a Virtue," 455.

crucial facet of modernity explaining the increasing discursive relevance of the concept is that one is always faced with a plurality of competing normative demands, to all of which one has a responsibility to respond. Institutions alleviate this burden by uniting individuals who follow their own values and ideas of good life – taking up the role previously supplied by shared values – while clearly delineating their spheres of responsibilities by allocating to them specific institutional roles and corresponding power.[164] "Responsibility is a central demand when we are granted significant discretion or power, wherever innovation, change, and fluidity rob practices of fixity, so that our mutual expectations require on-going renegotiations."[165] As a virtue, it acquires its special position when institutions cannot themselves provide the adequate rules for action – for instance wherever notional responsibilities become detached from the actual context – and when agents themselves must make a judgement about how to handle the normative demands they face.

Finally, apart from the problem of self-legislation and of the emergence of an administrative-institutional distribution of power and responsibilities, according to Ricoeur the increasing centrality of responsibility in current moral discourse is also linked to its insertion into a conceptual net of solidarity, risk and security. In this constellation responsibility comes to be defined through the objective identification of harm instead of its previous juridical understanding as an "obligation to accept punishment for a fault."[166] Separated from its legal origins, responsibility is radically transformed, including becoming co-extensive with the effects of an agent's actions in terms of both temporal and spatial scope. The focus on the avoidance of harm and this infinite expansion of responsibility push towards a concept of responsibility understood as vigilance or prudence.[167] Responsibility in this

164 See also: Williams, "'Infrastructures of Responsibility'."
165 Williams, "Responsibility as a Virtue," 465.
166 Ricoeur, "The Concept of Responsibility: An Essay in Semantic Analysis," 12, 25.
167 Ibid., 29–30.

prudential sense stands for both precaution and judgement, the latter concerning a moral judgement in a particular case regarding a just measure between taking up our infinite responsibility and ignoring some of the unintended effects of our actions. Responsibility in this sense is not merely a feeling – similar to the Kantian reverence for the moral law – that makes our moral obligations resulting from our power over things operative, as Hans Jonas argued.[168] Instead, the responsible actor exhibits the virtue of prudence.

The modern concept of responsibility has thus increasingly taken on a meaning as a virtue or character trait that becomes important when it is not possible to act according to pre-existing rules. This prudential meaning of responsibility has often been noted and likened to the Aristotelian concept of *phronēsis*, because it concerns judgement in particular situations regarding one's general responsibilities, and because it serves as a virtue central to the organisation of the social realm.[169] The distance between the two nevertheless remains substantial, primarily in terms the practical rationality and the form of social life they belong to.

2.2. The virtue of *phronēsis*

The Aristotelian virtue of *phronēsis* was part of a moral system that responded to, and tried to resolve, the breakdown of the moral categories of Homeric Greece in the absence of the overall framework within which they acquired a relatively coherent meaning.[170] Moral categories in Homeric Greece were tied to social roles. The latter received their meaning from a taken-for-granted hierarchical social order corresponding to the order of the cosmos.[171] The

168 Jonas, "The Concept of Responsibility: An Inquiry into the Foundations of an Ethics for Our Age."
169 Kelty, *Responsibility: McKeon and Ricoeur.*
170 Much of my genealogical narrative is informed by works of Alasdair MacIntyre on the historical transformations of practical rationality and concepts of virtue. See: MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*; MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*; MacIntyre, "Practical Rationalities as Forms of Social Structure."
171 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 14.

nature of this social order was "pre-reflective," as there was no possibility to step outside of it and ask questions about whether it was the right order or about what good one should follow.[172] *Phronēsis* named the virtue of knowing what one's due was, thus knowing one's social role and how it fitted into the web of expectations.[173] One's standing in society depended on the fulfilment of these expectations. Thus *to be* was always *to be someone* – to have some role – and to perform the requisite obligations, without any gap between fact and norm, is and ought, or the natural and the moral.[174]

One was held responsible for delivering – or failing to deliver – the expected performances. Blame could not be avoided by pointing out that one had the right intentions but still failed to perform the expected action.[175] The ancient Greeks did not separate doer and deed by inserting an abstract, characterless subject capable of "a will in the interest of an abstract concept of duty."[176] Delivering the expected performance should not be interpreted in terms of consequences or effects. Success was crucial, but it was not understood merely in terms of an 'outcome' completely external to and independent of the performance itself. To be good (*agathos*) one did not only need to be successful in a purely functional manner, but to be so displaying the virtues – the forms of excellence – belonging to a particular role, realising the good internal to practising one's role. Virtues in Homeric societies were "the qualities required to sustain a role, and [were] manifested in the actions required by the role."[177] Since actors were called *agathos* if they performed the virtues linked to their role, success was defined on the basis of shared concepts of good and of the excellence belonging to that good.[178]

172 Strong, "Introduction: The Self and the Political Order," 9; Adkins, *From the Many to the One*, 20.
173 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 154.
174 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 7.
175 Ibid.
176 Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 41; Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*.
177 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 122.
178 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 35.

The Homeric conception of social order collapsed under changes in economic conditions and as a result of exposure to different social orders.[179] In its wake the categories of social order could no longer be taken for granted, a distinction between nature (*physis*) and convention (*nomos*) developed. Without a stable set of social roles, the virtues as the qualities of a person who excels in his role lost their ground. A new question had to be raised concerning the good qualities of a person not as someone performing a role in a particular community, but as a man as such. Although the concept and list of virtues survived, it was unclear whether they could still be understood as being any more than mere expressions of approval.[180] A powerful answer to this condition was provided by the Sophists, who argued that the good of man-as-such was to be a successful citizen.[181] By 'success' they understood social advancement achieved through the skilful handling (*technē*) of desires, opinions and conventions present in a particular city-state. Success was the only goal of action, and the virtues were re-conceptualised as qualities that ensured success.[182] The choice regarding within which particular convention one sought success was taken to be a pre-moral matter of an individual existing prior to any social conventions.

Aristotle responded to this challenge by seeking to reconstruct a concept of overall social order within which the good of man could be defined as other than mere success, and where the choice between ways of life was not arbitrary. He argued that the human good was found in acting in accordance with virtue.[183] The possession of virtues was not merely a means to achieving that good, but was a necessary and integral part of it.[184] Virtues remained understood as forms of human excellence belonging to particular practices, but these practices

179 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 10–11.
180 Ibid., 91.
181 Ibid., 14.
182 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 139.
183 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 63.
184 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 149.

no longer corresponded to well-defined roles in a stable social order. The different practices one could engage in called for different virtues from individuals *as participants* in those practices. Aristotle believed that the good of the individual *as a human* could be found in the practice of politics,[185] a practice that both presupposed the existence of the human good and aimed at integrating all the other practices into the search for good life.[186] The space in which such a practice could be conducted was the *polis*, and thus its existence was a precondition for acquiring the virtues, those dispositions that enabled the individuals to achieve the human good.[187]

Correspondingly, for Aristotle acting right presupposed the framework of the *polis*. Action in his conceptualisation was not preceded by an act of rational decision on the end to follow. This end was always already posited by one's character, which itself depended on one's habituation and education.[188] Forming individuals with proper character was the task of politics, the practice within which the specifically human excellence of reason was exercised.[189] Action sprung directly from rational desire, that is, from the desire of what reason recognises as good. Once such a desire was in place, it was impossible for an actor to choose not to act upon it.[190] The only distinction was between choosing the right thing and failing to do so. The truly virtuous person could never fail to choose the right thing for the right end as his choice directly flowed from his character.[191] Thus failing to choose the right thing was understood as a failure of character and not of will. One was accountable not for one's will but insofar as something was up to oneself, that is, insofar as one's action reflected one's motivation (which, in turn, was decided by one's character).[192]

185 Frede, "The Political Character of Aristotle's Ethics."
186 MacIntyre, "Practical Rationalities as Forms of Social Structure," 123.
187 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 97.
188 Frede, *A Free Will*, 24.
189 Frede, "The Political Character of Aristotle's Ethics."
190 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 140.
191 Frede, *A Free Will*, 29.
192 Raffoul, *The Origins of Responsibility*.

Aristotle identified the character trait that was central to choosing the right action in *phronēsis,* which was "not only itself a virtue, it [was] the keystone of all virtue."[193] It stood for a disposition to act rightly and for the right end in particular cases. A prudent person (*phronimos*) was one who knew which general principles to apply and in what manner in concrete circumstances, and how to realise in action the virtues appropriate for a given context. A person who did not possess the virtues enabling the good life could, hence, not be *phronimos*. *Phronēsis* was thus not "a certain cunning capacity for linking means to any end,"[194] and it did not correspond to the modern idea of prudence, which is concerned with caution and self-interest.[195] To act with *phronēsis* was "to judge both which truths are relevant to him in his particular situation and from that judgement and from his perception of the relevant aspects of himself and his situation to act rightly."[196] In other words, this virtue connected the good – and ultimately the human good – with a particular case in a not rule-governed manner.

The absolute centrality of *phronēsis* to Aristotle's conception of order is clear in the way it links the particular context of individual acts with the political practice within which the human *telos* is articulated. In fact, the only way for Aristotle to define what is right to do in any particular context was by referring to what a person who is *phronimos* would do.[197] To possess this virtue was to possess a specifically political disposition, "the greatest possible overview of all possible standpoints and viewpoints from which an issue can be seen and judged."[198] Lacking a taken-for-granted social order with its roles and corresponding social expectations, order was re-conceived as a political order with *phronēsis* as its key virtue.

193 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 74.
194 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 154.
195 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 74.
196 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 116.
197 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 66.
198 Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, 170.

2.3. The virtue of prudence and the law conception of ethics

With the decline of the *polis* and its replacement with larger units of administration, the unity between community and moral evaluation became unsustainable.[199] People withdrew from communal life and searched for new frameworks for evaluating personal action and the exercise of power in individualised or cosmopolitan categories. The major philosophical schools of Epicureanism and Stoicism replaced the link between *polis* and personal character by the connection between universal law and individual will as the basis of order. Stoicism, which influenced the development of early Christian moral philosophy,[200] redefined the concept of virtue by detaching it – just as it did the individual – from the context of social life, and defining it instead in terms of action in conformity with the divine law governing the universe.[201] Christianity thus introduced a law conception of ethics, with individual will and moral obligation or duty as its central categories.[202]

Right action was no longer defined by the performance of human excellence aiming at the specifically human *telos* achievable in the practice of politics, but nor was it understood in a consequentialist manner. Stoicism posited a world wholly determined by God's providence, in which the only moral question concerned whether one recognised and assented to what would in any way come about.[203] A person of perfectly free will, having freed him or herself from the rule of wrong impressions and desires, would act freely according to God's plan. For those who were not fully free, God arranged circumstances in such a way that their false desires would lead them nevertheless to contribute to the desired effect.[204] The centrality of intention to the moral evaluation of action originated here, since the outcome of action was in

199 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 100.
200 Frede, *A Free Will*.
201 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 105–6.
202 Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy."
203 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 106; Frede, *A Free will*, 37.
204 Frede, *A Free Will*, 79.

any case preordained by God. Right action was hence identified as being motivated by a "rightly formed will."[205]

The Aristotelian account of virtues was inserted into this framework by Aquinas, whose work represented the highest articulation of medieval Christian theology. Virtues became redefined as qualities that enable a person to act in accordance with the divine law.[206] *Prudentia*, the rendering of *phronēsis* in Latin, was identified as the virtue of acting in particular circumstances so as to reproduce God's order. "*Prudentia* is exercised with a view to the ultimate end of human beings, and it is the counterpart in human beings to that ordering of creatures to their ultimate end which is God's providence."[207] Prudence thus no longer served as the link between choosing the right end and choosing the right action in a particular case. Instead, the choice of the right end was identified as the outcome of an anterior act of will oriented in line with God's sovereignty, while prudence merely enabled one to realise what is required by divine law in particular circumstances.

These developments were brought to their extreme with the arrival of the Reformation. Whereas the Stoics and pre-reformation Christians believed that ultimately right willing and right reason coincided,[208] for both Luther and Calvin moral rules were justified simply on the basis of God's sovereign command that must be accepted by a fully sovereign moral agent.[209] Now it was possible that God might command action that goes against reason. The act of will – as faith – thus became fundamental, and moral 'ought' was re-conceptualised fully in the model of unconditional command and obedience.

205 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 169.
206 Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy," 6; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 169.
207 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 196.
208 Frede, *A Free Will*, 78.
209 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, 121–7.

2.4. Responsibility as maturity

The Christian understanding of prudence presupposed a shared belief in divine law, a foundation for morality that looked increasingly fragile by the 17th century, and fell apart completely with the coming of the Enlightenment. While virtue was still thought of as "the habit of directing one's actions in conformity with the natural law" by Wolff,[210] it was increasingly problematic to find stable foundations for such a 'natural' moral law, and hence the inherited concepts of will and obligation could only be preserved by presenting them in a new framework.[211] In the quest to find universal foundations that neither relied on questionable metaphysical propositions and articles of faith, nor fell back upon mere desires and inclinations, philosophers turned from the model of obedience to that of self-governance.[212]

This development culminated in the work of Immanuel Kant, who put forward the most powerful conceptualisation of a moral law identifiable in the absence of any shared conception of common good.[213] In order to make space for moral law in a world of determinate physical laws, Kant argued that we must presuppose a capacity of free will, the possibility of absolutely spontaneous action motivated by an uncaused exercise of will.[214] For a will to be uncaused it must not be heteronomous, i.e. it must not independent of external determination (*auto*), be it desire, authority or command. Yet it should not be arbitrary, it should follow the law (*nomos*) it sets itself.[215] The truly free will would only be subject to a duty determined by the agent and exercised for its own sake as an end in itself. Such a duty would not inhibit freedom, because it would in fact be a form of self-obedience. The ground

210 McKeon, "The Development and the Significance of the Concept of Responsibility," 74.
211 Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy."
212 Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy*, 4.
213 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 43–7.
214 Raffoul, *The Origins of Responsibility*.
215 Ameriks, "Vindicating Autonomy: Kant, Sartre, and O'Neill," 54.

of moral rules for Kant is thus human autonomy defined as the "freedom of the will exercised in accordance with a self-given law."[216]

We are never, of course, fully autonomous, but this is the ideal Kant sets before humanity. What is important for Kant, however, is that to the extent we are ruled by heteronomy, it is our own making, a form of "self-incurred immaturity."[217] Kant shares the idea with Aristotle that even adults can be immature, but their conception of maturity diverges in a revealing way. For Aristotle maturity is a matter of character, developed through experience, habituation and training, and hence maturity presupposes a particular communal context and personal history.[218] In contrast, for Kant maturity is a matter of will, an overcoming of laziness and cowardice that prevents one from taking on the responsibility of directing oneself. It requires a capacity and willingness to abstract oneself out of one's particular context in order to arrive at one's subjectivity "prior to and independent of experience," to the transcendental subject of freedom.[219] To be irresponsible, accordingly, is to flee from such autonomy, to accept external authority as a replacement for one's own understanding.[220] In the sense of autonomy, "responsibility represents for Kant the essential nature and vocation of man."[221] Autonomy for Kant is an ontological condition that characterises everyone in the *noumenal* world – the realm of things-in-themselves. Maturity, on the other hand, is a matter of an agent's disposition or strength of will to take on, in relation to the *phenomenal* world of appearances, the responsibility of self-legislation that follows from this condition. This is also, as we have seen, the central problem of the new constitutional politics. To be responsible, in this constellation, is to be mature.[222]

216 Guyer, *Kant*, 373.
217 Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?," 54.
218 Lord, "Aristotle," 131.
219 Sandel, "The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self," 83.
220 Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*, 30.
221 Raffoul, *The Origins of Responsibility*, 74.
222 According to Arendt, Kant's concept of 'enlarged mentality' comes much closer to the original meaning of *phronēsis* but, as she admits, it plays little role in Kant's political and social philosophy. Arendt, *The*

According to Kant, the principle of autonomy – and the value of maturity – is not applicable to all spheres of life. Making a distinction between the public and the private uses of our understanding, he restricted autonomy to the former, to the public realm where we communicate with each other as universal and perfectly equal subjects of transcendental reason.[223] The private realm, in contrast, is that of individuals as functionaries, as parts in an administrative machine with circumscribed roles to play. In this realm the use of reason has no place, and it is obedience instead that is "wholly, absolutely and unconditionally good in private use."[224] There is, hence, a strict separation between a public realm where the identification of universal rules is pursued through the use of free reasoning, and the private realm of administration requiring total obedience (essentially immaturity). Moreover, just as the autonomous use of our free will should, for Kant, lead us to an unconditional self-submission to the moral law, the public freedom of reasoning should similarly lead to an unconditional self-submission in the private realm of civil society.[225]

With Kant's contributions, the problem of the realisation of law – formerly the domain of the virtue of prudence – acquired a new shape, since it could no longer rely on a given framework of law. Instead, the subject of will was given the task of both identifying and implementing the universal law, a task requiring a mature character that accepts the responsibility of the task of self-legislation instead of relying on authority or desire as guidance for action. Kant's seamless integration of a subject of free will, categorical duty and autonomy, however, relied on the possibility of founding the authority of universal moral law on the basis of pure reason, a project that ultimately failed. By the time of Kirkegaard and

Promise of Politics, 170–1.

223 Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*, 34.

224 Ibid., 36.

225 Ibid., 38.

Nietzsche individual choice, an individual act of will, remained the only foundation of authority.[226]

Max Weber's ethics of responsibility was heir to Kant's separation of facts and values as well as to his emphasis on autonomy and maturity. Weber, however, also responded to these later arguments about the groundless nature of human choice among a plurality of incompatible values. Maturity, in his understanding, did not connect the individual to the universal moral law. Instead, it linked an existential choice and the consequences of acting upon that choice through the inner strength of the individual. His ethical ideal was thus the "*mature* human being […] who feels the responsibility he bears for the consequences of his own actions with his entire soul."[227]

Weber contrasted the ethics of responsibility to the ethics of conviction, ruling out any reference to intentionality when assigning responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.[228] Weber's maturity has nothing to do with the Kantian concept of the rationally derived law of categorical duty. Instead, being responsible stands precisely in one's acknowledgement of acting under conditions in which decision as to what action to take can be justified by "no reference to anything outside itself."[229] The human condition for him was characterised by 'politheism,' a radical and irreconcilable plurality of values with no neutral ground for choosing between them: "[v]alues are given neither in the tangible nor in the transcendental; they are created by human decisions that differ radically in kind from procedures by which the mind apprehends reality and elaborates truth."[230] Being responsible for Weber is to take on the burden of decision that follows from this condition, and to

226 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 39–43.
227 Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 92, emphasis in original.
228 Strong and Owen, "Introduction: Max Weber's Calling to Knowledge and Action," xli.
229 Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 131; See also: Starr, "The Structure of Max Weber's Ethic of Responsibility."
230 Aron, "Max Weber," 211.

recognise and accept that one cannot flee by the act of will from the effects one's position, character and action inevitably have on the world.[231] The legitimacy of action ultimately only springs from this act of assuming responsibility, and thus from the "inner gravity" of the person capable of doing so.[232]

Neither the dictates of one's conscience, nor neutral calculations about empirical consequences can justify one's fundamental act of choice.[233] What Weber's maturity demanded was not that one should choose between different options for action on the basis of comparing their consequences on some neutral ground, not even when restricted to the perspective of the person and his or her cause.[234] Instead, it demanded taking up the burden of responsibility for making a choice, and for whatever might conceivably follow from making that fundamental act of "commitment to a god."[235] Contrary to later interpretations,[236] responsibility was not a matter of a judgement based on practical results or of accountability, but of authority based on taking a stance of existential significance, "a matter of faith."[237]

It should be clear by now that the ethics of responsibility, as Weber conceptualised it, was not simply the counterpart of an ethics of conviction. It was also a testimony in support of a charismatic leader in reaction to what Weber saw as the single most important development in European societies: the progressive domination of rational administration, of a system of pure instrumentality.[238] He denied the possibility of finding rational agreement on values in the public realm, and thus turned the Kantian argument on its head in stating that in the private realm of administration "authoritatively engendered behaviour is experienced as if it

231 Strong and Owen, "Introduction: Max Weber's Calling to Knowledge and Action," xl.
232 Weber, 'Politics as a Vocation', 92.
233 O'Donovan, "Causes and Consequences," 103.
234 Warner, *An Ethic of Responsibility in International Relations*, 17.
235 Aron, "Max Weber," 249.
236 Rosenthal, *Righteous Realists*, 42.
237 Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger*, 51.
238 Aron, "Max Weber," 254; Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger*, 34.

were autonomy."[239] Weber was concerned that such a system left no room for politics, save for the occasional 'heroic' action of the responsible individual.[240] This did not only reduce human life to machine-like existence, but also tended to cover up the dimension of ruling under the guise of bureaucratic rationality, effectiveness and expertise.[241] The assumption of responsibility hence also implied the recognition that someone at some point must take a decision concerning ultimate questions of good.[242] The ethics of conviction and the logic of administration both eschew the fundamental responsibility for taking decisions and bearing their consequences: "[t]he bureaucrat is irresponsible because she lacks a cause or calling for which she can be responsible, while the conviction politician is irresponsible because she deems her actions valuable for their own sake, irrespective of their worldly consequences."[243]

2.5. Responsibility as calculability

Weber's charismatic leader, who himself stands as the foundation of values, taking full responsibility for this choice and for its consequences, is a direct descendant of Nietzsche's 'great man,' whose sign of nobility was "not wanting to relinquish, not wanting to share your own responsibility."[244] Nietzsche meant this image as a challenge to the concept of responsibility central to the morality of his age and that was embodied in the state, the "coldest of all cold monsters."[245] The administrative structure of the state – for Nietzsche just as for Weber – both liberated individuals from the responsibility for making decisions, and rendered them responsible in terms of their character.[246] Hence the administrative concept of

239 Strong and Owen, "Introduction: Max Weber's Calling to Knowledge and Action," li.
240 "The genuine official […] should not be politically active but, above all, should 'administer', *impartially*." Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 53., emphasis in original.
241 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 74–77.
242 Strong and Owen, "Introduction: Max Weber's Calling to Knowledge and Action," xlviii.
243 O'Donovan, "Causes and Consequences," 96–7.
244 Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 167, (aphorism 272).
245 Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 34.
246 Nietzsche identifies the institutional division of responsibility, carrying out commands, obedience and impersonality as the characteristics of the state as "organised immorality." Nietzsche, *Writings from the*

responsibility operated precisely as the counterpart of the virtues of the great man, and was in fact introduced to tame the great individuals. For Nietzsche, the great men of will were incompatible with the logic of the modern world. "They are dangerous, accidents, exceptions, storms, strong enough to cast doubt on things that have been built and established slowly."[247] As he outlines in his fable of the eagle and the lamb, responsibility served to teach "strength *not* to express itself as strength."[248] The separation between strength and its display already belies the nature of true strength, which exists only in the doing, inseparable of the will. The ruse of the lamb is to make the eagle take decisions on the basis of the same rationale as the lamb does – of a universal rationale –, which then rules out the killing of the lamb.[249]

For Nietzsche, hence, the responsibility of slave morality is not merely a matter of external accountability according to a system of rule, but rather an internal capacity or property of holding oneself accountable, of taking decisions based on something external to one's inner drive in a way that that drive is subordinated to considerations based on that external element or framework. Nietzsche argues that the separation of doer and deed was enacted for the purpose of breeding "an animal which is able to make promises," that is, to commit itself to something that does not follow from its character or temporary desires.[250] The concept of a will was necessary for the creation of a subject that delivers on the promise, that can have a certain degree of control over its future and its future will. A concept of will, of course, is also central to Nietzsche's own aristocratic responsibility. What Nietzsche thus rejects is only a particular understanding of responsibility, as described in the following:

> In order to have that degree of control over the future, man must first have learnt to distinguish between what happens by accident and what by design, to think causally, to view the future as the present and anticipate it, to grasp with

Late Notebooks, 238, notebook 11, entry 407.

247 Ibid., 162, (notebook 9, entry 137).

248 Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 28, emphasis in original.

249 Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*.

250 Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 38.

> certainty what is end and what is means, in all, to be able to calculate, compute – and before he can do this, man himself will really have to become *reliable, regular, automatic*, even in his own self-image, so that he, as someone making a promise is, is answerable for his own future.[251]

To some extent, this can be interpreted as "the actor rendered subservient to a code of conduct that applies to society as a whole," an actor "self-surveilling and slow to initiate anything."[252] One can certainly find support for this in Nietzsche's emphasis on the uniformity of responsible subjects, and their subjection to the authority of "duty in itself."[253] But Nietzsche is also gesturing towards something more than a rigid code of conduct that disciplines the individual through its accountability, so that it chooses to refrain from taking any action. "Man" must become calculable, but not simply for reasons of realising any given moral code. As he writes in the above excerpt, the calculability of the individual is a precondition for the possibility "to calculate, to compute" in general. The responsibility of the individual is not simply a way of achieving indolence through holding the individual potentially accountable for whatever they do, but is in itself a virtue, a certain disposition central to practical rationality. It might in fact be one of those "machine virtues" one must be equipped with "to experience as most valuable those states in which he works in a mechanically useful way."[254]

The larger goal that lies behind the necessity of making individuals calculable would then not be to make them conform to a given social code of conduct, but to make the social whole itself calculable. The responsible individual does not merely act according to a concept of duty: it reflects on its own desires and will from a point of view external to it, it develops a disposition that attends to the world as a calculable realm, and thus it makes the individual

251 Ibid., 38–9, emphasis in original.
252 Villa, "Democratizing the Agon: Nietzsche, Arendt and the Agonistic Tendency in Recent Political Theory," 228.
253 Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, 176, notebook 10, entry 11.
254 Ibid.

formulate its will *as a result of* such calculations. We have then here another notion of responsibility, one that is also directly connected to the problem of autonomy, but is not articulated in terms of rule but completely restricted to the domain of administration, of instrumental rationality.

Nietzsche's description of this concept of responsibility was partly a reaction to John Stuart Mill's insertion of the term into the vocabulary of philosophical discussions.[255] Mill articulated a form of liberalism that broke with both the Scottish Enlightenment and Bentham's crude utilitarianism. For Hutcheson and Hume, representatives of the former, a natural moral sense,[256] a "socially shared understanding of and set of beliefs about the passions"[257] provided the criteria for distinguishing between right and wrong. The virtue of prudence was a secondary quality, a form of cleverness that allowed one to find the most suitable means for, and to exercise caution in, pursuing one's desires.[258] These thinkers relied on social consensus regarding the right passions and virtues, which itself did not need justification. Mill, however, believed that his was an age of crisis, a transitional period between two stable social eras.[259] Tradition and social conformism were obstacles for him in the way of social progress defined in terms of the improvement of well-being. He also believed, however, that institutional reforms based on calculations of utility, as advocated by Bentham, were insufficient so long as people had the wrong character and desires.[260] For Bentham the individual was an empirical fact of calculation, but for Mill it was an ideal to be realised.[261]

255 See his account of utilitarianism in his *On the Genealogy of Morality*, as well as a direct discussion of Mill in his *The Will to Power*, 488–9.(entries 925 and 926).
256 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 276.
257 MacIntyre, "Practical Rationalities as Forms of Social Structure," 127.
258 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 184–5.
259 Hamburger, "Individuality and moral reform," 407.
260 Ibid., 405.
261 Berlin, "John Stuart Mill and the ends of life," 136.

In order to bring history and progress forward, Mill relied on great, autonomous individuals, able to break with old beliefs and to open up new possibilities of character, higher forms of happiness and, hence, of utility.[262] He drew on Aristotle and Kant, and his defence of liberty was that of the mature person acting with spontaneity, driven by his or her own individual character rather than by conformity.[263] "He who does anything because it is the custom," he wrote, "makes no choice."[264] Great individuals transcended settled norms, but were also prior to any calculation of utility, as they were the only actors, by definition, who could judge the relative value of desires.[265]

Mill's conception of autonomy and maturity, however, was as different from Aristotle's as it was from Kant's and Weber's. In contrast to Aristotle, he did not accept the idea of common human good, as he believed in the "radical pluralism of individual natures."[266] As opposed to Kant, autonomy for Mill was not a *noumenal* condition characterising every individual, but an empirical phenomenon, and the practical rationality appropriate for it was not based on *a priori* judgements but on experience.[267] In his emphasis on the radical variety of ends and characters, and the prioritisation of individual choice, Mill is not far from Nietzsche or Weber.[268] But whereas for the latter decisions concerning values are of an existential and fundamental nature that do not lend themselves to any common measure,[269] and hence well-being is of secondary importance,[270] for Mill individuality, autonomy and freedom all contribute to the ultimate goal of well-being.[271]

262 Hamburger, "Individuality and Moral Reform," 416–9.
263 Baum, "J. S. Mill on Freedom and Power."
264 Gray and Smith, *J.S. Mill's On Liberty in Focus*, 74.
265 Donner, "Mill's Utilitarianism," 273–4; Donner, "Mill on Liberty and Self-Development."
266 Gray, "Mill's Conception of Happiness and the Theory of Individuality," 201.
267 Schneewind, "Autonomy after Kant," 150.
268 A good overview of the closeness of the ideas of Mill and Nietzsche is: Mara and Dovi, "Mill, Nietzsche, and the Identity of Postmodern Liberalism."
269 Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 488–9, entries 925 and 926.
270 Aron, "Max Weber Und Die Machtpolitik," 112.
271 Donner and Fumerton, *Mill*, 62.

The first principle of Mill's ethics remained utility, and his measure of historical progress was the increase in well-being. He defined true freedom as power over one's own character. Mill's freedom was hence a "mode of choosing," rather than a substantial value, that enabled the agent to reconcile his or her individuality – which was a necessary element of social betterment – with the larger whole of society.[272] Apart from the strength of character that enabled Mill's great individuals to act on their own choices and develop their own projects and characters, they also had to possess another inner quality that connected them to society, and this virtue was responsibility.

As Richard McKeon has shown, Mill developed a radically new notion of responsibility intending to break out of the controversy over basing moral rules either on duty (Kant's answer) or on moral sentiment (Hume's answer). He argued for understanding responsibility as "an internal feeling of being accountable" or punishable, thus as neither a matter of external devices of accountability (i.e. a legal system) nor a question of a pure feeling of duty.[273] In other words, questions of imputation, accountability and obligation were merged into a disposition based on an internalised regime of understanding the consequences of one's actions. What one wanted was therefore no longer the starting point of practical rationality, but *was itself limited by such calculations*, granting a place of primacy to considerations of means over a consideration of ends.[274]

This formulation of responsibility is directly related to the emergence of an analysis of social order in terms of the mutual effects individuals in a society have on each other, and in particular to liberalism's economic conception of society. Such an analysis does not address relations of authority, but identifies a network of relations in which individuals conduct each

272 Baum, *Rereading Power and Freedom in J.S. Mill*, 29–30.
273 McKeon, "The Development and the Significance of the Concept of Responsibility," 77–8.
274 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 339–342.

other's conduct through constraining and enabling each other's actions.[275] Hence power is no longer related to either will (capacity) or right, but is defined instead from the perspective of a system external to the individual, from the point of view of Nietzsche's lamb. As C. Wright Mills was to observe later, since these relations exist outside and prior to the political system, a societal power elite exists whose members are not characterised by their social roles, but are identified precisely by their ability to "call into question the structure, their position within it, or the way in which they are to enact that position."[276] Their responsibility is defined through the effects their decisions have over others.

James Stuart Mill's solution to this problem of power is to identify the domain of the calculation of means as the primary framework for practical rationality, just as the space of the public is re-conceptualised as that of bargaining between preferences instead of a space of public reasoning about what is just or right.[277] Mill's responsibility is a disposition to attend to the consequences of one's actions, to the relative weight of gains and punishment, and a willingness to reconsider preferences accordingly. There is no law – divine or human – and no passion that would intervene between responsibility and social order. Neither is this responsibility the maturity of either Kant or Weber – of either an autonomy from desires or a groundless choice of end – but a practical rationality based on the constant calculation of a system of desires and consequences.

This implies that, once again, right action can only be defined by reference to what a responsible agent would do, just as in the case of *phronēsis* and maturity. This time, however, the disposition of the responsible agent is identified independently of and prior to any particular end. The reference points for practical rationality remain firmly within the realm of

275 Connolly, *The Terms of Political Discourse*, 85–137; Lukes, *Power*, 66–67.
276 Mills, *The Power Elite*, 3–29.
277 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice?*, 338.

the administrative, of a field of calculating consequences. The same, as we have seen, is the case with later explorations of the concept: for both Jonas and Ricoeur the objective element of obligations to which the subjective virtue of responsibility should respond are provided by one's power over others, by the consequences of one's action (or non-action);[278] for Garrath Williams the virtue operates in relation to a liberal institutional infrastructure. The responsible agent is inserted into a domain of calculation, into a field of effects.

Conclusion

I traced in this chapter the genealogy of responsibility as a virtue through its links to the Aristotelian concept of *phronēsis*. The latter was the cornerstone of Aristotle's conception of order, for it denoted the virtue of being able to act in particular circumstances so as to realise the human good of the practice of politics, which united the diverse ends individuals might pursue within specific practices. With the decline of the *polis* as the practical framework for such a virtue, Stoicism and Christianity remodelled ethics and social order on the basis of the relationship between divine law and individual will. These schools of thought also introduced a corresponding vocabulary of moral duties and obligations, which survived the unquestioned status of the religious framework behind this law conception of ethics. From the Enlightenment onwards, thinkers sought to provide a new, stable foundation for the inherited concepts and for practical rationality.

I identified two major concepts of responsibility emerging from responses to this problem. Kant understood responsibility as *maturity*, the ability and willingness of the

278 As Jonas writes: "The well-being, the interest, the fate of others has, by circumstances or agreement, come under my care, which means that my control *over* it involves at the same time my obligation *for* it. The exercise of the power with disregard of the obligation is, then, 'irresponsible,' i.e. a breach of the trust-relation of responsibility. […] that 'over' becomes 'for' sums up the essence of responsibility." Jonas, "The Concept of Responsibility: An Inquiry into the Foundations of an Ethics for Our Age," 53, 55., emphasis in original.

individual to face a condition of autonomy, in which the only foundation for moral action is the self-legislating individual will that sets its law for itself, transcending desires and settled norms. Weber's ethics of responsibility reflected the failure of the Kantian project to find a non-arbitrary ground for the self-legislation of will, and re-conceptualised maturity as the agent's ability and willingness to bear both the task of having to make a groundless decision of value-commitment and whatever consequences follow from that choice. Weber thus defined responsibility against the heteronomy of both ethical conviction and the machine-like operation of administrative power. Mill also accorded central importance to individual autonomy. He identified it as the force that brings history forward by setting new standards, thus transcending the existing framework of laws and calculations of utility. He subordinated autonomy, however, to the larger goal of well-being, with the help of the virtue of responsibility defined as economic *calculability*. I argued that it is this, purely administrative, conception of responsible character that has become central to contemporary moral and political discourse, instead of its alternative formulations as *phronēsis* and maturity (autonomy). All three formulations, however, stand for a character trait that is more fundamental than any existing framework of rules or empirical calculations.

3.
Forms of Greatness and Responsibility in Changing Conceptions of International Order

In this chapter, I link the genealogy of the relationship between forms of social order and responsibility, provided in the previous chapter, to diverse notions of greatness in changing conceptions of international order. I thus also propose that ahistorical conceptualisations of great powers are fundamentally mistaken. Major IR theoretical approaches to great powers – focusing on the balance of power, on social order and on legal-institutional frameworks – do not seek to explain the same reality, but reflect different modes in which the 'reality' of great powers has been historically constructed.

The chapter is organised around the 19th century articulation of a separate class of Great Powers as a central category of international order. I begin by providing an account of earlier concepts of greatness – secular glory, secular social hierarchy, material preponderance – appearing in the context of the gradual dissolution of the social order of medieval Christendom. This is followed by a presentation of the 19th century Great Powers as occupying the position of a collective sovereign in relation to the European juridical and spatial order, which signals the arrival of the modern problem of continuous self-legislation at the level of international order. I then discuss how such a position was challenged from the perspective of liberal governmentality, i.e. of rules internal to the activity of managing international order. Finally, I discuss three attempts at defining the relationship between the major powers and international order through a notion of responsibility after the European

spatial order ceased to provide this link. I begin with Max Weber's definition of greatness as maturity in opposition to the administrative dimension of international order, and continue with Alfred Zimmern's articulation of the relationship between major states and international order through their *phronetic* responsibility for bringing about a world *polis* of nations. I end the chapter by discussing Robert Zoellick's early 21st century notion of responsible stakeholders, in which a notion of responsibility as calculability is used to problematise the relation of major powers to a purely administrative conception of international order.

3.1. Greatness before the Great Powers: social hierarchy, glory, and power

An international order based on the formal equality of states is a relatively recent phenomenon. Pre-modern international orders generally operated with a hierarchical grading of actors, underpinned by an image of natural or divine order within which a range of positions were identified and ranked. The order of medieval Europe was a "single, undivided *societas christiana*, which was the framework of all relationship and all conflict."[279] Status distinctions primarily concerned persons rather than political units, and were supposed to reflect how close one was to God.[280] Alternative, secular claims to greatness could be made on the basis of historical continuity with the Roman world.[281] Greatness, hence, was a position in a pre-existing hierarchy which specified one's rights and duties. One's privilege did not "create exceptions to a generally prevailing law; rather it [was] the precise formulation of an actual and concrete subjective right."[282] Greatness in all its forms had its sources outside human agency – in history, tradition or divine ordering. Action was taken to be

279 Wight, *Systems of States*, 26.
280 Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*, 102–103.
281 On status claims supported by history, see: Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 115–118.
282 Tellenbach quoted in: Hall, "Moral Authority as a Power Resource," 598.

"heterodynamic," having its source external to the actor: the source of all power – and of the balance of power – was God, and hence glory belonged only to him too.[283]

Geographical discoveries, revolutions in science and philosophy, and the Renaissance and Reformation movements gradually eroded the idea of unitary Christendom.[284] From the 12th century onwards, monarchies sought to emancipate themselves from the authority of the Empire and of the Pope by claiming direct divine legitimacy, hence containing the cosmic hierarchy within the borders of the state.[285] This culminated, in the 16th century, in Jean Bodin's theory of the king's absolute sovereignty.[286] As a result, up until the early 19th century, no international political hierarchy between states, manifested in special rights, was recognised. The ranking of states dominant in the era of absolutism was a matter of diplomatic precedence based on lineage and tradition and linked to individual states instead of constituting a special class of Great Powers.[287] At the European level, greatness as a position in the hierarchy of divine order was challenged and replaced by three alternative formulations based on secular glory, on a secular social hierarchy and on relative measurable power.

The first alternative formulation of greatness had its roots in Renaissance humanism, which rediscovered the classical autodynamic conception of action and the *secular glory* of the Roman Empire.[288] Actors became understood as the source of their own power, as independent individuals with selves and identities of their own making.[289] Politics was re-conceptualised as a practice autonomous from the laws of nature, God and morality.[290] By the 15th century, leaving behind the Augustinian association of glory with peace and tranquility,

283 Kleinschmidt, *Understanding the Middle Ages*, 84.
284 Galli, *Political Spaces and Global War*, 16–20.
285 Larkins, *From Hierarchy to Anarchy*, 91–9.
286 Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*, 96.
287 Keene, "International Hierarchy and the Origins of the Modern Practice of Intervention."
288 Kleinschmidt, *Understanding the Middle Ages*, 88.
289 Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action*.
290 Larkins, *From Hierarchy to Anarchy*, 101–122.

Renaissance humanists re-articulated the republican idea of *grandezza* (greatness, glory) as secular power and prosperity, glorifying external acquisitiveness and war.[291] Most influentially, Machiavelli posited *grandezza* as the ultimate goal of both princes and republics in a radical break with the Christian denial of worldly glory as well as with the considerations of economic gain characterising many other humanists.[292] By the 17th century, the pursuit of standing through that of *gloire* became the primary motivation for states to wage war in the whole of Europe.[293]

The glory of warfare, however, remained qualitatively different from pure violence. The pursuit of territorial gain and of military fame were subordinated as means to – and hence were limited by – the goal of achieving higher standing in the community of peers.[294] The glory of power was not objectively measurable but inherently social, gaining its meaning only from a contest that was recognised as such by its participants. In Renaissance Italy this was made possible by the development of a ritualistic oratorial practice of diplomacy that sustained a common language in which identities, common standards of legitimacy and relative standing in power and glory could be identified.[295] This practice itself relied on pre-existing commonality of values, norms and mentalities, that is, on the existence of a shared and unquestioned arena of politics inherited from the medieval period or defined by the dispersion of the rediscovered classical culture. Similarly, at the level of Europe, the ruins of the *res publica christiana* – "a sort of empty envelope, an empty shell" that had lost all its "vocation and meaning" – still provided a taken-for-granted arena and underlying categories

291 Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Vol. 2*., for a short overview of the development of the concept of *grandezza*, see: Mikael Hörnqvist's summary at: http://www2.idehist.uu.se/distans/ilmh/Ren/civic-greatness.htm (accessed 3 August 2014).

292 For different views on the place of *grandezza* in Machiavelli's system, see: Cesa, *Machiavelli on International Relations*; Skinner, *Machiavelli*; Armitage, "Empire and Liberty: A Republican Dilemma"; Hulliung, *Citizen Machiavelli*; Hörnqvist, *Machiavelli and Empire*.

293 Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, 171–174.

294 Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics*, 263.

295 Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*, 78–86.

that allowed for competitive self-assertion to continue without collapsing into an anarchical power struggle.[296] Each attempt at seeking *gloire* re-enforced the idea of a European international society, within which such action could be understood as directed to the achievement of glory. As participants in the contest, glorious powers represented the vitality and splendour of an order, the categories of which were neither in need of justification, nor within the control of any actor or set of actors. They expressed – rather than ruled or managed – the social order upon which their glory was founded.

In the meantime, the status and nature of this underlying social order underwent a transformation that made room for a second understanding of greatness as *an aristocratic status in a secular hierarchy*. By the Peace of Westphalia (1648), decisions on status and on other fundamental categories of order were taken in the hands of international society itself, and hence these categories could less and less function as an unquestioned background to action.[297] The continent's religious civil wars and encounters with extra-European social orders necessitated the abstract articulation and justification of the rules of European order, as demonstrated by the publication of the first explicit statements on the concept of a 'states-system' and on a common civilisation uniting Europe.[298]

The idea of Europe as a social order independent of papal and imperial authority but transcending the civic law of particular communities had its roots in the new natural law thinking of the 15th century theologians of the Salamanca School and in the more consequential revival of their ideas by Hugo Grotius in the early 17th century. These thinkers articulated a sphere of *ius gentium* that was understood to be man-made, yet having the sanction of divine origins and being valid between states.[299] Its public law component

296 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 291.
297 Clark, *International Legitimacy and World Society*, 49.
298 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 12; Mazower, "An International Civilization?," 554.
299 Koskenniemi, "Empire and International Law."

encompassing war, trade and diplomacy developed into the positivism characterising the 18th century idea of the *droit public de l'Europe* and the new, European international society.[300]

The positivist conception of the public law of Europe was based on an empirical and historical approach, and thus inscribed the existing treaties, customary rights and *de facto* practices into a legal system beyond both these elements and the states themselves.[301] It justified the European social order as a system that brings advantages to its participants and expresses the "underlying cultural homogeneity of Europe."[302] The most powerful and honourable states would, then, constitute a type of 'aristocracy' with special rights and responsibilities in the direction of international affairs. reflecting not only the respect they command but also their possession of property and their experience in ruling.[303]

A third form of greatness *as relative power* emerged when the balance-of-power thinking that appeared in Renaissance Italy emancipated itself from the rules of European international society. By the second half of the 17th century, the new conception of *raison d'état* ruled out any legitimate authority above the state, and hence there could not be any substantive juridical requirement for waging war, only a formal one: sovereign states had the right to war simply on account of being sovereign states.[304] But while war thus no longer needed juridical justification, it did enter into a field of calculations that replaced the medieval logic of government: a field of competing states with the balance of Europe serving as a "system of security."[305] It aimed to secure the survival and aggrandisement of states in a contest that distributed glory among them. It also sought to prevent the emergence of a state

300 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 31–6.
301 Ibid., 34; Koskenniemi, "Into Positivism," 192.
302 Welsh, *Edmund Burke and International Relations*, 90.
303 Ibid., 56–57.
304 Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, esp. 140–171.
305 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 301.

strong enough to dominate the whole of Europe, thus preserving the European society of states, "a civilization fundamentally one but broken into panes of many-coloured glass."[306]

This negative conception of the balance, however, was gradually challenged from a scientific perspective that made the world accessible as a calculable and controllable totality, and the foundations of which were already laid down by Descartes during the Thirty Years' War (1618-48).[307] The crisis of authority opened up by the Renaissance and the Reformation was thus overcome partly by reference to the new authority of the Newtonian science of mechanics over inter-state relations.[308] Correspondingly, by the time of Treaty of Utrecht (1713), the balance of power was no longer conceived as a policy of individual states aiming to preserve the equilibrium, but as a holistic system representing "the natural tendency of groups of units to form themselves into wholes."[309]

This holistic view provided both limits and an alternative to the system of sovereign and customary rights in Europe. As the settlement in Utrecht made clear, the legitimacy of dynastic aggrandisement could now be judged by the requirements of the security of the state system, which could override rights of, for instance, dynastic succession.[310] It was, however, only with the emergence of the new sciences of the state – statistics – and of the related forms of economic knowledge, that calculations based on measures of states' internal strength and on the quality and coherence of their government attained a level of sophistication that could allow the balance of power to be emancipated from the network of rights, instead of being directed at preventing dynastic hegemony in defence of those rights.[311]

306 Butterfield, "The Balance of Power," 142.
307 Elden, *Speaking Against Number.*
308 Sheehan, *Balance Of Power*, 52.
309 Ibid., 76., also Chapters 3 and 4.
310 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 77–81; Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*, 117–8.
311 Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*, 8.

Such calculations not only made possible a radically new conceptualisation of international standing directly based on measurable capabilities,[312] but also "replaced the established juridical framework of public affairs" or at least provided a serious alternative to it.[313] It is not surprising that the emerging powers of Russia and Prussia – which were outside the core of European international society, and whose belonging to this cultural community and position in its hierarchies of tradition and lineage remained uncertain – were at the forefront of promoting this new measure of international status favourable to their claims.[314]

When, in 1772, this abstract principle of the balance of power was deployed as a way to legitimise the partition of a European state, Poland, it questioned the very idea of European international society.[315] Although the partition was similar to previous instances of compensatory equilibrium characterising the principle of equality of dynastic aggrandisement,[316] this time the calculative logic of balance was claimed to justify such aggrandisement even in the absence of a preceding defeat of Poland in war, and of any established dispute or of any legal basis for annexation.[317] Burke noted with horror that Europe viewed "the destruction of a great kingdom […] with as total an indifference and unconcern as we could read an account of the exterminating of one horde of Tartars by another."[318] The rules and prescriptive customary rights distinguishing Europe from the barbarians were overridden by the decision of three major powers, justified by the abstract principle of the balance of power. This was the definitive entry of a new, power-based concept of greatness into the political vocabulary of Europe.[319]

312 Keene, "International Hierarchy and the Origins of the Modern Practice of Intervention."
313 Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*, 8.
314 Hall, *The International Thought of Martin Wight*, 117–8; Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*. On Russia, see: Neumann, "Russia's Quest for Recognition as a Great Power, 1489-2007"; Neumann, "Entry into International Society Reconceptualised." On Prussia, see: Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 510.
315 Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*.
316 Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, 236–8; Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848*, 5–19.
317 Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*, 216.
318 Quoted in Welsh, *Edmund Burke and International Relations*, 37.
319 Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775*, 7.

By the time the French Revolution and Napoleon challenged European international society, therefore, the relationship between the latter and the balance of power was already in tatters. Napoleon contended that "[t]he French Republic needs recognition as little as the sun requires it," imposing its order upon the world out of pure "strength of existence."[320] The limitlessness of Napoleon's pursuits signalled for many the ultimate crisis of European international society.[321] After defeating France, the victorious Alliance had to make a decision on the future European order. Having experienced the revolution, there was no going back to an unquestioned European social order, but it was also clear that the balance of power in itself provided no limits or stability. In a sense, the challenge was to find a way to reconcile a concept of great powers based on capabilities with that of a legitimate order.

3.2. The Great Powers and the juridical order of Europe

A separate class of Great Powers first appeared as an element of international legal order around the Congress of Vienna (1814-15).[322] The distinction referred, above all, to the special role the victorious coalition claimed for itself in making decisions regarding the post-war order. After the defeat of Napoleon, European order needed to be restored through conscious decisions and, as a result, restoration in fact necessarily meant artificial re-instatement. Order was no longer based on custom – an organically developing, flexible framework of spontaneous action – but on fixed, invented tradition,[323] captured in the public law of Europe: a set of historical rights, practices and treaties grounded on a territorial *status quo*. In contrast with earlier peace settlements, this time it was recognised that order had to be "created and, once established, to be maintained […] The system required to be governed."[324] A permanent

320 Quoted in: Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, 312.
321 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 12; Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 192.
322 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 97; Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*.
323 Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*; Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 92.
324 Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States*, 85.

practice of international government was set up by the Great Powers who *de facto* dominated the continent. Their status was, hence, identified by their special position to international order and not simply by their measurable capabilities in the context of a mechanical balance of power.[325]

The dominant interpretation of this position characterises the Congress of Vienna as an initial step towards a constitutional order in international politics. Authority in such an order is based on an institutional design that is generally accepted as legitimate, and that provides binding rules on the exercise of power within an institutionalised political process.[326] The Vienna settlement thus "marks a shift away from legitimacy rooted in the 'public right' of Europe and towards an explicitly consensual notion whereby legitimacy is to be thought of as marking the explicit bounds of great-power agreement."[327] This framework presents great power management as an institution of international society, the "effective exercise [of which] underpins much of the order that is attainable," and as an "institutionalised practice of special rights and responsibilities, conferred by international society or a constituency within it, on a state (or states) with the resources to lead."[328]

The status of the Great Powers, however, exceeded what could be defined by any concrete standard of legitimacy. The Concert of Europe as the collective forum of the Great Powers "was the standard of legitimacy, and did not simply give voice to it."[329] Although their status was defined in relation to the rights of Europe, this legal order was conceived in abstraction from the concrete plurality of rights that constituted it. As the protocol of the London Conference of 1831 stated, "[e]ach nation has its individual rights; but Europe has

325 Keene presents that quantitative ranking as the decisive factor in the emergence of a new hierarchy. My argument here is that it only constituted a new class of Great Powers when it got linked to the public law of Europe. Keene, "International Hierarchy and the Origins of the Modern Practice of Intervention."
326 Ikenberry, *After Victory*, 31.
327 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 97.
328 Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, 1, 4.
329 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 102.

also her right; it is social order that has given them to her."[330] The Great Powers claimed to be the exclusive representatives of the rights and interests of Europe. In effect, this meant that

> legitimacy in its international aspect was coming to be conceived less as an adherence to law and treaties and more as the expression of what the great powers were minded to think agreeable. Legitimacy could be claimed on the basis of a working consensus in support of any proposed action, and to be sanctioned by the very existence of that consensus.[331]

The Great Powers could decide on the status of individual states and on the validity of specific principles.[332] France, for instance "did not just resume her place as an inevitable fact of nature. Rather, she was admitted by a formal act of European diplomacy – the product of a general meeting of Great Powers."[333] This was indicative of a wider development in which rightful membership within the European international society became connected to explicit – even if disputed – criteria and to the agreement of the Great Powers.[334] Similarly, the principle of dynasticism, although reaffirmed, now could be overruled through the agreement of Great Powers.[335] Under the clout of restoration, the Great Powers oversaw large-scale territorial rearrangements as well as changes to the status of states, including the unification of Belgium and Holland, and the neutralisation of Switzerland.

Since the Great Powers served as the standards of legitimacy, their status could not fully be defined in terms of legitimacy. In order to locate their position, then, it is worth considering the novelty of conceptualising their role in terms of a legalised hegemony, "the realisation through legal forms of Great Power prerogatives."[336] At one level, Great Powers in such an arrangement are those states that are "capable of, and legally authorised to, project

330 Quoted in Wight, *International Theory*, 127.
331 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 102.
332 Elrod, "The Concert of Europe"; Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 213–237; Schroeder, "The 19th-Century International System."
333 Clark, *The Hierarchy of States*, 121.
334 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 91.
335 Welsh, *Edmund Burke and International Relations*, 81–2; Lowe, *The Concert of Europe*, 19.
336 Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, x.

force in ways that would be unlawful for other states in the system."[337] This would indicate that the special position of Great Powers can be grasped in the rights that are accorded exclusively to them within the legal system, i.e. in their prerogatives that do not constitute a general norm.[338] The relation of the Great Powers to the legal order, however, was more complicated than this.

As Astrov has pointed out, the Great Powers had a "paradoxical position both inside and outside the society of states," corresponding to Carl Schmitt's definition of the sovereign as the one "who decides on the exception."[339] The exceptional position of the Great Powers can be witnessed in their right to suspend the legal order collectively, and in their ability to unilaterally dissolve it by declaring war on their peers. First, the prerogatives of the Great Powers, especially with regards to the use of force, operate more often when the legal order is suspended than within its structure. In the Troppau Protocol of 1820, for instance, the three participating Great Powers – Austria, Prussia and Russia – did not assert their special right to intervene into the domestic affairs of members of the European international society. Instead, they asserted their right to intervene when the normal legal order was already suspended – a state of affairs established by their common decision – in order to recreate the normal situation.[340] In such cases the Great Powers would act in a state of exception in which the legal order is not applicable but remains in force.[341] The decision regarding when and where the normal situation applies or is suspended is made by the Great Powers themselves: the "sovereign must decide both that a situation is exceptional and what to do about that

337 Ibid., 62.
338 Ibid., esp. 327–337.
339 Astrov, "Great Power Management Without Great Powers?," 13; Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 5.
340 For the relevant part of the protocol, see: Lowe, *The Concert of Europe*, 44–5.
341 Agamben, *State of Exception*, 31.

exception in order to be able to create or recover a juridical order when the existing one is threatened with chaos".[342]

Any change to the territorial order and to the balance of power and influence resulting from a war or a revolution in Europe had to meet the consent of the Great Powers in order to become legitimate.[343] Such decisions were made at conferences (and, later, congresses), participation at which was, until 1871, linked not to interest but to Great Powers status.[344] Theoretically, wars between European states could be "completely legal procedures" provided that the Great Powers themselves remained neutral.[345] Conferences served to preserve this neutrality, as they guaranteed that the interests of all Great Powers were sufficiently satisfied for them not to want to go to war over them. Thus, the legality of any territorial change was fundamentally grounded on the consensual political decision made by the Great Powers.

The alternative of such procedures was ultimately war, the phenomenon in which the exceptional position of the Great Powers becomes most apparent. Emphasised in particular by Carl Schmitt, the existence of international legal order depended on the absence of war between the Great Powers, since a total war between them threatened to destroy the spatial order upon which the legal order was founded.[346] In other words, the force of the legal order reached its limit in a Great Power's decision to go to war over an issue with the other Great Powers. Such war was the ultimate exception upon which the rules of European international society were based.[347]

The full implications of this can be recovered by interrogating how a state could become a Great Power. As I have mentioned before, the recognition of Great Powers was a

342 Strong, "The Sovereign and the Exception," xx.
343 Lowe, *The Concert of Europe*, 128.
344 Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, 128.
345 Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, 186.
346 Ibid., 187.
347 Astrov, "Great Power Management Without Great Powers?," 13.

legal instrument, but stating this leaves untouched the nature of that recognition. Astrov has argued that the mutual recognition of Great Powers is a "highly indeterminate political decision" that "gives shape not only to the concrete situation the sovereign is facing, but also to the sovereign itself."[348] Would that imply, then, as Astrov seems to argue, that the inclusion of a new Great Power itself is such a sovereign decision, i.e., that the inclusion of a new member – "the highest form of recognition in international law" – needs no external ground?[349]

Italy (in 1867) and Japan (by 1905) were granted Great Power status by an act of recognition, as these powers received the right to participate in conferences settling the matters of international order. But a closer investigation Italy's case reveals the insufficiency of such pure recognition. As I have mentioned before, Alexander Gorchakov, the state chancellor of the Russian Empire, commented the invitation of Italy to the London conference of 1867 with the words: "A great power does not wait for recognition, it reveals itself."[350] But if great powers need to be recognised, what explains Gorchakov's protestation?

The assertion of a state's claim to Great Powerhood was closely associated with defeating another Great Power in war.[351] Such a war was clearly on Gorchakov's mind, since the disdain expressed towards Italy was probably related to the conflict of 1866 between Austria and Prussia. Italy entered this war on the latter's side, with the aim of pursuing territorial gains but also – and at least as importantly – of proving its Great Power status.[352] The Austrian forces humiliated the Italians at Custozza and Lissa, while Prussia concluded a quick armistice with Austria without any consideration for Italy. Austria was unwilling to concede Veneto to Italy, and it was instead handed to France that, "in truly imperial fashion,

348 Ibid.
349 Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, 191.
350 Wight, *Power Politics*, 46. Consider also Japan's partial recognition after its defeat of Russia in 1905.
351 Wight, *International Theory*, 175.
352 Duggan, *The Force of Destiny*, 250.

passed it on to Italy as a gift."[353] One could hardly imagine a clearer signalling of status difference between the actors. Italy was invited the next year to the international conference on the situation of Belgium *in spite* of this international humiliation. As Gorchakov was keen to remind everybody, however, this recognition was empty, as it was not backed by successful self-assertion in war.

The centrality of war to the self-assertion and consequent recognition of Great Powers shows the full structure of their position as a collective Schmittian sovereign who "does not only define the 'exception' – he is also revealed by and in it."[354] Hence, any genuine contender to Great Power status must reveal itself in a war, or in a credible threat of war, that questions the spatial order on which the legal order and the status of Great Powers is based. More precisely, such a war must have the nature of an exception to a spatial and legal order based on the consent of the Great Powers as the rule. Neither a war contained within the legal order nor a war against the order can reveal the state as a potential Great Power, but only war as an exception. Thus the Crimean War pitting three of the Great Powers against another one – Russia – did not dissolve the Great Power system precisely because "[i]t was a struggle about the extension of the public law of Europe between Powers which all subscribed to its general validity; and there was no question of treating Russia as other than one of the Powers who upheld that law."[355]

The spatial order of Europe as well as the corresponding system of rights provided a common plane for recognition distinct from the will of the Great Powers. It offered "common problems that they had a responsibility to approach jointly," while the intermediary bodies of Europe – such as the German Confederation or the Netherlands – "separated the great powers,

353 Ibid., 253.
354 Strong, "The Sovereign and the Exception," xx.
355 Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 229.

making it more difficult for them to fight, [but] also linked them by giving them something in common to manage."[356] The concept of neutral states in particular expressed this element of Great Power management.[357] The status of Great Powers was hence defined by their collective liminal, sovereign position to a concrete order – a remnant of European Christendom – and by a shared responsibility for its management.

3.3. The Great Powers and the task of management

If the crucial development after 1815 was, as I argued above, that the European international order as a whole was re-conceived as an object of continuous definition and management by the Great Powers, it also meant that, in a reversal of emphasis, the categories of 'Europe' and 'international' could become the targets of attempts at defining order from the perspective of effective management, rather than from that of the social order of Europe or of Great Power consent.[358] Such attempts were, of course, not entirely new, but now they coexisted with both the broad crisis of the traditional order and with the managerial role of the Great Powers. In other words, it was now possible to define European order in categories that did not take the will of the Great Powers as their starting point and, hence, challenged their sovereign position.

The ideas of Great Powers and the European international society as a system of public law were intimately connected. For Bull, it was Hugo Grotius who symbolised the idea of international society as a mode of organising the world, distinguished from the Hobbesian world of anarchy and the Kantian world of a universal moral community of humankind.[359] But Grotius also contributed to a fourth way of thinking about order through his discussion of

356 Schroeder, "The 19th-Century International System," 23, 17.
357 Morgenthau, "International Affairs: The Resurrection of Neutrality in Europe."
358 The word 'international' was coined by Jeremy Bentham in his 1798 *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* in an effort to provide such a neutral point of view from which to define rules. Mazower, *Governing the World*, 21.
359 Bull, *The Anarchical Society.*

private law in terms of the sovereignty of the individual and of the right to property derivable from it. This tradition of thinking elaborated a "universal system of private exchanges" with its own internal rules. For Grotius, these rules were based on innate human sociability, but later thinkers identified them in terms of the empirical experience of searching for utility through the application of reason as a method.[360]

From the early 17th century onwards, the works of the same line of international lawyers that Bull identified with the idea of international society – Pufendorf, Wolff and Vattel – also engaged the literature of *raison d'état.*[361] The latter works sought to identify the limits placed on the exercise of the absolute sovereignty of the ruler by the inherent characteristics of the international realm in which the purposes of states had to be realised.[362] Legitimacy ceased to be the only way to evaluate sovereignty, an alternative being provided by the functional perspective of how well the state governed in order to provide for the well-being of its citizens and to guarantee the security of rights on which the operation of the system of private exchanges was based.[363] State reason was, by definition, not bound by positive or divine law but, to be successful, it had to make the calculations necessary for "the practice of wise government."[364] These calculations were possible because the laws of the social world were both immanent and knowable, and this knowledge was provided increasingly by experts in governmental sciences. These new political technologies and forms of knowledge, including statistics and political economy, inscribed the system of intra-

360 Koskenniemi, "Empire and International Law," 16; Koskenniemi, "The Advantage of Treaties," 49–50.
361 Craven, "On Foucault and Wolff or from Law to Political Economy."
362 Koskenniemi, "The Advantage of Treaties," 32.
363 "The moral purpose of the modern state lies in the augmentation of the individual's purposes and potentialities, in the cultivation of a social, economic and political order that enables individuals to engage in the self-directed pursuit of their 'interests.'" Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*, 123; Burchell, 'Peculiar Interests: Civil Society and Governing "The System of Natural Liberty"', 140.
364 Koskenniemi, "'Not Excepting the Iroquois Themselves': Sociological Thought and International Law," 21.

individual relations within a structure set up and regulated in its totality by a sovereign aspiring to total knowledge of that realm and its mechanisms.

The appearance of this new form of governmentality had implications for the way the state's external relations and the external realm itself were conceived. Within the reason of state tradition, the principles of both internal and external government were defined from the perspective of the sovereign's rationality. The space of government proper was the domestic arena, to be regulated in view of maximising the state's power while preserving its internal stability. The diplomatic and military techniques, on the other hand, served to secure the competitive state system by consciously maintaining a relation of forces in balance.[365] The Great Powers had a special role to play in the technology of the balance of power. In contrast to the pre-19th century practice of the occasional readjustment of the balance through wars and consecutive peace agreements, after 1815 there emerged a practice of continuous management aiming at preventing breakdown by guiding the development of forces in Europe also in peacetime.

As balance was increasingly considered in terms of a dynamic process of competition, the task of management was to guarantee not only the balance between states, but to identify those forces internal to the states that threatened to undermine the balanced development of forces and to intervene to restore good order.[366] The new system did not restrict itself to adjusting the power relations between states through wars, shifting alliances and the redistribution of territories, but directly targeted the internal forces that were understood to drive the behaviour and development of forces within individual states.[367] The Great Powers undertook a series of military interventions in cases when domestic developments of states

365 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 296–306.
366 Ibid., 314–315.
367 McMillan, "European Diplomacy and the Origins of Governmentality"; Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 333–354.

were perceived to threaten the general balance.[368] Peace was no longer understood as a political relation between states, but as an objective condition that can be approximated by the right application of the political technology of the balance of power.[369]

While the Great Powers thus maintained the balance by military force, the operation of this system, as we have seen above, was founded on the exclusion of war between the Great Powers. The systemic perspective of the balance had its limits in the understanding that "not only should the mechanism [of the balance of power] operate, but its operations should be sanctioned and legitimised by the Concert of Great Powers."[370] Thus, the Great Powers' perspective was the ultimate ground from which the state of balance was judged. Correspondingly, although wars between lesser powers could be taken as legal procedures within the juridical order of Europe, a war between the Great Powers effectively dissolved or suspended that order. As the official British commentary on the United Nations Charter pointed out, "the successful working of the United Nations depends on the preservation of the unanimity of the Great Powers," and in case of a war amongst them, "the United Nations will have failed in its purpose and all members will have to act as seems best in the circumstances."[371] In the event of a Great Power war, law is defunct.

An alternative conceptualisation of the balance of power, however, provided a perspective external to the will of the Great Powers, challenging the exceptionality of Great Power war and, hence, the sovereign position of the Great Powers. Nietzsche and Marx both suggested that the balance of power followed the logic of "people without state instinct," i.e. of those who can regard the system of states itself from a fully external position, without any particular loyalty.[372] Such people, should they exist, will define the optimal operation of the

368 Interventions in Naples (1821), Spain (1823), Turkey (1827), Italy (1831-2), Portugal (1847).
369 On this distinction, see: Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States*, 282–284.
370 Clark, *The Hierarchy of States*, 120.
371 Quoted in Wight, *International Theory*, 35.
372 Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, 209. A similar argument can be found in

state system not from the point of view of a particular state, but from that of their own interests and of the field of calculation within which that interest can be realised. From such a perspective, states would appear not as expressions of will but as forces to be managed,[373] and greatness only as a matter of "the calculus of the difference in size."[374] What distinguishes the modern conception of the balance of power is precisely "its impersonality, its emptiness, its abstraction, its anonymity, its almost scientific technicism," which is the external expression of the liberal reconstruction of the relationship between state and society.[375]

During the 18th century the literatures on police, mercantilism and cameralism came under challenge from the early liberalism of the Physiocrats and the Scottish Enlightenment.[376] It is telling for the close relation between the tradition of natural jurisprudence and this new, liberal thinking about government that a crucial moment in this development came when Adam Smith transposed Pufendorf's ideas to the field of economics, making the economy into a fully autonomous, self-regulating field of human action.[377] The economy and civil society were identified as possessing a "quality of radical immanence," not only a specific, but an autonomous form of logic and an inherent naturalness.[378] Whereas the actions of the sovereign previously faced an external limitation in terms of the rights and laws it could not violate without a loss of legitimacy and, hence, of its attending power as right, the new, liberal rationality confronted it with general principles of *de facto* limitations intrinsic to the activity of government, directly feeding back to power's effectiveness.[379]

Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, chap. 2.
373 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 326.
374 Dean, *Governmentality*, 240.
375 Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society*, 140, 84–5.
376 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*.
377 Hont and Ignatieff, "Needs and Justice in the Wealth of Nations."
378 Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," 11, 22.
379 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 10–13.

Liberal rationality emancipated the problem of government from the confines of the state structure and re-defined Europe as an economic unit governed with the aim of limitless positive-sum growth.[380] To this corresponded the increasing importance of international trade in securing the well-being and power of the state. A new space emerged, cutting across but irreducible to an aggregation of state-spaces. This was a space of an international civil society that could be grasped for the purpose of government not in terms of the political rights and allegiances of its participants that defined them as citizens of this or that country, but in terms of general economic interests that exceeded these political frameworks.[381] As such, it provided a potentially universal domain of calculation "ruled by principles reasonably analogous to the ones natural sciences operated to govern the physical world."[382]

The Declaration of 8 February 1815 by the Eight Powers attached to the Final Act of the Vienna Congress, stated that, the virtues and honourable intentions of the Great Powers notwithstanding, their "objectives cannot be attained without due regard to the interests, the habits, and even the prejudices of their subjects."[383] Hence, even in international affairs, one could not hope for success unless one took into account the rationality of the economy (interests and habits) and public opinion (prejudices). Moreover, civil society came to be understood in the post-Vienna era as not amenable to sovereign rule. The advocates of scientific internationalism argued that "underlying any system of government were social forces upon which the successful management of international affairs depended."[384] In the field of economy, this was captured in the idea of the invisible hand as the basis of the liberal rationality of government. "[T]he unknowability of the totality of the process," on which the

380 Ibid., 54–6.
381 Burchell, "Peculiar Interests: Civil Society and Governing 'The System of Natural Liberty'," 135.
382 Koskenniemi, "Miserable Comforters: International Relations as New Natural Law," 309.
383 Quoted in: Clark, *International Legitimacy and World Society*, 42.
384 Mazower, *Governing the World*, 40.

rationality of the economy is based, undermines any attempt to establish sovereignty over it.[385] Civil society has its own rationality that governmental rationality must accept as its starting point and can try to channel and guide, but cannot rule. And if the invisible hand of liberal economy undermines the possibility of economic sovereignty, then the idea of a mechanistic, impersonal balance of power can be seen as its public equivalent that similarly allows for no successful sovereign intervention.[386]

The social laws of civil society, hence, provided a concept of order based on calculations about what is "socially necessary,"[387] which even the Great Powers would have to respect if they wanted to be successful. War between them was not the exception upon which the order was based. There existed an order beyond their will that such war could not dissolve but only disturb. Understood in these terms, the domain outside the legal order sanctioned by the Great Powers was not a lawless space at all. From the perspective of civil society, war was not framed as the result of sovereign will or, at least, a sovereign that wills war itself had to be understood as the effect of some underlying deficiency in the operation of the domain of civil society. Peace was no longer thought to be best secured by the balance of power, but by relying on the force of the laws of economics, and on the enlightened public opinion of cosmopolitan and commercial citizenry.[388]

The experience of the First World War led to the conclusion that the relevant causes could be found in the excessive autonomy of government, and so the supervisory role of civil society over the state needed to be enhanced through democratisation.[389] Germany was designated as a state guilty of war, and the French blueprint for the League of Nations asserted that "no nations can be admitted to the League other than those which are constituted

385 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 281–286.
386 Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society*, 142–151.
387 Koskenniemi, "Miserable Comforters: International Relations as New Natural Law," 316.
388 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 56–7; Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 83.
389 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 110–116.

as States and are provided with representative institutions such as will permit their being themselves considered responsible for the acts of their own Governments."[390] When, in the inter-war years, this proved to be insufficient for preventing war, the emphasis shifted to the relation between international security and international economy, leading to a system that Ruggie described as "embedded liberalism."[391] From a managerial point of view, the sovereign will is not the ultimate source of order, but a problem to be managed and restrained. It should have no role apart from acting along the dictates of natural law as identified by the experts in natural law. There is no room for sovereign decision and, it seems, there is no room for a notion of Great Powers either beyond mere quantitative preponderance. "Everything is always already regulated by nature and the only task for politics [is] to find out how."[392] International order is like a machine and Great Power war is, hence, an aberration. What war reveals of a state is not at all the quality of greatness – it is failure and irresponsibility.

3.4. *Machtstaaten* and the 'Great Responsibles'

The clash between the sovereign will of the Great Powers (ultimately expressed in the exceptional act of war) and the laws of liberal governmentality (defined from a purportedly neutral perspective) could already be observed in the different attitudes taken to the balance of power after 1815. As an abstract mechanism, it was promoted by Britain, whose interest lay in securing its role as the central agent of the fields of global trade and finances, whereas for Austria the equilibrium was an instrument for preserving a particular type of domestic order.[393] Trade was used by its advocates as the measure of the peace-loving nature of states,

390 Quoted in: Ibid., 116.
391 Ibid., 131–141.
392 Koskenniemi, "'Not Excepting the Iroquois Themselves': Sociological Thought and International Law," 28.
393 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 60.

denouncing the uncivilised militarism of continental powers.[394] "Traders," as Werner Sombart outlined in his 1911 essay 'Technology and Culture,' clashed in world history with "Heroes": Britain stood for a mechanical commercialism deemed irreconcilable with humanity, and it was up to Germany to stop its advancement.[395]

From the 1870s, as the world became increasingly integrated by administrative and technical bodies, "the Great Powers insisted as never before on autonomy in international politics."[396] States could also make use of the development of organisational capacity domestically, increasing their power and thus their sovereign capacity. Despite administrative integration, political divergence and conflicts were increasingly dominant. From at least 1850s, the solutions for reconciling the political and the administrative dimensions moved towards the idea of a confederal order – perhaps towards the ultimate horizon of a world state – with international legislative, judicial and police powers, within which the Great Powers would have been accorded a pre-eminent role in law-making as well as an executive position.[397]

It remained, however, unclear on the basis of what law such an order would operate, having lost its spontaneity "where alternative courses of action are not rejected but inconceivable."[398] No later than with the establishment of the German Empire in 1871, the European spatial order ceased to provide a foundation for order, and Europe gradually descended into unbridled power politics.[399] The culmination of this process in the First World War itself reflected the clash between the ideas of the particularity of a rooted will and order

394 Mazower, *Governing the World*, 42.
395 Watson, *Terrible Beauty*, 171.
396 Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace*, 261.
397 Ibid., 133–7.
398 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 192. Morgenthau wrote of the 'far-reaching dissolution of an ethical system which in the past imposed its restraints upon the day-by-day operations of the foreign office', Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 184–196.
399 Kissinger, 'The White Revolutionary'.

and that of the universal validity of neutral standards. It was in this context, and reflecting these two opposing ways of thinking, that the concepts of greatness and international order, and the relationship between them, were re-articulated in two alternative ways, both relying on a concept of responsibility to substitute for the missing foundation of order: Max Weber's *Machtstaaten* and Alfred Zimmern's Great Responsibles.

Writing in 1916, Weber analysed the situation of Germany in world politics.[400] He argued that Bismarck's legacy – the foundation of the *Reich* – made Germany a *Machtstaat* ("state of power"), Weber's alternative to the idea of Great Power.[401] The concept described a state whose weight in the international system is such that it cannot escape its responsibility before history for shaping the future of the world. "Such nations," he wrote, "by their very nature, have different obligations and therefore other cultural possibilities."[402] Whereas less powerful nations would not be held accountable for renouncing such a task, Germany had the capacity to pose an alternative to the Anglo-Saxon and Russian cultural character. Germany's relative power position allowed it to give meaning to history, a responsibility it had to shoulder. Weber believed that Germany must embrace its greatness because it cannot escape it, being by its very existence "an obstacle in the path of other *Machtstaaten*."[403]

Consistent with his ideas on responsibility as maturity, as described in Chapter 2, he assessed the political maturity of German society by its ability to bear the task of committing itself to the choice that the foundation of the German Empire represented, and to accept responsibility for its consequences.[404] For Weber all politics was war, both inside and among nations.[405] He recognised no other source of order than the imposition on the world of the

400 Weber, 'Between Two Laws'.
401 Aron, 'Max Weber', 214.
402 Weber, 'Between Two Laws', 75.
403 Ibid., 77.
404 Weber, 'The Nation State and Economic Policy'.
405 Aron, 'Max Weber Und Die Machtpolitik', 105.

cultural value system of particular nations. The only increasingly universal feature of order he recognised was the order of administration based on instrumental rationality, and he combated against such a purely managerial organisation of the world in which the dimension of rule is concealed under the domination of the notion of efficiency. Beyond this domain, however, the world was a realm of competing values in which "at all times [one] will find himself engaged in a fight against one or other of the gods of this world."[406] Responsible *Machtstaaten* did not try to escape this reality but embraced it to shape the world in their own image.

In 1914, Zimmern attacked head-on the idea of German *Kultur* at the basis of Weber's thinking, from the perspective of the British ideal of Civilization.[407] Around the same time, he also put forward a radically different understanding of the role of the Great Powers.[408] He argued that the force they represented was just as necessary for the maintenance of order than morality. Consequently, power had to be not rejected but purified and transformed "through the influence of the notion of moral responsibility."[409] He noted that, domestically, states were becoming "less and less an agency of pure power and increasingly the agency of common welfare," their policemen no longer instruments of coercion but the "friends of the public."[410] If a corresponding change were to take place in international politics, the Great Powers would transform into the Great Responsibles.

In agreement with Norman Angell, Zimmern perceived the world to be one single space of economic organisation, a Great Society where "[t]rade and industry respond to the reactions of a single, world-wide nervous system."[411] Zimmern understood organisation as the intellectual realm of knowledge, of human mastery over nature as well as over other humans,

406 Weber, 'Between Two Laws', 79.
407 Zimmern, 'German Culture and the British Commonwealth'.
408 Zimmern, 'Progress in Government'.
409 Zimmern, *The League Of Nations And The Rule Of Law, 1918-1935*, 83.
410 Ibid.
411 Zimmern, 'German Culture and the British Commonwealth', 24.

and as the efficiency of means and control, of which the Great Powers represented the most highly developed form.[412] In the aftermath of the First World War, the League of Nations provided an institutionalised form of this organisational dimension of international order. Zimmern identified it as an instrument for facilitating the workings of a "Co-operative Society of States" - a term he borrowed from Larnaude – every member of which "must recognise that his own interest is bound up with the interest of the whole enterprise and that he cannot expect an assured dividend unless the society in its turn is assured of the loyal support and contributions of its individual members."[413]

For Zimmern, organisation – administrative and scientific reason – was in itself insufficient for providing order.[414] He observed that the extent to which the League could operate depended on the willingness of the member states – and especially of the Great Powers – to cooperate.[415] Without this willingness or "spirit" of cooperation, organisation was a dead machinery. The League and other international bodies, he wrote, were truly just bodies without soul.[416] The soul had to come from an external source. The Covenant of the League of Nations, he commented, "assumes" the presence of this spirit, "presupposes a transformation of Power-politics into Responsibility-politics," and "not only cannot by itself bring about the passing of Power-politics, but may even provide a new and more sensational and even dangerous arena for its exercise."[417]

International law had similar limitations. Its force, Zimmern argued, traditionally had its source in Christianity and in a concept of natural law, neither of which could serve this function any longer. Positive international law was ineffective without a world community

412 Zimmern, 'Progress in Government', 148.
413 Zimmern, *The League Of Nations And The Rule Of Law 1918 1935*, 283.
414 Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 70–75; Morefield, *Covenants without Swords*, 156–7.
415 Zimmern, *The League Of Nations And The Rule Of Law, 1918-1935*, 282–3.
416 Zimmern, 'The Decline of International Standards', 5.
417 Zimmern, *The League Of Nations And The Rule Of Law, 1918-1935*, 285.

that could sustain it, without a social consciousness through which law could become a habit or attitude of living together.[418] If there was an international judiciary or an international police force, he asked, "what sort of law their Judges will interpret or their army enforce?"[419]

World order hence necessitated something more than the dimensions of organisation and law. He defined government, which concerned "the common life of mankind in the world," as part organisation – the dimension of force and control –, and part politics – the dimension of freedom and the good life.[420] The spirit of order had to come from this second element. He found his model for politics in the political philosophy of Aristotle, as he was convinced that the *polis* embodied the supreme form of good life, the special quality of which was expressed in a state's constitution or laws.[421] Law, in this framework, functioned with spontaneity, as it was built into the social consciousness and life of the community it regulated. Zimmern believed that England approached this model of the *polis*, although after the Second World War he transferred his hopes to the United States.[422]

Zimmern thus located the potential source of order in relations between men in its political dimension. Since within the most civilised, liberal constitutional states citizens already shared the sort of social consciousness that was needed to create international order, the task was that of "mobilising and making effective in the field of world affairs 'dispositions' – to use Burke's phrase – that are already dominant in the public life of the leading countries of the world."[423] International order required a transformation of the character of the common man, "to *enlarge* his vision so as to bear in mind that the *public affairs* of the twentieth century are world affairs."[424] Order consisted, for him, in a

418 Zimmern, 'The Decline of International Standards', 12.
419 Zimmern, 'International Law and Social Consciousness', 40.
420 Zimmern, 'Progress in Government', 136.
421 Zimmern, 'International Law and Social Consciousness', 26–7.
422 Zimmern, 'Athens and America'.
423 Zimmern, 'The Decline of International Standards', 21.
424 Zimmern quoted in: Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939*, 152, emphasis in original.

combination of an individual and communal character developed in line with a society-wide consciousness, and an institutional framework that maintained it through educating and restraining those not possessing it. Accordingly, for Zimmern, the League of Nations was above all an instrument of educating the peoples of the world into this enlarged consciousness through intellectual cooperation.[425]

For Zimmern, civilisation did not stand for "anything intellectual at all," like German *Kultur*, but for "the establishment of the Rule of Law" and for "the task of making men fit for free institutions, [for] the work of guiding and training them to recognise the obligations of their citizenship."[426] With the spread of universal civilisation, nations representing their own unique cultures would ultimately be united in a single world commonwealth on the model of the British Empire.[427]

The Great Powers, he wrote, "between them control the destinies of civilisation."[428] As the most civilised states, they had the most favourable domestic conditions for promoting among themselves the "habit of living together."[429] Moreover, as they also controlled most of the power of organisation, if they managed to establish among them a common rule of law and the enlarged social consciousness necessary to sustain it, they had the capacity to impose it on the rest of the world.[430] This placed the Great Powers at the centre of Zimmern's vision of order. They had to act "with a common sense of their responsibility to provide the world with a framework of law,"[431] in order to break with the "European political tradition of power-

425 Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 67; Laqua, 'Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order'; Toye and Toye, 'One World, Two Cultures?'.
426 Zimmern, 'German Culture and the British Commonwealth', 15.
427 Zimmern, 'Nationality and Government', 58–60.
428 Zimmern, 'German Culture and the British Commonwealth', 21.
429 Zimmern, 'The Decline of International Standards', 22.
430 Ibid., 22–3.
431 Quoted in: Rich, 'Reinventing Peace', 126.

politics" and to enable "mankind to attain the outward conditions of what Aristotle called the good life."[432]

It is certainly the case that Zimmern understood the Great Powers to have an executive role, in which function they would supervise a broad range of administrative fields.[433] Yet he did not define their responsibility only in relation to organisation, for he believed that "a working arrangement between persons animated by a number of different purposes is not a basis for institutional life."[434] This was only Burke's "gross animal partnership," lacking "the deeper partnership in the things of the spirit."[435] Nor did he define the responsibility of the Great Powers in terms of existing standards and forms of social consciousness, since he found them too weak to sustain international order.

Ultimately, a common framework and concept of the good life was necessary, hence the concept of Great Responsibles was linked to a movement – and to the task of moving – towards a shared, global *polis*. Had a world state existed, there would not have been Great Powers, since Zimmern rejected the idea of divisible sovereignty.[436] The concept of Great Responsibles was therefore located in the problem of international government with a world-wide system of organisation but without a world state. Linking the highest level of civilisation and the most awesome administrative power, the Great Responsibles had a dual face: being the executive (responsible) power of a world-wide community of the Rule of Law, and being responsible for acting in such a way as to bring about that common political organisation of the globe.[437]

432 Zimmern, 'Our Greek Augustan Age', 326.
433 Zimmern, *The League Of Nations And The Rule Of Law, 1918-1935*, 203–206.
434 Zimmern, 'The Decline of International Standards', 6.
435 Zimmern, 'International Law and Social Consciousness', 41–2.
436 Zimmern, 'Nationality and Government', 43–44.
437 Hedley Bull later gave a different twist to Zimmern's ideas. Whereas Zimmern's Great Responsibles were linked by a thick transnational field of administration and a world political community, Bull – writing in the Cold War – could not rely on either. Instead, he identified the responsibility of great powers in a Kantian, procedural manner. Bull distrusted liberal progressivism and put more faith in the operation of the traditional 19th century state-system. He argued that the core responsibility of great powers was to take into

3.5. 'Responsible stakeholders' and global liberal governmentality

In the context of the ideological and military confrontation of the Soviet Union and the United States after the Second World War, neither Zimmern's civilisation nor Weber's existentialist nationalism were perceived as providing adequate answers to the problem of international order, although elements of Weber's thought lived on in American realism.[438] It was only with the post-Cold War return to an increasingly globalised system of economic and social organisation, and with the emergence of multiple power centres with incompatible views on global political order, that the concept of responsibility came to centre stage again as defining a special role for major powers. Both Weber's act of commitment and Zimmern's common political horizon were gone, however. Instead, the concept of responsible power was reconstructed by exclusive reference to the domain of administration.

The concept of 'responsible stakeholder,' put forward by Robert Zoellick in 2005, provided an alternative to the problematisation of emerging powers on the basis of liberal standards of legitimacy.[439] As an example of the latter, Jorge N. Castañeda argued that, in order for emerging powers to be granted a right to participate in governing the world, they must place "universal values above national sovereignty, as would befit a new member of the world's ruling councils." He also noted that the emerging states' "core values are too different from the ones espoused, however partially and duplicitously, by the international community's

account the interests and views of every other state in the system and to define their interests in such a way as "to encompass the preservation of an international system in which the bulk of member states regard themselves as having a stake." This enlarged mindset was not Zimmern's world consciousness but, instead, the definition of one's interest as a state – not a particular state – and the preservation of the pluralistic international society that supports the state form. Bull thought that a focus on the state form instead of substantial interests and conceptions of good life might provide sufficient order in a world beset by disagreement on values. Bull, *The Anarchical Society*; Bull, 'The Great Irresponsibles?'; Vincent, 'Hedley Bull and Order in International Politics'; Wheeler and Dunne, 'Hedley Bull's Pluralism of the Intellect and Solidarism of the Will'; Sandel, 'The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self'.

438 Rosenthal, *Righteous Realists*; Murray, *Reconstructing Realism*; Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger.* See also Chapter 5 of this thesis.

439 Zoellick, 'Whither China? From Membership to Responsibility'; See also: Zoellick, 'China and America: Power and Responsibility'.

main players and their partners to warrant the emerging powers' inclusion at the helm of the world's top organizations."[440]

In contrast to this emphasis on values and rules, Zoellick defined responsible stakeholders as states that "recognize that the international system sustains their peaceful prosperity, so they work to sustain that system."[441] He did not focus on the conditions under which China (and other emerging powers) might have a right to participate in rule-making, but on how it should act so as to maintain the international system – not its inclusion or exclusion, but its impact on the way the system operates. Zoellick did not merely demand that emerging powers should conform to the rules and values of the international system, but articulated an underlying *rationale* for doing so, in the form of maintaining the system on the basis of self-interest. Ultimately, a state is not a responsible stakeholder because it observes the rules. Rather, such behaviour follows from it being responsible.

The concept of stakeholder appeared in the 1960s in the context of corporate management.[442] It approached the problem of social order not through the liberal political principle that the governed should govern, but through the managerial logic of success and risk-management.[443] Stakeholder theory later became part of the theory of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The founder of the latter, Keith Davis, identified two core principles at its core. The "power-responsibility equation" stated that the "social responsibility of businessmen arises from the amount of social power they have." According to "the Iron Law of Responsibility," in turn, "those who do not take responsibility for their power, ultimately shall lose it."

440 Castañeda, 'Not Ready for Prime Time', 115, 122.
441 Zoellick, 'Whither China? From Membership to Responsibility', 3.
442 Freeman and Reed, 'Stockholders and Stakeholders'; Freeman et al., *Stakeholder Theory.*
443 Freeman et al., *Stakeholder Theory*, 236–7.

In both its CSR and stakeholder formulations, responsibility is defined from a managerial perspective. More precisely, it presupposes that morality and economic prosperity form one unity, and that one's self-interest is ultimately connected to the self-interest of others.[444] A responsible actor is not responsible on account of acting upon its social and legal responsibilities, but because it prudently realises that it needs to sustain the social conditions on which its own success depends, including taking into account others' expectations about its responsibilities. Stakeholder theory thus emphasises the preservation of social structures providing for individual well-being, such as high levels of social trust, and identifies as the source of problems not the failure of individuals but the breakdown or weakening of these structures.[445]

The importance of these structures as the pillars of prosperity is partly captured in the conceptualisation of the responsibility of major powers as "the ability and willingness to provide global public goods, i.e. goods that are non-excludable and non-rival, and thereby also harder to supply because of the temptation of free-riding."[446] Such goods include free economic circulation, security, and the stabilization of processes such as global climate change. The provision of public goods is the activity in which system-maintenance and self-interest converge: "[i]f a state defines its national interests more in line with the common interests of other nations and the international society, […] it should increasingly see undertaking more international responsibility as in its own interest."[447]

The concept of responsibility in question is, therefore, linked to a system generating and distributing benefits. Zimmern's definition of the co-operative society in terms of an enterprise is remarkably similar to Zoellick's definition of the international system in relation

444 Freeman, Martin, and Parmar, 'Stakeholder Capitalism', 307.
445 Budd, 'Stakeholding', 180; Fukuyama, *Trust*.
446 Narlikar, 'Is India a Responsible Great Power?', 1608.
447 Chen, 'International Responsibility and China's Foreign Policy', 22.

to which the contemporary concept of 'responsible stakeholder' is articulated. Yet, whereas for Zimmern responsibility was also defined in relation to a global *polis*, to a system of rules external to the dimension of organisation and concerning the political living-together of mankind, for Zoellick it is defined in a way that is fully contained within the logic of administration. The process of becoming responsible is not a matter of being able to consider what is right from multiple perspectives, but of learning how to calculate what is truly in one's interest.

Yet this is not simply a return to the liberal idea of the "harmony of interests," according to which "[i]n pursuing his own interest, the individual pursues that of the community, and in promoting the interest of the community he promotes his own."[448] There is a radical problem at the heart of public goods: while it is the common interest to provide them, it is in the individual's interest to free ride so long as others are willing and able to provide the public good. Free-riding is not simply a problem of not carrying out one's obligations or not fulfilling social expectations: irresponsible behaviour undermines the provision of public goods since it removes the incentive others have to act so as to maintain the system. Zoellick warned China that "[t]he United States will not be able to sustain an open economic system – or domestic U.S. support for such a system – without greater cooperation from China."[449] China's behaviour can potentially remove the incentives actors in the system face when they make their decisions about, for instance, whether to defy norms against nuclear proliferation, rules of debt sustainability or strategies of climate change mitigation and adoption. The provision of public goods is, hence, not only a matter of China's contribution, but also of how China's behaviour influences others' willingness to contribute. Responsibility

448 Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939*, 43.
449 Zoellick, 'Whither China? From Membership to Responsibility'.

is central not only in its connection to legitimacy and, hence, to success, but also as one of the conditions of the functioning of a field within which success can be achieved.

Order is sought in this framework not in accordance with a set of rules transcending the immanent relationship of actors, but in making the latter calculable. As Nietzsche's analysis mentioned in Chapter 2 suggests, this corresponds to a specific problematisation of greatness. The crisis following the end of an unquestioned framework for order, which raised the aporias of self-legislation, does not disappear by eliminating the dimension of rule from the conception of order. Calculability must be produced and maintained, and great actors are great because they maintain the potential to disrupt it. In other words, the great actor is the one whose irresponsibility threatens the calculability and, hence, the governability of the whole.

I suggest, then, that what is at stake here can be adequately captured by what Michel Foucault describes as the "conduct of conduct," the direction of actors' conduct by structuring "the possible field of action of others," as an alternative to a legal or moral form of government.[450] Free-riding by major powers undermines not simply the public good itself, but also the ways it is produced through the manipulation of the field in which it is produced. The meaning of responsible power, hence, cannot be fully captured by the dual requirements suggested by Dormandy: that a state should be a promoter of dominant norms in the international system and that it should participate in sharing the burdens of public good provision.[451] A more adequate understanding is related to the manipulation and channelling of the inherent tendencies, rationalities and laws of the domain of the international, so as to produce international order.

450 Foucault, *Power*, 341; Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 192–5; On the 'conduct of conduct' and great powers, see: Astrov, 'Great Power Management without Great Powers?'.
451 Dormandy, 'Is India, or Will It Be, a Responsible International Stakeholder?'.

In the administrative domain of public good provision, control is exercised not through the legal order but through the rules and conditions of effective management, making the system self-regulating to a certain degree. Global governmentality makes use of "manipulating the environment or the effects of problem behaviours."[452] It acts on the milieu rather than the actors themselves or, more precisely, it treats actors themselves – including the actor from whose perspective the task of governing or administration is addressed – as serving also as the milieu of others. But the rules of governmentality can only be relied upon insofar as the most powerful states are predictable in that they actively sustain the validity of these rules.[453] If their behaviour fails to establish a single basis of calculation for the actors in the system, it is less and less possible to talk about the existence of an order. Irresponsible major powers do not necessarily challenge the rules of international order, but make them "progressively less relevant."[454] They undermine the global objectives of international order not by contesting them but by weakening the mechanisms that were meant to secure them.[455] Insofar as the operation of the system is supposed to be in their interest, their responsibility means both "being reasonable" and "causing" at the same time.[456]

The discourse of responsible power thus locates the potential position for major powers within a problematisation of international order as governmentality. The current literature on governmentality uses two different, but interacting and overlapping, images of the *nomos* of the Earth: global governmentality; and the sovereign power that establishes the normal situation for that governmentality.[457] On the one hand, there are the knowledges, practices and technologies through which the "international becomes identified as a problem,

452 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 20–1; O'Malley, 'Risk and Responsibility'.
453 This does not necessarily mean acting according to obligations or promises. See: Rodrik and Zeckhauser, 'The Dilemma of Government Responsiveness'.
454 Barma, Ratner, and Weber, 'The Mythical Liberal Order'.
455 Halper, *The Beijing Consensus*, 28–29; Breslin, 'China's Emerging Global Role', 58.
456 Scott, 'China and the "Responsibilities" of a "Responsible" Power—The Uncertainties of Appropriate Power Rise Language'.
457 Dean, 'Nomos and the Politics of World Order'.

is rendered thinkable, knowable and actionable."[458] This image captures how both state and non-state actors are monitored, categorised, evaluated, regulated and produced through the administrative, expert definition of the "legitimate forms of being (subjectivity) and responsibility."[459] At the core of the system such definitions take the form of norms derivable from the stable operation of the normal situation.[460] Through this gradual and non-disciplinary transformative action, the governance of the global is achieved "at the level of the governed," in the shape of self-governance in the face of risks.[461]

The agents of such constant shaping of conduct are primarily technical institutions and expert agencies – international and national governmental and non-governmental organisations –, although they themselves are simultaneously subjects and objects of global governmentality as states harness their activities for their own governmental purposes.[462] Yet the state is not so much "a source of governmental power, but rather a transmission belt for global governance."[463] States and non-state actors alike face global governmentality "as a [universal] standard of reference against which all forms of life […] can be assessed."[464] Neumann identifies the great powers as those states that provide such a standard of exemplary form of governance, and are able to spread such forms of government to the rest of the world, thus making it governable.[465] In Hardt and Negri's *Empire,* this role is given to the United States as the "first tier" and "unified global command," standing above nation-states (the

458 Dean, *Governmentality*, 238.
459 Aalberts and Werner, 'Mobilising Uncertainty and the Making of Responsible Sovereigns', 2197; Aalberts, *Constructing Sovereignty between Politics and Law.*
460 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 63.
461 Innes and Steele, 'Governmentality in Global Governance', 719.
462 Sending and Neumann, 'Governance to Governmentality'.
463 Coward, 'Securing the Global (Bio)Political Economy: Empire, Poststructuralism and Political Economy', 66.
464 Vrasti, 'Universal but not truly "Global"', 16.
465 Neumann, 'Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007', 132.

filters and facilitators of circulations and regulations) and global civil society (the domain of biopower).[466]

Although liberal global governmentality is universal in its aspirations, it is not global in its actuality.[467] Some actors are measured, found wanting, and thus subjected to the coercive instruments of the liberal form of police.[468] From the knowable and actionable domain of the international – including the global civil society – "liberal government is able to derive the substantive content of freedom and a society based on it, and transform that content into a set of norms enforceable, if necessary, by sovereign means."[469] It is through such sovereign distinctions between those capable of autonomous action and those having to be disciplined that the governable domain is defined.[470] Yet this is not the sovereignty of the classical figure of the sovereign – of the state or of the Great Powers. Rather, this is the realm of the "petty sovereigns" or "sovereign police:" executive agents exercising limited and localised sovereignty in particular cases, suspending the law and defining the borders of the 'inside' in a dispersed and networked manner.[471]

Dean's alternative geopolitical imaginary – inspired by Carl Schmitt – tells a different story of sovereignty. If the new planetary *nomos* is global governmentality, he argues, it also depends on "a prior set of actions and processes which appropriate, establish and secure the spaces in which market forces could operate globally and decide when such a normal market situation prevails."[472] Global governmentality is the result of the "active forgetting" of the origins of this act of appropriation.[473] Moreover, Dean continues, such acts are not only

466 Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 310.
467 Vrasti, 'Universal but not Truly "Global".'
468 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 353–4.
469 Dean, 'Liberal Government and Authoritarianism', 46.
470 Hindess, 'Liberalism - What's in a Name?'; Hindess, 'Liberalism: Rationality of Government and Vision of History'.
471 Doty, 'States of Exception on the Mexico–U.S. Border'; Agamben, *Means Without End*, 103–6; Innes and Steele, 'Governmentality in Global Governance', 721–4.
472 Dean, 'Nomos and the Politics of World Order', 53.
473 Ibid., 44; See also: Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*.

originary but are regularly performed by the United States, as the single superpower, in its assertion of a sovereign position in international order. This argument closely follows Schmitt's claim that "[t]he power to decide who is sovereign would signify a new sovereignty."[474] Yet it remains unclear whether this new sovereignty is indeed exercised by the United States or rather by those "petty sovereigns" – officials, NGOs, experts – mentioned above, who make their decisions on a technical or normative basis. As Astrov argues, although the administrative assessment of forms of life is in fact a "resolutely political [decision] in so far as it presupposes the whole and gives it concrete shape by introducing divisions within it," most such decisions might actually be made by non-governmental agencies, thus relegating the great powers to a mere "executive managerial role."[475]

The concept of responsible power suggests, however, a third possibility, by problematising the role of major powers in international order in terms of how they potentially undermine or make possible the normal operation of global governmentality. The assessment of their responsibility as a merely administrative act is problematic, since what is at stake in their responsible behaviour is the very relevance of the administrative categories in the first place. At the same time, the idea of responsible power signals the problems of the sovereign act of exclusion and appropriation-by-exclusion: it becomes relevant when an irresponsible power undermines the 'normal situation,' but neither its sovereign exclusion nor its disciplinary transformation is viable and, hence, that power appears as a necessary but problematic part in the administrative grounding of international order. Global liberal governmentality hence defines the criteria of responsibility, but the responsible disposition of major actors – their active contribution of providing an appropriate milieu, or public goods – is also the condition of the operation of the system.

474 Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, 30.
475 Astrov, 'Great Power Management without Great Powers?', 15, 21.

Conclusion

Responsibility as a disposition became central to linking great powers and international order when the last vestiges of the European social order, in the shape of the spatial order managed by the Great Powers, no longer could fulfil the same function. From the perspective of global governmentality (the alternative ground of order that offered itself in the 19th century), the Great Powers appeared only as a totally external source of disruption. Weber attempted to re-define the relationship between greatness and international order against this new domain of administration through a concept of responsibility as maturity. Zimmern, on the other hand, proposed a quasi-*phronetic* notion of responsibility for bringing about a political form of living together over the managerial domain of bargaining between individual preferences.

Zoellick's concept of 'responsible stakeholder,' in contrast, defines responsibility from the perspective of rules and conditions of the effective management of society presented as a calculable system of causes and effects. The problem of greatness is thus presented in terms of the dependence of the ordered operation of this system on the responsible disposition of the major powers. Responsible actors actively contribute their conduct – and thus conducting others' conduct – to the governability of the global domain. Although this is a conception of responsibility as a character trait, it remains subordinated – secondary – to the order in relation to which it is defined, and therefore preserves the responsibility/greatness paradox, although now transferred to the domain of administration.

In order to understand how, in the context of a discourse on 'responsible power' informed by such a liberal understanding of responsibility, greatness has apparently come to be equated with responsibility in the case of China, as discussed in the Introduction, I turn in Part II to a genealogical inquiry into Sino-Western relations.

Part II.
China in Western Conceptions of Governing the World

4.
Forms of Governmentality and the Status of China in Sino-British Relations, 1792-1842

In this chapter, I concentrate on a fifty-year period during which Great Britain actively contested the Chinese Empire's rules of conducting political and economic relations with foreign entities, and tried to bring about instead a common framework of order on the basis of equality. London's main motivation was to make Sino-British commercial relations governable, secure, and potentially expandable, as it was becoming increasingly central to the operation of the global circulations underlying British power. As initial attempts at extending the mercantilist logic of regulating commerce and the European model of inter-state relations – treating China as an equal, sovereign great power – failed, and it was deemed impossible to subjugate China militarily, British statesmen looked for new ways of constructing a common order with China.

The growing importance of free trade and of tenets of liberal political economy in British conceptions of trade relations made it possible to articulate such an order in terms of the internal, and supposedly universally valid, tendencies of commercial circulation. This enabled them to conceptualise China's position in relation to such an order not as an outsider (which presumes the existence of a society with membership) but as an irresponsible actor (based on the requirements of stable commercial circulation). This, however, also set up China as an inferior state that should be disciplined and educated if possible. Indeed, in 1842, after the first Opium War, Britain imposed its rules on China. In the intervening twenty-years

period, however, Britain conducted its trade relations with China in an exceptional space of direct control – *vis-à-vis* the general rule of liberal commerce – as a response to China's perceived irresponsibility.

I begin this chapter by locating the British attempt at seeking a common order with China in existing IR approaches to rule formation in such encounters, and continue by considering broader patterns in changing European views on China. I then argue that Sino-British relations were dominated by questions of trade and describe the nature of these commercial relations. Finally, relying on a combination of primary documents and secondary literature, I discuss three periods of British attempts at ordering trade: one dominated by mercantile rationality; one dominated by the new liberal rationality and setting up an exceptional relationship with China; and one following the unilateral liberalisation of trade by Britain, leading to a breakdown of relations and to the beginning of the imperialist subjugation of China.

4.1. The East Asian order contested

Following the unification and stabilisation of the country in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, Imperial China dominated the East Asian international society virtually uninterrupted. The Empire understood itself to be the embodiment of an unquestioned form of greatness located in an all-encompassing cosmological order in which everything had its proper place.[476] Its political and social order was structured not by positive or moral law, but by the Confucian concept of ritual (*li*) that was supposed to ensure a perfect fit between order and its performance.[477] The emperor performed the rituals connecting the celestial order to the earthly realm. Good government resulted from the authority and example emanating from a virtuous

476 Zhang, 'The Idea of Order in Ancient Chinese Political Thought'.
477 Ford, *The Mind of Empire*, 30–37.

emperor, inducing everyone else to imitate his virtue and thus spreading order and harmony in concentric circles.[478] The strong conservatism of Confucianism thus also incorporated the Daoist idea of inaction (*wuwei*) insofar as order was not meant to result from governmental action but from proper comportment and thus proper relations.[479]

The Chinese order was a world order without boundaries although with a strong stratification of actors based on their civilisational distance from the Middle Kingdom (*zhongguo*). Internationally, this system translated into a Sino-centric order in which other actors could participate by emulating Chinese culture and by performing the adequate rituals.[480] Korea, Vietnam, Japan and the Ryukyu Kingdom all closely copied the Chinese domestic system as well as its cultural achievements in their own state-building efforts, and looked for cosmological legitimacy for their rulers in having the sanction of the Chinese Emperor.[481] They also maintained tributary relations with China, which included – apart from a ritualised form of access to a coveted trade – the performance of rituals of submission (*kowtow*) to the Emperor. In contrast to the formal equality and informal hierarchy of states in post-Westphalian Europe, the East Asian international society exhibited a strong formal hierarchy, but also an almost complete informal equality.[482] Although China's central position was not uncontested, until the late 19th century the aim of such challenges was confined to replacing China in the hierarchical order defined by the constitutive norms of the East Asian international society.[483]

478 Ringmar, 'Performing International Systems', 9.
479 Ford, *The Mind of Empire*, 40; Zhao, 'All-Under-Heaven and Methodological Relationism'.
480 Good overviews are provided by Hsü, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations*, 3–18; Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*, 34–46; Kang, 'Civilization and State Formation in the Shadow of China'; Ringmar, 'Performing International Systems'.
481 Kang, 'Hierarchy and Stability in Asian International Relations', 96, 101.
482 Ibid., 105.
483 Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*, 43–46.

The European powers remained at the margins of this order. They came into direct and regular contact with China in the early 16th century with the occupation of Malacca by the Portuguese and the European takeover of the spice trade. By the 17th century European trade became increasingly dependent on China, whose products, enormous domestic market and – for the missionaries – population were highly coveted.[484] Even at the end of the 18th century, when its military capacities began to fall behind that of the European states, China's economy still far outstripped that of the whole of Western Europe.[485]

The ritualistic nature of the Sino-centric order allowed the European powers (and many other entities, whether companies or individuals) to participate in it, so long as they were granted the opportunity and were willing to perform the adequate rituals.[486] But there were considerable obstacles to fully entering the club. From the second half of the 17th century the Portuguese and the Dutch sent a number of official missions with the purpose of getting their trade rights expanded. They were all unsuccessful despite their willingness to accept ritual submission and nominal tributary status and thus to conduct their relations with China on terms set by the latter.[487] Not being part of the Confucian world, they were regarded as 'barbarians,' potentially dangerous actors to be managed.[488] The Europeans' vision of trade as a source of national power and private profit through the horizontal circulation of goods and money was also at odds with the symbolic significance attributed to it by the Empire as the hierarchical circulation of glory between the tributaries and the cosmic centre.[489] The status of Western states was thus fixed by China somewhere between that of the tributary states and that of the land power Russia, with whom Beijing had exceptional relations.[490] Their trade was

484 Stuart-Fox, *A Short History of China and Southeast Asia*, 95–105.
485 Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millenial Perspective/Historical Statistics*, 261.
486 Ringmar, 'Performing International Systems', 14–5.
487 Stuart-Fox, *A Short History of China and Southeast Asia*, 95–112; Keay, *The Spice Route*, 165–248.
488 Wang, *Harmony and War*; Johnston, *Cultural Realism*; Kelly, 'A "Confucian Long Peace" in Pre-Western East Asia?'.
489 Ropp, *China in World History*, 1.
490 Westad, *Restless Empire*, 35–6.

confined to Canton (Guangzhou) since the mid-17th century, and even the Treaty of Nanjing of 1842, which nominally created equality between the parties, was seen by the Emperor as just another instance of managing the barbarians at the periphery by giving them restricted trade access.[491]

Relations through trade had thus already been conducted for more than two centuries according to the rules of the East Asian order, when in the late 18th century Western states conducting maritime relations with China sought to question the tributary order and establish political relations with the Chinese Empire on their own terms.[492] More precisely, it was first the British who, in 1792, dispatched an embassy with the explicit aim of using diplomatic relations on the basis of asserted equality to improve the conditions of trade, questioning the validity of the rules set up by the imperial court. While China's status had been fixed for two millennia within the East Asian international society, in the eyes of the Western powers it was an open question.

China's international status remained in limbo for another 80 years, until membership in the League of Nations was finally attained, but it became a different problem after the Celestial Empire's defeat in the first Opium War of 1839-42, and the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing.[493] By force of arms, China was drawn into the rules of European international society in a position of inferiority, lacking full membership on account of its failure to meet its conditions. China never really accepted, and for a long time did not even recognise, such a position, but was nevertheless subjected to a Western imperial project of transformation for over a century.[494] But between 1792 and 1842, the question of China's relation to the European international order took a different shape: it was the British who sought the recognition of

491 Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, 109; Fairbank and Goldman, *China*, 200.
492 The system of trade was a political/diplomatic relation in Chinese eyes, as it was inseparable from the broader cosmological order. Stuart-Fox, *A Short History of China and Southeast Asia*, 111.
493 Zhang, 'China's Entry into International Society'.
494 Hevia, *English Lessons*.

equality by the Chinese, who were unwilling to grant it. On what terms, then, did the British seek to construct a common order and make sense of China's position in it?

The extant literature provides two major alternatives as to how the rules of such an encounter might have been determined and how that would influence the status of China in the eyes of Britain. The first is based on what is known as the logic of consequences, and suggests that the observance of any rule or principle "is based on calculation of material and ideational interests."[495] Those powerful enough can pick and choose or even create the rules they see fit on the basis of their rational calculation of interests. Status distinctions reflect power relations and are only upheld if calculations so recommend.

According to the alternative position, the criteria of legitimate actorhood and status are always typical of a given society of states and are determined by its "deep generative grammar."[496] Encounters between different civilisations would then be structured by expanding 'standards of civilisations.'[497] As the argument goes, the status of China was defined primarily by the degree of its compliance with the standards of full membership in the European international society, as measured by adherence to the norms, rules of conduct and institutions of said society. Externally, these included the adoption of the principles of international law and of European diplomatic practice. Internally, besides adequate administrative organisation and legal system, it required the demonstrated ability of a state "to guarantee the life, liberty and property of foreign nationals."[498]

495 Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, 9.

496 Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*.

497 The central argument of this literature is that the main source of the contemporary global international society was a geographically expanding 'vanguard' European society of states with its particular institutions, norms and shared interests. See: Buzan and Little, 'The Historical Expansion of International Society'; Bull and Watson, *The Expansion of International Society*; Buzan, 'Culture and International Society'.

498 Gong, 'China's Entry into International Society', 179; Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society*, 15; Hsü, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations*. On the continuing importance of the term, see: Bowden and Seabrooke, 'Global Standards of Market Civilization'; Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization*; Gong, 'Standards of Civilization Today'; Donnelly, 'Human Rights'; O'Hagan, 'Discourses of Civilizational Identity'; Buzan, 'The "Standard of Civilisation" as an English School Concept'. For further

The concept of a 'standard of civilisation' emerged in explicit form only in the late 19th century writings of international lawyers, but it was implicit in earlier European state practice as a set of criteria that "embodies the assumptions, tacit and explicit, used to distinguish those that belong to a particular society […] and differentiates them from those excluded as outsiders."[499] Thus, the standard of civilisation amounted to a rule of membership, a benchmark for acquiring the "right to have rights."[500] In relation to those states that failed to meet it, the regular rules and norms of international society were not applicable, and a different set of rules had to take their place.[501]

For the period between 1792 and 1842, neither approach seems to provide an adequate account of British views on China. In this intervening period English statesmen sought to move relations out of a state of expediency. At the same time, by any enumeration of the standards of civilisation, China was clearly an outsider to European international society. It rejected international law and the equality of sovereign states, it eschewed the establishment of diplomatic relations and its domestic government was out of touch with contemporary European developments. Yet Britain sought to conduct relations with China on the basis of equal status, with strong concerns about their own status and honour, and whatever served as the basis for such equality cannot be accounted for by the standards of civilisation.[502]

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criteria and their relation to international hierarchy, see: Towns, 'The Status of Women as a Standard of "Civilization"'; Suzuki, 'Japan's Socialization into Janus-Faced European International Society'; Hobson and Sharman, 'The Enduring Place of Hierarchy in World Politics'. For a good overview of problems with the term, see: Keene, 'The Standard of "Civilisation", the Expansion Thesis and the 19th-Century International Social Space'. Recently this English School concern with clashing international norms and institutions has been translated into the constructivist terminology of norm socialisation and into the language of diverging and clashing international practices. Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*; Ringmar, 'Performing International Systems'.

499 Gong, 'China's Entry into International Society', 172.

500 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 26, who takes the expression from Jean-Marc Coicaud.

501 Watson, 'European International Society and Its Expansion', 25.

502 The classical study here is: Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*. Lydia Liu approaches it from the perspective of a semiotic clash between empires in her *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making*. These themes also provide the main focal point in early Anglo-Chinese relations in: Bickers, *The Scramble for China*. Wong, *Deadly Dreams*, 31–33., Ch. 2–6. has a useful summary of the relevant literature as well as a detailed consideration of the matter in relation to the Arrow War of 1856-60.

In this chapter I offer an account of the first stage of the Sino-British encounter that breaks down the duality between rational calculations on the one hand and rules regarding appropriate subjectivity on the other. The question of status is a question of "differential regard," and the available status positions depend on the basis or principle of such differentiation.[503] Neither relative power nor a distinction between members and outsiders appears to account for the case at hand. If the encounter is understood neither in terms of a merely expedient international system nor as a matter of legitimacy but rather in terms of the practical problem it presents for the task of governing, the relationship between rules and action appears in a different light, since different forms of governmental reason contain their own 'truth' and with it their own principles of status differentiation. Namely, any governmental calculation must take place in terms of forms of knowledge already possessing a normative side through expectations about the subjects to be governed.[504] Without some such assumptions no calculation would ever be possible. Hence questions of status and of calculation are not neatly separable as the requirement of calculability has implications for requirements about subjectivity. Considerations of status do not merely act out pre-existing standards of membership and hierarchy, but nor are they merely the consequence of calculation. Instead, that a particular entity enters into thought with a particular status is part and parcel of the way the government of international relations is thought possible and desirable.

503 Luard, *International Society*, 18.
504 Aalberts and Werner, 'Mobilising Uncertainty and the Making of Responsible Sovereigns'.

4.2. China in the eyes of Europe

China was clearly an exotic outsider both to a concept of a community rooted in the *respublica christiana* and to the just emerging new idea of an international society bound by equality, diplomacy and the institution of positive international law. Yet from the earliest contacts China was mostly viewed favourably in Europe. The Jesuits who dominated the early phase of relations emphasised China's positive qualities and argued that Confucianism contained within it a latent form of Christianity.[505] The Enlightenment retained the positive view, but glorified China precisely for its lack of Christianity, and for the 'natural religion' of highly developed practical ethics that took the place of 'superstition' as the binding force of society. For many Enlightenment thinkers, China's was an exemplary social and political order based on the education of virtue, "a model of a moral society governed by natural reason."[506] The perfectly ordered and stable state of China was further attributed to its right practice of economic governance. François Quesnay, the founder of the Physiocratic school of economics, claimed to have developed his theory and prescriptions by studying China, leading to his *Le Despotisme en Chine* (1767). For Quesnay, China provided "the model of a perfectly regulated state," with the Emperor at its centre, who studied and correctly understood the "natural physical order and framed appropriate laws in accordance with the natural circulation of wealth."[507]

Naturally, such a positive view of China was never homogeneously shared. Diderot and D'Alambert's *Encyclopédie* (1751-72) took a harsher line, but the most influential critic of the Celestial Empire was Montesquieu. In his *De L'Esprit des Lois* (1748), he attacked the

505 Jones, *The Image of China in Western Social and Political Thought*, 14–6; Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 33.
506 Jones, *The Image of China in Western Social and Political Thought*, 20.
507 Ibid., 26, 27.

Chinese political system as a form of oriental despotism for its preoccupation with order and for its personalised rule as opposed to his preferred impartial rule of law.[508] He re-described the dominance of practical ethics praised by early Enlightenment thinkers as the rule of fear that destroys political virtue and the sense of freedom and initiative. In the absence of any transcendental ground of government, he argued, such an order leads to the decay of the moral development of individuals, exposing them to the whim of the despot.

The most consequential challenge to the formerly favourable evaluation of China, however, was based neither on the problem of political virtue nor on that of a transcendental foundation for government, but on the assessment of forms of government on the ground of scientific knowledge. Already Leibniz asserted that while China was superior to Europe in the field of politics and ethics, it was inferior in matters of scientific knowledge.[509] Such a distinction was no longer tenable when politics itself came to be assessed in increasingly scientific terms in certain strands of the Enlightenment, and especially with the development of British political economy. While China was a model for the physiocrats, for the new *laissez-faire* economics of Adam Smith the country might still have been a model for its internal practices[510] but was a negative example when it came to international trade.

Although both schools shared a belief that the economy is a quasi-natural domain that works as a site of veridiction, a source of truth for governmental practices, they differed in their views on whether this nature is properly knowable by the sovereign, i.e. on whether economic sovereignty is possible.[511] For Adam Smith, the latter was not only impossible, but attempts at exercising it were to lead to inefficiencies. In his *Wealth of Nations* (1776), he criticised the way China put barriers to foreign trade, thus confining it "within a much

508 Ibid., 31–33.
509 Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 84–5.
510 Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing*.
511 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 32–3; Dean, *Governmentality*, 134–5.

narrower circle than that to which it would naturally extend itself."[512] For Smith and his followers the nature of China's government and its educational system stifled individuality and creativity, undermined personal security and made commerce uncertain. According to Crawfurd's *History of the Indian Archipelago* (1820), the Empire displayed "all the errors and absurdities of the mercantile political economy."[513] The problem was, thus, not with the people, who were industrious and eager to trade, but with the government's arbitrary, monopolistic, and disciplinary policies. China required reform in order to achieve "good government": "an indifferent rule of law, property rights for peasant agriculturalists and merchants, the abolition of slavery, and the inculcation of moral principles through Christian education."[514]

Britain played a vanguard role in transforming "China in the political imagination of the West, from a model to be imitated into the antithesis of the British model of the commercially oriented, liberal state that was becoming hegemonic in Western thought."[515] This shift in the appreciation of China has certain parallels with the changing view of Russia in Europe around the same time. According to Neumann, Russia's great powerhood was questioned in the late 18th century because it followed the outdated, direct form of government based on the principles of disciplinary *Polizeiwissenschaft,* while the rest of Europe – and England in particular – moved toward more indirect forms of governmentality.[516] Although the European science of police was not known there, China's practical ethics resembled that model. In fact, Catherine the Great not only adhered to the absolutist aim of a well-ordered society,[517] but also greatly admired China and sought to import certain methods of government

512 Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 904–5.
513 Quoted in: Jones, *The Image of China in Western Social and Political Thought*, 47.
514 Ibid., 51.
515 Arrighi, Ahmad, and Shih, 'Western Hegemonies in World-Historical Perspective', 227.
516 Neumann, 'Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007'.
517 Neumann, 'Russia's Quest for Recognition as a Great Power, 1489-2007', 20–21.

from her country's Eastern neighbour.[518] Just like Russia's, China's governmental model was quickly becoming outdated from the British perspective. As Lord Macartney, the head of the 1793 embassy to China wrote, the Empire was like "an old crazy first-rate man-of-war" that still impresses with its sight but is in fact rather frail.[519]

Its fragility, however, was of different import than was Russia's. China was outside the European system of balance of power within which Russia's power really mattered, and its weakness did not directly enter such calculations until the late 19th century. In order to properly understand what the specifics of Chinese governmental reason meant from the perspective of the British rationality of governing the international, we need to turn our attention to the nature, content, and development of Sino-British relations.

4.3. Sino-British relations and the governance of trade

4.3.1. The centrality of trade in Sino-British relations

If we understand an international system to exist when states enter into each other's calculations, such a system encompassing Britain and China first took shape at the end of the 17th century when the British East India Company (EIC) first secured a permanent presence in the China trade. To the extent that such a system actually was formed, it was highly unequal. Until 1839, the relations between Britain and China were nearly exclusively conducted within the framework of trade, which framed all matters of honour, of diplomatic recognition, of the protection of British subjects and of military capabilities. There were no attempts at establishing state-to-state relations until the first abortive British embassy of 1787-8.[520] Trade, however, occupied very different positions in the two states' calculations. Despite its local

518 Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 56.
519 Ibid., 60.
520 The ambassador, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Cathcart, died on the way to China.

importance in port cities, for the Chinese imperial court trade was a marginal issue.[521] As a result, so was the British presence, which caused no real concern until as late as 1812 when the war between Britain and the United States spread into the Chinese sphere of influence.[522] For British calculations, in contrast, China's importance was growing rapidly. By 1770 the trade in Canton was the most important element in the EIC's portfolio, while the Company itself was so deeply interwoven with the wealth and power of Britain and its ruling classes, that it prompted Burke to declare that "to say the Company was in a state of distress was neither more nor less their saying that the Country was in a state of distress."[523]

Britain was not only dependent on trade, however, but also had an increasingly complex understanding of it. If, by international economy, we mean not only an objective system of production and circulation of goods and money but also a domain "in which governments recognise the stake their own citizens have in its stability and efficient operation," China was part of such an economy.[524] That the security, wealth and national power of the 'fiscal-military' state of Great Britain depended on trade was such a commonplace of British political discourse that it "can be regarded as normative."[525] That this dependence was primarily positive was also widely shared, and until the 1840s no real divisions existed between the major holders of power in their attitude towards commerce.[526] Trade was understood to be contributing to public finances, employment, economic growth and political stability in important ways. The governmental revenues of the period relied heavily on tariffs on imported goods.[527] At the same time, its possible negative consequences were also recognised: imports could destroy jobs, the inflow of luxury articles could

521 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 43.
522 Westad, *Restless Empire*, 38.
523 Quoted in: Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 2.
524 O'Brian, 'Europe in the World Economy', 45.
525 Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 22.
526 O'Brian, 'Trade, Economy, State and Empire, 1688-1815', 73.
527 Engerman, 'Mercantilism and Overseas Trade, 1700-1800', 196.

undermine both public finances and social order, and a commercial way of life was seen to be antithetical to the military virtues necessary for national greatness.[528] Thus, trade was not just a phenomenon to be acknowledged, or a source of good, but it was also problematised in particular ways calling for particular modes of governmental action. For much of the 18th century, data that could have provided a sound basis for governmental calculations was not readily available,[529] but the situation improved significantly by the early 19th century, as is clearly demonstrated by the relatively precise information the meetings of the Special Committees of the Parliament could rely on.[530]

The form of governmental reason that prevailed throughout the 18th century was mercantilism, which believed in the long-term harmony between the goals of the pursuit of power and that of plenty.[531] The natural processes of international economy were not trusted to bring about equilibrium automatically. Instead, trade was understood to be a competitive, zero-sum interaction in which one nation's gain is always the loss of another, most directly captured in the direction of bullion flows.[532] Although in comparison with questions of empire, government intervention in trade was relatively minimal, it still made use of a wide number of instruments, including protectionist measures, tariffs and taxes, but also the "private imperialism" of chartered companies, whose privileges "represented an indirect form of government regulation."[533]

The movement towards the new norm of free trade was gradual, and conjured up deep divisions within British society. A significant ideological and practical shift can only be

528 Neocleous, '"O Effeminacy! Effeminacy!" War, Masculinity and the Myth of Liberal Peace'.
529 Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 17–8.
530 Wong, *Deadly Dreams*, 466.
531 Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 30; Viner, 'Power Versus Plenty as Objectives of Foreign Policy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries'.
532 On mercantilism as a governmental reason and international governmentality, see: Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 32–3; On British mercantilist thought and practice, see: Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 31–2; Horrocks, *A Short History of Mercantilism*.
533 Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 57.

located in the 1840s, at the end of the period under consideration here.[534] Free trade as a norm of the British standard of civilisation only emerged in the 1850s, by which time adherence to it "was erected into the key standard of political legitimacy."[535] For most of the 18th century, mercantile self-interest was still looked at with suspicion, and even when the advantages of a more liberal approach to trade at a theoretical level were acknowledged, its practicability remained minimal in a world dominated by mercantilist competitors.[536] Both the initially strong division over the question of free trade and the gradual gaining of the upper hand by its supporters are well visible in the debates over the China trade in the first half of the 19th century.

4.3.2. The structure of Sino-British trade

A major mercantilist instrument of governing the international economy was the creation of chartered companies, private joint-stock companies with privileges granted by the sovereign in exchange for carrying out certain responsibilities. The East India Company, created in 1600, was the most important of them. Over time it received a monopoly over the trade between Britain and the East Indies. Until 1833, when this monopoly was finally dissolved, the EIC was the exclusive official link between China and Britain with the exception of the embassies of 1793 and 1816, and thus the question of the China trade emerged in the context of the Company's affairs.

Naturally, the separation between the state and the Company was not at all clear-cut. On the one hand, its strong connections with the political elite provided the EIC with significant influence over policy decisions.[537] At the same time the Company itself was built

534 Cain, 'Economics and Empire: The Metropolitan Context', 41.
535 Howe, 'Free Trade and Global Order: The Rise and Fall of a Victorian Vision', 33.
536 Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 46–8, 33.
537 Personal connections between the EIC and government as well as with other chartered companies are described in: Ibid., 56–7.

largely as a political corporate body and used the language of government in its own affairs.[538] As an extended hand of the state, it also participated in the governing of British subjects far from their homeland: the responsibilities specified in its charter included not only the conduct of trade but also "a jurisdiction and responsibility to govern and patrol the people that engaged in that 'traffick'."[539]

A more direct relationship developed between the state and the Company in the second half of the 18th century, when the EIC acquired an empire in India and received from the Mughal emperor the right of collecting land taxes (*diwani*). Its new quasi-sovereign function invited strong criticism from Britain as the latter was trying to consolidate its national sovereignty.[540] Moreover, the costs of war and territorial administration in the new possessions soon resulted in a breakdown of the Company's financing.[541] The British government addressed the problem through gradually taking control over the Company's "higher branches of government" while staying out of its administrative and trade functions.[542] In reality, the separation of these domains was hardly possible, if only because of the close connection between revenues and trade that drew the state administrators into questions of commercial policy.[543] Following Pitt's India Act of 1784 "[t]he Company had to all intents and purposes been incorporated within the Hanoverian state machinery of empire […]",[544] and thus the government got involved in the trade between China and Britain, but also between China and India.

The latter relation was the so-called 'Country Trade,' in which the Company did not enjoy a monopoly. As a result, by the 1790s this trade had become increasingly dominated by

538 Stern, 'Company, State and Empire: Governance and Regulatory Frameworks in Asia'.
539 Ibid., 132.
540 Reinert, 'Rivalry: Greatness in Early Modern Political Economy', 359.
541 Bowen, *The Business of Empire*, 16–7; Crossley, *The Wobbling Pivot, China since 1800*, 70.
542 Roberts, 'The East India Company and the State, 1772-86', 184–5.
543 Bowen, 'British India 1765-1813, The Metropolitan Context', 545.
544 Bowen, *The Business of Empire*, 83.

private entrepreneurs, the so called 'country traders,' providing up to 75% of imports to China by 1817.[545] Thus, while the trade between India and Britain and China and Britain were the exclusive domains of the EIC, in the China-India relations (and in general in trade within Asia) the conditions of trade were relatively liberal. By the end of the century the country traders were the most dynamic actors in the trade of India, and had a growing importance for the finances of the Company's quasi-state.[546] Still, the private traders did not provide an alternative direct link to China, since on the Chinese side their rights to trade were not acknowledged and thus they had to function within a framework established by the EIC. Country traders received their license from the Company, who represented them, and was responsible for them, in the eyes of the Chinese.[547]

This framework underwent significant changes in the first half of the 19th century. First, in 1813 the monopoly of the EIC over the British-India trade was revoked, and the Company only kept its privileges in the Britain-China relation. Finally, in 1833, this latter right was also ended by the Parliament, and the EIC could no longer serve as the sole representative of Britain in China. On the insistence of the Chinese court the British state had to send a person responsible for the plethora of private traders entering into the competition, and so the institution of the Chief Superintendent was established. Hence, between 1833 and 1842 the China trade and the relations with the Celestial Empire can be followed in the correspondence between the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and the Chief Superintendent.[548]

On the Chinese side, relations were conducted in a largely unchanged framework during the whole period under consideration. A small number of so-called Hong merchants

545 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 11, 15.
546 Keay, *The Honourable Company*, 435.
547 Pritchard, 'The Instructions of the East India Company to Lord Macartney. Part I'.
548 The Chief Superintendents of the period were Lord William Napier (1834), John Francis Davis (1834-5), Sir George B. Robinson (1835-6) and Sir Charles Elliot (1836-41).

formed a collective monopoly that negotiated quantities and prices directly with the EIC.[549] A member of the House explained the role of the Hong as follows: "[u]pon the arrival of any foreign ship at the port of Canton, she is not permitted either to land or to have any intercourse with the merchants of the port, until some one of the Hong merchants becomes responsible […]."[550]

In sum, on the Chinese side trade was conducted through an institution of monopoly, while on the British side the EIC enjoyed a monopoly of trade between Asia and Europe and the also mostly British country traders dominated the trade within Asia. The decades between 1793 and 1833 witnessed the gradual dissolution of the monopoly system on the British side and, simultaneously, the increasingly direct involvement of the British government with China.

4.4. Ordering trade: extending the European model of mercantilist rationality and sovereign equality

The first British embassy to China took place at a time when mercantilist governmentality was slowly giving way to liberal governmental reason. The dominant economic practice and theory of much of the 18th century in Britain, mercantilism was state-centric insofar as it analysed trade relations in terms of the state-to-state balance of trade and of its relation to the balance of wealth. This, in turn, underpinned the balance of power between the states of Europe. Since "a nation's wealth was measured by the amount of silver and gold it possessed," bullion flows were a central sign of success for mercantilism.[551] The inter-state system was understood to be one of strict competition in which states ensured the growth of their own power by controlling the balance of trade through regulations, laws and other tools

549 Evidence provided by Daniel Beale, 11 May 1813, British Parliament, *Minutes of Evidence... 1813*, 756.
550 Evidence provided by James Drummond, 19 May 1813, Ibid., 868.
551 Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, 257.

of sovereignty, and aiming at having only raw materials as imports and only finished products as exports. Mercantilist government established a relationship between the sovereign's will and the subjects of right whose will it subjected through law, regulation and police power.[552] For mercantilism, in other words, trade was conducted from the perspective of the sovereign, between the sovereigns, and in the framework set by the sovereigns. The relations with China and its commercial context was thus also analysed in these terms.

With the explosion of the tea trade in the second half of the 18th century, driven by the curious British addiction to this new exotic brew, the China trade became a major issue for Britain. Greenberg suggests that tea was first promoted by the EIC as a substitute for the import of Indian textiles, the latter blocked by protectionist measures since 1721.[553] Wong, on the other hand, emphasises the role of tea as a socially less disruptive replacement for the popular drinks of beer, gin and whisky, as well as a supplement to the workers' diet when mixed with sugar – another important commercial item – and milk. Tea thus became an important element in the maximization of the state's forces both as "the vehicle whereby human energy was supplied to British factories," and by providing an outlet for traders from both East and West.[554]

The import of tea from China surged immensely: the amount legally imported by the EIC was less than one million pounds in 1727, reaching above seven million by 1776, close to 18 million by 1796 and to 30 million by 1830.[555] The consumption of tea became so widespread by the end of the century that George Leonard Staunton, member of the first

552 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 70.
553 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 3.
554 Wong, *Deadly Dreams*, 357–8.
555 Martin, *The Past and Present State of the Tea Trade of England*, 19; Connors, 'Opium and Imperial Expansion: The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Asia', 259; Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 185; Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 3.

embassy to China, was moved to write in a manner reminiscent of later caricatures of British national character that:

> [...] independently of every consideration of gain, it happens, in fact, that one of the chief articles of import from China has become a necessary of life in most of the ranks of society in England. Until teas, of similar qualities with the Chinese, could be procured from other countries, and at as reasonable a price as they were then imported from China, no precaution was to be neglected, which could secure the usual supply of that article [...][556]

Appearing before the Parliament's Select Committee in 1813, his son argued that any negative change in the quantity or quality of tea imported "would be attended with distress and inconvenience to the country."[557] In fact, it became so important that the Parliament required the Company to keep in stock a whole year's supply of tea.[558] Considerations of gain were not negligible either. Already in 1760, tea trade accounted for 25% of the value of EIC's invoices.[559] By 1830, the trade provided the entire profit of the Company and the customs revenues derived from it gave around 10% of the total revenue of the British government.[560]

The success of tea in Britain, however, was hardly matched by exports to China, creating a large trade imbalance between the two countries. By the late 1770s silver came to account for about 90% of England's exports to China, creating serious problems for the financing of the trade.[561] Mercantilist reason provided a number of options that were hardly viable in relation to China. First, the British government could have used its sovereign instruments and could have limited or stopped the trade but the problem of government revenues and the proven ease of smuggling tea to Britain made this both very costly and potentially ineffective.[562] Another solution could have been to extend British rule to the source

556 Staunton, *An Authentic Account of an Embassy*, 21.
557 Evidence provided by George Thomas Staunton, 10 May 1813, British Parliament, *Minutes of Evidence... 1813*, 746.
558 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 3.
559 Broadberry and O'Rourke, *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe*, 108.
560 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 3; Keay, *China*, 457.
561 Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, 287.
562 Hoh-Cheung and Mui, 'Smuggling and the British Tea Trade before 1784'.

of tea. An effective control of China or even its tea-producing territories was, however, seen as both costly and impossible due to the country's "own immeasurable extent, combined with the fact of having no vulnerable organs," such as crucial commercial or industrial centres.[563] The complications resulting from the territorial possessions acquired in India provided another warning sign.[564] As an alternative, the British government tried already in the 18th century to move tea cultivation to India, but efforts at establishing plantations remained unsuccessful until the second half of the 19th century.[565]

A further alternative presented itself in the shape of appealing as a sovereign to a sovereign in an attempt to balance trade relations and promote British exports by mobilising the power of the Chinese emperor to regulate its side of the trade in a more balanced manner. The first attempts at establishing diplomatic relations with the imperial court in Beijing were undertaken largely with this goal in mind. As the very similar instructions from the British government to the prematurely failed Cathcart embassy of 1788 and to the more successful Macartney embassy of 1792-4 show,[566] they were conceived as means of promoting the export of British and Indian produce to China in order to replace bullion and derive further revenue from the trade. In fact, the Macartney embassy had "the character of a trade fair" with its complex display of the scientific, technological and industrial achievements of Britain: "described as the most elaborate and expensive diplomatic initiative ever undertaken by a British government", it aimed at impressing the Emperor in a way that would open up the Chinese markets for further products.[567]

563 Quincey, 'The Opium Question in China in 1840', 176–7.
564 'Despatch of Secret Committee to Governor-General of India,' Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China 1635-1834. Vol. IV*, 313.
565 Staunton, *An Authentic Account of an Embassy*, 22–3; Rose, *For All the Tea in China*.
566 'Instructions to Lt.-Col. Cathcart,' 30 November 1787, and 'Instructions to Lord Macartney,' 8 September 1792, in Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China 1635-1834. Vol. II*, 160–8, 232–242.
567 Berg, 'Britain, Industry and Perceptions of China'; Keay, *The Honourable Company*, 435, 439.

The second main goal of the embassies was to make the circumstances of trade less "precarious," "hazardous" and "arbitrary". The legal standing of British subjects in China was to be clarified, either by granting them equal status under Chinese law or by attaining a secure depot outside Chinese jurisdiction and "with a power of regulating the police and exercising jurisdiction over our own dependants..."[568] The protection of British citizens was to be achieved through claiming "the Emperor of China's particular protection of them."[569] Most of the trading difficulties were put down to the manipulations of local officers in Canton and remedy for them was sought by directly addressing the Emperor for the purpose of establishing stable and fair regulations.[570]

Trade relations, and the situation of the British subjects participating in them, were to be regulated within a framework of law, and arbitrariness was defined in relation to this framework. The British government approached Beijing as a sovereign equal, in the form of "the requisition of one great Sovereign from another,"[571] thus empowering the imperial court to treat with England and expecting it to enforce the terms of the agreement. In approaching the Emperor to seek remedies to the arbitrary behaviour of local powers, the British attempted to make use of existing structures of government and to mobilise the Emperor as a regulating and law-giving sovereign.

568 Instructions to Lord Macartney, Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China 1635-1834. Vol. II*, 238.
569 Ibid., 232.
570 Ibid., 234.
571 Ibid., 232.

4.5. Ordering trade: liberal rationality, responsibility and exceptional governance

In the end, Macartney's embassy proved to be a failure with respect to its major aspirations. The Chinese emperor was unwilling to concede diplomatic equality and to change the legal status of British subjects, just as his court remained uninterested in British products. In other ways, however, some of the embassy's background and goals already contained an alternative to the mercantilist attempt at governing trade relations. Although the Macartney embassy was financed by the East India Company, its origins go back partly to the British government's efforts under Pitt the Younger to facilitate the operation of the dynamic sector of the country trade.[572] The government's instructions to Macartney accused the Hong of destroying "the fair competition of the market." The EIC's own instructions to the ambassador, however, were much less sanguine about removing the Chinese monopoly, observing that it afforded the security of regulation and calculability, provided security from bad debts and allowed the Company to engage in the non-market practice of barter trade that contributed to the financing of tea purchases, which could not have been achieved to the same degree by free trade.[573] In any case, abolishing the monopoly of the Hong was only advisable if it could be replaced by a central regulation of fixed custom duties by the Emperor.

The profile of private, unregulated trade was, however, quickly rising, independent of the fate of the embassy. At about the same time as the British state first tried to solve the imbalance of trade through an appeal to the sovereign power of the Emperor, the problem itself started to disappear due to an emerging triangular commercial circulation between India, China and Britain with the country traders as its engine working outside – and even in the face

572 Keay, *The Honourable Company*, 435, 439.
573 Pritchard, 'The Instructions of the East India Company to Lord Macartney. Part I', 215–6.

of – governmental control. Crucial to this new circulation was opium. Edward Thornton, head of the East India House's statistical department, described this relationship thus: "India, by exporting opium, assists in supplying England with tea. China, by consuming opium, facilitates the revenue operations between India and England. England, by consuming tea, contributes to increase the demand for the opium in India."[574]

Great Britain found itself as the central actor in the most lucrative commodity trade of the 19th century as a result of the East India Company's territorial acquisitions in India.[575] By 1793 the Company enjoyed a monopoly of opium-production in the areas of India under its control, and a monopoly of trade over the whole of India. In the hands of the EIC opium quickly became "the monetary catalyst of the English-Indian-Chinese trade," although not without complications.[576] In 1729 the Chinese Emperor banned the smoking and domestic sale of opium in an edict reiterated and extended over the following decades. By the end of the century both its import into and production in China was outlawed.[577]

This meant that the EIC could not participate in the opium trade with China without risking its right to participate in the booming tea trade in Canton.[578] The right of states to outlaw any product – and narcotics especially – was generally acknowledged, so engaging in this illegal trade was also considered a deviation "from the plain road of honourable trade to pursue the crooked paths of smuggling."[579] In order to avoid this loss of both profit and honour, the Company opted for selling the opium to private 'country traders' in Calcutta, who then smuggled the product into China without formally implicating the EIC. The silver they received in exchange contributed to the EIC's revenues and thus helped financing the tea

574 Quoted in: Arrighi et al., 'Historical Capitalism, East and West', 291.
575 Trocki, *Opium Empire and the Global Political Economy*, chap. 3.
576 Wakeman, 'The Canton Trade and the Opium War', 177–8.
577 Blue, 'Opium for China: The British Connection', 33.
578 Keay, *The Honourable Company*, 455.
579 Mr. Fritz-Hugh's letter to Mr. Gregory, attached to the 1783 report of the Special Committee, quoted in: Hill, *The Indo-Chinese Opium Trade*, 3.

trade. Though formally the China trade was structured by the double monopoly of the EIC and the Hong, it could only function with the balancing role of the private country trade.

This circulation of goods contributed significantly to Britain's broader trade relations and global financial power. The British state derived large revenues from the tea trade and, consequently, was interested in its expansion, but the trade could only be financed by revenues from the opium trade.[580] The administration of India also relied heavily on tea trade, which provided all of the profits of the Company, while opium sales contributed around 15% of its total revenues already at the beginning of the 19th century.[581] The Select Committee of 1821 thus concluded that "[t]he East India Company attach great importance to this monopoly [on tea trade] and state that the profits of their trade with China constitute the principal resource from which their dividend is paid, and that that trade is in fact the main prop of their financial system, in which the state has an interest neither inconsiderable nor very remote."[582]

Even more importantly, this trade was also the channel of remittance from India to Britain, which was a crucial element in Britain's global balance of payments and, according to some economic historians, "turned India into the 'pivot' of Britain's global financial and economic supremacy."[583] By the late 18th century it was believed that India's fall would be "the ruin of the whole edifice of the British Empire."[584] French designs on East India, the Foreign Secretary contended in 1784, "deeply concern not only the present interests but, perhaps, the future existence of Great Britain as an independent; at any rate as a respectable power."[585] Hence East India was a crucial factor in the European balance of power as well,

580 Wong, *Deadly Dreams*, 364.
581 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 105.
582 British Parliament, *The Foreign Trade of the Country, 1821*, 203.
583 Arrighi et al., 'Historical Capitalism, East and West', 290; Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, 58, 264; Esteban, 'The British Balance of Payments, 1772-1820'.
584 Thomas Pownall, member of the Parliament and colonial administrator, quoted in: Bowen, *The Business of Empire*, 17.
585 Quoted in: Black, *Trade, Empire and British Foreign Policy, 1689-1815*, 48.

and its role as a 'pivot' hinged on the trade with China. The main reason for this was that apart from the remitted private profits, India was required to pay millions of pounds of its territorial revenues to London, which it could only do by investing it in exportable goods.[586] Hence, without the China trade, the revenues of the Company "might as well be thrown into the Ganges."[587] Mackillop, a partner in an East India agency, summarised the problem before the Select Committee of 1832 as follows:

> As India does not produce either gold or silver beyond a trifling amount, any system which would have the effect of draining that country of the precious metals, would prove highly disadvantageous to its interests. The only eligible mode [of remittance...] is by the course now pursued of making shipments of goods from India, applying the proceeds thereof to the purchase in China of tea and other goods shipped to England; the value of the annual shipments from China being far greater than the cost of the goods imported into that country from England.[588]

The result of this new triangular trade circulation was that the problem of balance disappeared. The East Asia Company could manipulate the amount of opium in such a way as to gather just enough revenues for financing the tea trade and the Home Charges, but without causing such a shock to the Chinese that they would decide to withdraw the trading rights of the Company altogether.[589] The British government could continue collecting large customs revenues and resources channelled from India, while private trade provided the link that made the whole system function. "The Country Trade had become the keystone of the whole structure", and it stabilised the system without resort to and, in fact, in collision with the regulative power of the Emperor.[590]

As a result of this, and of the gradual change of British governmental rationality, the problem of stability *as balance* was replaced by the problem of the security of circulation. In

586 Keay, *India*, 450–1.
587 Robert Clive, one of the founder's of the EIC's Indian empire, quoted in: Ward, 'The Industrial Revolution and British Imperialism, 1750-1850', 50.
588 British Parliament, 'Appendix II to the Report from the Select Committee, 1832', 735.
589 Hanes and Sanello, *The Opium Wars*, 22.
590 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 16.

1793, the year of Lord Macartney's arrival to China, the Parliament extended the EIC's privileges for another twenty years. The supporters of free trade could, however, register a small success as a small door was opened for private trade on Company ships. The following half a century witnessed a gradual shift towards the victory of 'free traders', but the dominance of liberal governmental rationality in relation to the China trade can be traced back to a somewhat earlier period. Liberalism is often taken to correspond to free trade, but such equivalence is not obvious if liberalism is defined not in terms of a set of prescriptions but of a particular governmental rationality.

The liberal form of governmentality is distinguished from the disciplinary reason of mercantilism by its identification of the economy as possessing its own 'naturalness,' its own 'truth' that governmental reason must take into account and mobilise to achieve its own purposes.[591] From the point of view of liberalism, mercantilism's reliance on regulation was "considered uneconomical, because [it] substituted authoritarian (and ultimately counterproductive) interventions for the 'spontaneous' or 'natural' self-regulation of the population, especially through competition among private interests."[592] Thus, in liberal reasoning, international economy no longer appeared merely as a relation between sovereigns structured by regulations, but as an autonomous domain with its own inherent rationality, "a set of processes to be managed at the level and on the basis of what is natural in these processes."[593] Liberalism abandoned the mercantilist project of directly defining an order of elements under a pre-established norm and on the right calibration of things based on the sovereign's rationality.[594] Instead, it took as its starting point the 'natural' conditions of the market and only intervened "with the essential function of ensuring the security of the natural

591 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 21–2.
592 Jaeger, 'Governmentality's (missing) International Dimension', 33.
593 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 70.
594 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 311–2.

phenomena of economic processes or processes intrinsic to population."[595] With liberal governmental reason, the dualism between the domestic governmental goal of the maximisation of forces and the external goal of balance faded, and was replaced by the organising principles of dynamic circulation and mutual enrichment. At least in terms of its basic logic, "the international space in liberalism seems to become entirely homogeneous with its domestic counterpart."[596]

One important difference, however, remained between the two domains. In a domestic setting, the normal situation from which the truth of 'naturalness' is derived can be the function of the established sovereign power taking "a prior set of actions and processes which appropriate, establish and secure the spaces in which […] forces could operate […] and decide when such a normal […] situation prevails."[597] Internationally, the sovereign decision on exclusion is not always an available option, which creates a particular governmental problem related to the question of 'naturalness.' This problem was raised by the move to a more liberal form of governmentality in relation to the China trade. On the one hand, reliance on the self-regulation of market meant that, instead of establishing the right form of rule in China, it was enough to avoid that the Chinese suspend or significantly obstruct the circulation that brought about the desired effects by its own mechanisms. At the same time, the liberal government of trade also found its limits in China's non-liberal policies, a situation that was highlighted when the question of the renewal of the EIC's monopoly came up again in 1813.

In the Charter Act of that year, the British Parliament decided to open up the East India trade for private traders, with the exception of the China trade where the East India Company

595 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 353.
596 Jaeger, 'Governmentality's (missing) International Dimension', 34.
597 Dean, 'Nomos and the Politics of World Order', 53.

retained its monopoly for another twenty years, a curious solution that has been characterised as a "mystery."[598] The push for opening came from the Lancashire mill owners who, having lost their source of American cotton due to the previous year's war, had to turn to the monopoly-priced Indian cotton of the EIC.[599] The justification for abolishing the monopoly was already at hand in the works of Adam Smith and his followers, who both attacked the practice as uneconomical, and argued that the EIC's role as a territorial power was incompatible with its role in trade.[600] As an anonymous self-avowed disciple of Smith argued, "[i]n their character of *Eastern* sovereigns, [the EIC] are wholly incapacitated from acting as *merchants* – the two characters cannot coexist, without the ruin of the people; and, consequently, rendering them unprofitable subjects for trade of any kind."[601] Many among the arguments against the liberalisation of trade were of a mercantilist nature, emphasising the advantages of well-regulated and carefully calculated Company trade over short-sighted and chaotic private commerce.[602] If, however, mercantile considerations had still dominated, there would have been no reason to confine the EIC monopoly to the China trade only. Instead, the reasoning behind continuing the monopoly focused on securing the continuity of trade given the Chinese way of governing external trade.

In part decision-makers feared that an increase in the number of disputes could lead to China shutting down the trade should the Company no longer play a regulatory role.[603] The Chinese view of trade was organised around the principle of responsibility, i.e. that. no trade was allowed that was not linked to the personal responsibility of the Hong merchants and the chief of the British factory in Canton. As George Thomas Staunton warned, the Chinese

598 Lawson, *The East India Company*, 156.
599 Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, 284.
600 Bowen, *The Business of Empire*, 6; Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, 282–3.
601 *Free Trade; Or, An Inquiry*, 12–3, emphasis in original.
602 See, for instance, the evidence provided by George Thomas Staunton and Daniel Beale in 1813, E.g.: British Parliament, *Minutes of Evidence... 1813*, 748, 755.
603 Webster, 'The Strategies and Limits of Gentlemanly Capitalism', 412.

would be "particularly adverse to any trade that was not under an efficient control."[604] It was also expected that, without the countervailing force of the EIC, it would be impossible to prevent the Hong monopoly from abusing its position, leading to a significant increase in the price of tea as well as to making trade much less reliable.[605]

The fears did not subside in later years: in 1821 a former director of the EIC stated that the opening of the trade with China would endanger the existing Company trade with China because of the monopolistic structure on the Chinese side. "I conceive," he argued, "[that] to make the freedom of the trade in Europe, beneficial, in the common way that we understand the freedom of trade, a freedom on the part of the Chinese government is also necessary."[606] In 1830, defenders of the monopoly argued that ending it "would cause a violent interruption to British trade," "would cause war between China and England,"[607] and that "the Chinese government losing their revenue would view the change with hostility; would raise the price of tea; the foreigners would become embroiled with the Chinese."[608] In 1831, Sir Charles Forbes, member of the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company, still argued that without the EIC monopoly the China trade was in danger of being lost because of the nature of the Chinese.[609]

What, then, was the status of China in the context of this new governmentality? For liberal governmental reason the principle of status differentiation is derived from the principle of government through freedom. Hence, the freedom of liberalism is not a right, "but the correlative of the deployment of apparatuses of security […], no longer the exemptions and

604 Evidence provided by George Thomas Staunton 10 May 1813, British Parliament, *Minutes of Evidence... 1813*, 739.
605 See, for instance, the evidence provided by Daniel Beale and James Drummond in 1813, Ibid., 758–9, 871.
606 British Parliament, *The Foreign Trade of the Country, 1821*, 320.
607 Walter Stevenson Davidson, merchant in Canton, quoted in: Buckton, *China Trade*, 74.
608 John Francis Davis, member of the Select Committee of the East India Company; Charles Marjoribanks, a servant of the East India Company in the factory at Canton; and Davidson, summarised in: Ibid.
609 Evidence given on 18 April, 1831, British Parliament, *Minutes of Evidence... 1831*, 225.

privileges attached to a person, but the possibility of movement, change of place, and processes of circulation of both people and things."[610] The most crucial distinction, therefore, is between those that can be governed freely and those who need to be disciplined or quarantined, between responsible and irresponsible subjects.[611] Such a distinction is established on the basis of what is 'natural' in the domain to be governed, and thus presupposes the existence of the normal condition. In this respect, the Chinese state was increasingly portrayed as an irresponsible actor that stood in the way of the 'natural' process of trade.

The term 'responsibility' at this point did not yet exist in its later meaning as a disposition. Instead, it was mostly used as referring to relations of authority, as in complaints about the not delegated, "irresponsible authority" of the Emperor,[612] or about having to deal with individuals who were not in the political chain of responsibility to the king and thus "irresponsible."[613] Yet, disciples of Adam Smith transformed the logic of responsibility from its original context of representative government to that of governmental efficiency. Wakefield, for instance, argued that irresponsible authority is suitable for governing societies without a division of labour, but that market conditions require responsible government, and that right policies are prescribed by political economy.[614]

The liberal reason for equality and responsibility was not that of mercantilism, not that of sovereignty and keeping one's word. Instead, it was articulated in terms of universal reason. Thus, in 1839 John Slade wrote: "[t]o allow reason to be the judge in any question implies an approximation of equality, and a consequent descent from lofty pretension and a yielding of

610 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 48–9.
611 Dean, 'Liberal Government and Authoritarianism'.
612 Medhurst, *China*, 126.
613 Viscount Palmerston to Captain Elliot, Foreign Office, 12 June 1837, No. 88. Foreign Office of Great Britain, *China*. p. 149.
614 In his commentary to: Smith, *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*.

uncontrolled and uncontrollable, – and, therefore, *irresponsible* – power. To appeal, in verity, to reason would be beneath the dignity of China."[615] This irresponsibility made China risk "ruining the general foreign commerce, and causing a total disruption of all commercial connections with the Western world."[616] It was argued that the people of China were "so much disposed to trade with foreigners, that they do it, even now, at the risk of liberty and even their lives," but the government's "despotic character renders the wishes of the nation as nothing in the question."[617] Lord Napier, the first Chief Superintendent in Canton, wrote to Palmerston in 1834 that "[t]he Chinese are most anxious to trade with us; the Tartar Viceroys [the Qing authorities] cannot comprehend it."[618] The Chinese government was no longer the potential stabiliser of the trade, but "the jealousy of the Government" an obstacle in the way of its natural processes.[619]

At the same time, both the sovereign exclusion and the disciplining of China was still seen to be too dangerous from the perspective of securing the continuity of trade. For the failed Amherst embassy to Beijing of 1816, the goal of promoting British exports clearly gave way to guaranteeing "[s]ecurity for the continuance of the Trade (whilst the prescribed Laws and Regulations be observed) against sudden and capricious interruptions, a security necessary where such great property is embarked, and where the Mercantile transactions requisite for its transfers and circulation cannot be carried out without confidence."[620] After the total failure of this embassy, diplomacy no longer seemed an effective instrument for

615 *Narrative of the Late Proceedings and Events in China*, 173, emphasis in original.
616 Ibid., 172.
617 Quoted in: Matson, 'British Relations with China', 70.
618 August 1834, received 31 January 1835, British Parliament, *Correspondence Relating to China*, 13.
619 Despatch of Select Committee to Governor-General of India, Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China 1635-1834. Vol. IV*, 317.
620 'Letter from the Right Honble Lord Castlereagh to the Right Honble Lord Amherst, Ambassador, etc. etc. etc.,' dated 1 January 1816, Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China 1635-1834. Vol. III*, 280. See also: 'Letter from the Secret Commercial Committee to the Right Honble Lord Amherst, Ambassador, etc. etc. etc.,' dated 17 January 1816, Ibid., especially 284–5.

managing the trade with China.[621] Almost universal agreement emerged that "[it] is in no other way than an armed body that an English embassy can ever prevail at Pekin."[622] Nevertheless, the military option was not favoured by the government, as it found it ineffective for securing the continuity of trade. In 1832, the Court communicated to the Select Committee at Canton that:

> the commerce between Great Britain and China is too important to be put to hazard without the most urgent and imperious necessity […]. It is of essential moment to the Indian as well as to the Home Revenues, both as regards the state and the East-India Company, as well as in the regular supply to the British public of an article of general consumption. […] To attempt to maintain a purely commercial intercourse, such as that with China, by force of arms, would in a pecuniary point of view, be anything rather than a matter of profit, even if justice and humanity could allow us for a moment to contemplate such a step.[623]

China, appearing as a subject of government that was irresponsible but neither to be excluded or disciplined, threw into question the parameters of naturalness and undermined the possibility of governing on that basis. Taking that irresponsible subject and the effects of its behaviour as part of the normal condition would have required abandoning or qualifying the principles of government on the basis of which it was identified as irresponsible. Insofar as the naturalness of the domain on the basis of which government operates was identified without taking into account that irresponsible actor, the circulation at the core of the technology of government might have easily ground to a halt. In other words, the irresponsible subject in question appeared from the perspective of governmental reason not merely as irresponsible according to a certain principle of government, but as a subject on whose responsible subjectivity hinged the governability of a domain. As an anonymous pamphlet of 1830 stated, "[i]f the merchants of Liverpool and Glasgow could prevail on the

621 Auber, *China*, 279–80.

622 Quincey, 'The Opium Question in China in 1840', 198; See also: British Parliament, 'Report from the Select Committee... 1830', 46–7; Evidence provided by William Henry Chicheley Plowden, formerly in the service of the Company, 16 August 1831, British Parliament, *Minutes of Evidence... 1831*, 545 (3752).

623 Quoted in: Auber, *China*, 358.

Celestial Emperor to become a disciple of Adam Smith and Mr. M'Culloch, then indeed, they might have hopes of realizing their schemes. But as we cannot make foreign powers what we would, we must be content to take them as they are."[624]

Thus emerged a strange governmental compromise in the East India trade, where mercantilist and liberal practices were employed together for the purpose of securing circulation (on the British side) and of regulating trade in terms of law (on the Chinese side). As Larpent, a major advocate of free trade, noted in his evidence provided to the House of Commons in 1832, "a monopoly of trade of any kind is not justifiable, except on the sole ground of its being dangerous to the existence of the trade itself to remove the restriction."[625] The Select Committee on foreign trade concluded in 1821 that given the private merchants' clearly superior performance in increasing the profits of the India trade, "[r]estriction […] being in itself an evil, requires, as well as for its continuance as for its original imposition, a special political expediency to support it."[626] In the case of the China trade and its larger East Indian context, such restriction was considered justifiable. Moreover, the mercantilist tool of monopoly was not merely redeployed tactically with a view to effecting the desired outcome of making the system governable on liberal terms, the way legal and disciplinary mechanisms might be redeployed within the liberal mechanisms of security.[627] Because of the ineliminable presence of an 'irresponsible' China, direct regulation remained at the core of governing commercial circulation in the East Indies.

624 *Remarks on Free Trade to China*, 6.
625 British Parliament, 'Appendix II to the Report from the Select Committee, 1832', 669–70.
626 British Parliament, *The Foreign Trade of the Country, 1821*, 197.
627 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 8–9.

4.6. Disorder: unilateral liberalisation, war and imperial subjugation

In accordance with the Charter Act of 1833, the East India Company became an exclusively administrative body and ceased its commercial activities. There were many reasons for the victory of free traders. The opening of the India trade in 1813 proved to be a great success, confirming the liberal point about the inefficiency of monopolies and forcing the Company out of the India trade by 1824.[628] Moreover, as the EIC's monopoly was only legally valid for British subjects, it could not prevent them from trading under the diplomatic cover of other countries.[629] Even more significantly, American trade steadily increased in Canton, constituting up to 20% of total Western trade there by 1800. [630] But it was not primarily the amount of trade that dealt a "death blow" to the monopoly, as Mr. Grant pointed out in his evidence before the Select Committee of 1821. It was "the uncertainty of that amount, which the very great fluctuation in American commerce renders totally incalculable; and which at once converts a trade hitherto considered as regular and secure, into a most uncertain and dangerous speculation."[631] The only reasonable reaction was to open up the trade for British subjects who were expected to beat the Americans in market competition.[632] Finally, it was argued that the EIC's use of the China trade for the purposes of remitting the Home Charges "without primary regard to profit, must unquestionably operate detrimentally to commerce, and to an extent proportionate to the operation."[633] The most cogent argument for the self-regulating power of private trade in bringing about effective returns from India came from Larpent who observed that: "[i]n such a trade [...] every thing depending upon skill and judgement, every reasoning, *a priori* should induce the Legislature to trust to individual

628 Robins, *The Corporation That Changed the World*, 147.
629 Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, 290–1.
630 Wills and Cranmer-Byng, 'Trade and Diplomacy with Maritime Europe, 1644-c.1800', 236.
631 British Parliament, *The Foreign Trade of the Country, 1821*, 205.
632 British Parliament, 'Appendix II to the Report from the Select Committee, 1832', 618.
633 Manchester Chamber of Commerce, ibid., 720; See also: British Parliament, 'Report from the Select Committee... 1830', 48.

interest rather than to the operations of a large company, especially if that company be sovereigns also […]. The trade left to itself would soon fall into its natural channels."[634]

The other pillar of the special relation with China, the Company's opium monopoly in India, was also becoming increasingly impracticable. Through its monopoly, the Company could not only limit the availability of opium for purposes of preserving India's social order,[635] but could also set an artificially high price level, contributing to both the limitation of consumption and to the generation of large profits channelled into balancing the China trade and into the Company's budget, which was heavily burdened by the costs of running India.[636] The limits of this system, however, soon became visible. The artificially high price of opium not only made opium from Turkey competitive, it also encouraged production in new areas despite legal prohibition. For more than a decade after 1823, opium from Malwa dominated the Chinese market.[637] The Company's efforts at protecting its monopoly failed, its coercive tactics were undermined by smuggling techniques greatly improved during the 'continental blockade' of the Napoleonic Wars.[638] As a last resort, in 1825 the Company decided to flood the market with cheap produce to eradicate its competitors.[639] As this also failed, in 1831 the EIC allowed Malwa opium to be shipped through Bombay by private traders on the condition of paying the requisite transit duty.[640] Instead of trying to restrict the circulation of the drug, it opted for directing it through incentives and drawing tariff revenue from its circulation.

The result was a revolutionary expansion of the import of opium into China, turning a luxury article into a product of mass consumption and radically redrawing the context of

634 British Parliament, 'Appendix II to the Report from the Select Committee, 1832', 723.
635 Connors, 'Opium and Imperial Expansion: The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Asia', 257, 265.
636 Hanes and Sanello, *The Opium Wars*, 22.
637 Trocki, *Opium Empire and the Global Political Economy*, chap. 4; Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 126.
638 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 127–131; Fay, 'The Movement Towards Free Trade, 1820-1853', 389.
639 Hanes and Sanello, *The Opium Wars*, 22; Klimburg, 'Some Research Notes on Carl A. Trocki's Publication Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy', 266.
640 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 131.

Britain-China relations.[641] Whereas in 1820 only 5,000 chests of opium were imported into China, this number increased to 40,000 in 1839,[642] making opium "the most valuable single commodity trade in the 19th century."[643] As a consequence, the direction of the flow of bullion got radically reversed: between 1828 and 1836, £6,200,000 flowed out of China, one and a half the amount China still gained in the first decade of the century.[644]

The composite effect of the elimination of these two crucial props for reconciling the liberal system of Britain with the Chinese form of conducting trade relations was disastrous for the security of circulation, and the opening of trade in 1834 was "followed by a period of acute difficulty in the Chinese trade."[645] Chinese officials insisted on placing the trade under the direct responsibility of a British body. When informed about the ending of the Company's monopoly, the Hong merchants voiced their concerns: "[i]f they trade individually, affairs will not be subject to one control, and if not under one control, responsibility will be nowhere." To address this, the British government agreed to appoint a Chief Superintendent as the locus of responsibility, even though it rejected the principle, and thus "[p]aradoxically, the most immediate result of the victory of the free traders was to bring the power of the British state to bear directly on the China trade."[646]

This introduced a serious tension in British policies. The government recognised that the "rash conduct" of its subjects "cannot be left to the operation of Chinese laws without the utmost inconvenience and risk" and that their "impunity is alike injurious to British character and dangerous to British interests."[647] It was also aware, however, that so long as the free trade

641 Trocki, *Opium Empire and the Global Political Economy*, chap. 5.
642 Robins, *The Corporation That Changed the World*, 152; Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange*, 295.
643 Wakeman, 'The Canton Trade and the Opium War', 172.
644 Ibid., 173. Conversion based on: http://www.measuringworth.com/exchangepound/
645 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 191.
646 Ibid.
647 Captain Elliot to Viscount Palmerston - Received 13 May 1839, written in Canton, 2 January 1839, British Parliament, *Correspondence Relating to China*, 349.

system remained in place, it did not have control to a degree sufficient for performing the responsibility placed on its shoulders. Palmerston warned Captain Elliot, Chief Superintendent from 1836, that he should be "very careful not to assume a greater degree of authority over British subjects in China than that which you in reality possess."[648] On the question of the illegal trade of opium in particular, Elliot observed that most of the opium was shipped to China under foreign flags that the British government had "neither the right nor the power" to control.[649] "I believe," he wrote in his memorandum to the Queen, "it would be salutary to announce, that her Majesty being without power to prevent or to regulate this trade, anxiously desired its legalisation; so that all men who visited the Empire of China might be within the controul of the laws."[650]

At the same time, the unilateral liberalisation of trade created further problems on both sides.[651] It not only led to an inflation of prices for Chinese goods, but also triggered a series of bankruptcies among the Hong merchants. As Wakeman wrote, "[n]o longer was there a single collective group of English company representatives concerned with protecting individual hongists from the levies of the Hoppo [the official collecting state revenues on foreign trade]. Free trade therefore removed an important prop from Chinese mercantilism and thereby threw the Canton system entirely out of order." It seemed that "*laissez-faire* on

648 Viscount Palmerston to Captain Elliot, July 1836, ibid., 121–2.
649 Memorandum by Captain Elliot - Canton, 19 November, 1837, ibid., 244.
650 Ibid., 245.
651 I do not engage in detail with the Chinese debates on how to handle the problems that followed from unilateral liberalisation, as China never allowed for the possibility of an order other than its existing system of international and trade relations. Yet, important internal debates took place on how to manage the inflow of opium, which was understood to diminish human resources and lead to a disastrous outflow of silver. Some advocated controlling the opium trade through legalisation and import duties, while setting up a domestic source of production. In the end the Emperor confirmed the ban in 1836, affirming the opinion of his advisor according to which law is the adequate means of transmitting the heavenly order to earth, and that "as to levying a duty of opium, the thing sounds so awkwardly, and reads so unbeseemingly, that such a duty ought surely not to be levied." Memorial by Zhu Zun, member of the council and the Board of Rites, in: Baumler, *Modern China and Opium*, 16.

one side required corresponding dissolution of restraints on the other to restore the functional balance of trade."[652] Elliot warned about this in 1838, arguing that

> the altered manner in which this great trade is conducted upon our side must render these grave embarrassments more frequent of occurrence than they have ever yet been, till some suitable modification is made upon the part of the Chinese Government. Neither does it seem to be doubtful that failing such needful adaptation of the system, the difficulties of adjustment will be enhanced at each succeeding crisis; and that the growing general complication of the Hong merchants' affairs, and the utter destruction of confidence in their stability, will inflict, at no distant date, excessive injury on commercial and financial interests of great moment.[653]

In the end the Opium War of 1839-42 provided a partial solution to this dilemma. Despite the increasingly warlike sentiments of merchants, the government was reluctant to go to war. It was more interested in securing the continuity of trade and was unwilling to intervene in the absence of a complete breakdown.[654] When the Chinese authorities finally forced foreigners to give over their valuable opium stocks, precipitating the war, the initial reaction of the government was to protect relations with China. In 1838 Elliot – on Palmerston's instructions – warned British subjects engaged in illicit opium trade that Britain would not protect them against confiscation.[655] James Matheson, an important pro-war advocate and major private trader, thought it "worthy of consideration, whether as *tea is such a necessity of life in England*, the British government will not, in the event of hostilities with China, prefer to connive the export of teas through foreigners rather than by establishing the blockade, cut off the supplies to the distress of our turbulent home population, not to mention the defalcation of revenue."[656] The government's final decision to go to war was most probably made in the end not for economic reasons but primarily in "defence of honour and

652 Wakeman, 'The Canton Trade and the Opium War', 176.
653 Captain Elliot to Mr. Inglis, 27 March 1838, British Parliament, *Correspondence Relating to China*, 275–6.
654 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 196–7.
655 Public notice to Her Majesty's Subjects, December 1838 and Viscount Palmerston to Captain Elliot - Foreign Office, 15 June 1838, British Parliament, *Correspondence Relating to China*, 332–3, 258., emphasis in original.
656 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 211.

avoidance of shame," goals that had immediate relevance to the domestic political crisis of 1839 threatening the Melbourne government with a loss of power in parliament.[657]

In any case, the war provided the British government with both a problem and an opportunity. It was clear that the action of the Chinese authorities and the war together "destroyed all confidence at Canton" in the security of trade under the old system.[658] At the same time, victory over China made it possible to enforce upon it regulations that would facilitate the operation of international trade. In the Treaty of Nanjing, signed in 1842, China did not only have to accept meetings between officials of corresponding rank – something they have previously denied in order to indicate their superiority –, but five new treaty ports were opened for trade, the Hong system had to be abandoned, and British consular agents were given the power to oversee British trade in China. Thus began the disciplinary process of implanting foreigners and administrative organisations into the Chinese governmental system to guarantee its proper, responsible functioning. By the 1860s, foreign influence in China was so extensive that one could reasonably talk of the "Anglo-Qing co-domination of the China court."[659] The obstacles to liberal governmentality were largely removed and China's status was reconfigured from its perspective as a subject to be disciplined.

Conclusion

By the end of the 18th century, China presented Britain with a problem: the country was an indispensable part of the global commercial circulations upon which London's power was based, but its way of conducting trade threatened to make those circulations ungovernable from a British perspective. As the imperialist option of subjugating China in order to solve

657 Melancon, 'Honour in Opium?', 856; Melancon, *Britain's China Policy and the Opium Crisis*; Brown, 'Britain's China Policy and the Opium Crisis'.
658 Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, 203.
659 Fairbank and Goldman, *China*, 233.

such governmental problems was reckoned to be infeasible, some other solution was sought for reconciling China's ‘greatness’ with the requirements of ordered trade relations. China was viewed in terms of a complex governmental problematisation of Sino-British relations, with important implications for the role of Chinese subjectivity in British projects of governing the international economy. The change in China's status over this period had to do primarily with the shift of British governmental rationality within which such a status was identified.

Britain at first attempted to extend the European patterns of (great power) diplomacy to Sino-British relations, presupposing China's sovereign equality in order to regulate trade by mobilising the Emperor's law-giving power, and thus following the logic of mercantilism. With these attempts failing and Britain's practices shifting towards liberal governmentality, China appeared in a different light to the English statesmen. From the perspective of liberal standards, China was in an inferior position as an irresponsible state unwilling to take into account the tendencies inherent to market relations. Yet neither the exclusion nor the disciplining of China was perceived to be viable options. Instead, in the period between 1813 and 1833, liberal governmentality had to compromise with China in order to secure the continuity of circulation upon which its governmental logic was premised, and to conduct trade relations in an exceptional manner. Britain abandoned this compromise after 1833, leading to a breakdown of ordered trade relations and to the first Opium War. London embarked on the imperialist route of imposing disciplinary regimes on China.

The period between 1792 and 1842 introduced a way of problematising the relationship between powerful states and global order that was liberated from its cultural-geographical limitations. It claimed validity on the basis of the universal sphere of civil society and assessed China on this basis as an irresponsible power that fails to take into account the rules internal to liberal governmentality.

5.
Making International Order Governable: Communist China as a Mature Great Power

> *"Those statesmen who have achieved greatness [...] It was given to them not only to maintain the perfection of order but to have the strength to contemplate chaos, there to find material for fresh creation." Kissinger*[660]

After the Opium War it took more than a century for China to appear as a great power in international politics, in a peculiar alteration of both the exceptional arrangement described in the previous chapter and of the concept of responsibility in relation to which it was articulated. In the intervening period – 'the century of humiliation' as it is known in China – the country was subjected to Western standards as a "sub-colony of all powers."[661] As a result, it saw international order as nothing more than the imposition of great powers,[662] and subordinated everything to the ultimate goal of recovering its greatness through a policy of national strengthening.[663] Even the inclusion of China as one of Roosevelt's Four Policemen, and within the United Nations Security Council, left its great power status "more form than substance."[664] Churchill considered the idea "an absolute farce," while the Americans still

660 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 213.
661 From Sun Yat-sen's San Min Zhu lectures, available at: http://larouchejapan.com/japanese/drupal-6.14/sites/default/files/text/San-Min-Chu-I_FINAL.pdf (Accessed on 5 January 2014)
662 Wang, 'China and the International Order', 24.
663 Schell and Delury, *Wealth and Power.*
664 Brittingham, 'China's Contested Rise: Sino-US Relations and the Social Construction of Great Power Status', 96.

regarded the status as conditional on further transformations to meet the requirements of being a great power.[665]

When Mao declared in 1949 that China "stood up," tearing China out of its imperialist subordination through a revolutionary challenge to international order, his country lost even this status, its very legitimacy denied by the West. Yet, it was this revolutionary China that the Nixon-Kissinger administration recognised as a great power in a sudden reversal of Washington's assessment of its position in international order. In this chapter, I investigate the rationale underlying this unexpected rapprochement with China despite the PRC's perceived lack of military power and questionable international legitimacy.

Existing accounts displace, rather than address, this puzzle, seeing in 'great powerhood' a mere rhetorical device used instrumentally; a product of Kissinger's fascination with the 19th century Concert of Europe system and with the balance of power underlying its operation; or a discourse about China's historical identity. My argument, in contrast, is that Beijing's appearance as a great power was made possible by Kissinger's profound break with previous approaches to the problem of order, which had a radical reformulation of the relationship between greatness and responsibility at its centre.

I begin this chapter with an overview of American discourses on Communist China's position in international order in the years preceding the Nixon administration. The early view of China as a menacing, revolutionary state to be excluded was transformed in the 1960s in response to problems with the policy of isolation, linked to a growing recognition of the limits of American power. In this period, Washington re-articulated Beijing's identity as an irresponsible power that must be tamed and transformed to secure order, conceptualising the

665 Scott, *China and the International System, 1840-1949*, 270–1, 275–6.

relation between China and international order through the liberal concept of responsibility investigated in the previous chapter.

In the second part, I argue that the opening to China was a product of Kissinger's radically new thinking about the problem of international order, as traceable in official government documents and in Kissinger's theoretical reflections. During the 1960s, the growth of Soviet relative military power, the failure of the Vietnam War and the changing distribution of economic power signalled a profound crisis of American power and of an approach to foreign policy based on Washington's ability to impose order on the world. Kissinger believed that the only available way out of this situation was to create a new order out of nothing by breaking free from the double trap of ideological antagonism and bureaucratic routine that made relations between the two superpowers rigid and ungovernable.

This task required the availability of actors able to give meaning to the international situation through genuine choices rather than relying on transcendental truths (ideology) or immanent circumstances (administration). Such a choice transcending the existing circumstances and providing an opening for creativity required the character trait of responsibility as maturity as defined by Kant and Weber. Kissinger believed that it would be possible to break with the current instability and disorder of bipolarity by defining the principles of order through the diplomatic interaction of great powers possessing such inner quality. I argue that China appeared to Kissinger as a great power because he perceived its leaders as mature actors, conscious of the groundless nature of human choice, and thus saw China central to the realisation of the transformation towards a manageable order.

5.1. China in the bipolar world, 1949-1969

5.1.1. China as a revolutionary power

Nixon's national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, has often been pointed to as the author of the diplomatic realignment that broke Cold War bipolarity. Yet, from the earliest days of the new communist regime, China was "the only major country that stood at the intersection of the two superpower camps."[666] Already in 1946, Mao defined China's place in the bipolar order as an "intermediate zone:" while the USSR was recognised as the theoretical model for world revolution, the struggle would continue under Chinese leadership even if Moscow had achieved a compromise with the US.[667] This should not be taken to mean that reconciliation with the United States was always a possibility. Much has been made of the "lost chance" of early 1949, when the Chinese leadership seemed to suggest a mediating or neutral role between the USSR and the US.[668] The Chinese requirements for establishing relations with the US, however, were flatly incompatible with Washington's principles of international order, especially as they included treating China as a perfect equal.[669] The negotiations soon ran out of steam and Mao declared his policy of 'leaning to one side,' ending Western hopes for a "new Tito."[670]

China's unofficial entry into the Korean War in 1950 removed whatever enthusiasm there remained in the US to treat China as anything other than an illegitimate, enemy state. At the same time, it also demonstrated the unexpected capacity of China to wage war with the strongest military and economic power in the world without being defeated – a major criterion of realist definitions of great powerhood. The country's participation at the Geneva

666 Nathan and Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, 13.
667 Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*, 145–153.
668 Segal, *The Great Power Triangle*, 1.
669 Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 42–3.
670 Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 37.

Conference of 1954 that closed the conflict was certainly seen in Beijing as a sign that the PRC "joined the other major powers."[671] On the other side of the Pacific the view was very different. Although the British administration advocated the recognition of China as a great power in East Asia for the sake of stabilising Korea, within the US State Department Walter McConaughy argued that China was only invited as the aggressor, and that "far from dealing with it as a Great Power, we do not even deal with it as a legitimate government."[672] Secretary of State Dulles reportedly refused to shake hands with the Chinese leaders in Geneva,[673] and firmly rejected Zhou Enlai's initiative for a high-level dialogue with the US in 1955. Low-level ambassadorial talks were established instead that year, continuing with occasional interruptions up to the Nixon-Kissinger opening.[674]

This rejection can be understood in light of the dominant image of China that had emerged by the mid-1950s.[675] In the immediate aftermath of the Korean War, the US viewed China not only as an enemy, but as a revolutionary challenger of the state system, a subversive and destabilising force.[676] Perceived no longer as a Soviet puppet without autonomous identity, but increasingly as a threat on its own, China became the central element in Eisenhower's 'Domino Theory,' a 'red menace' potentially worse than the Soviet Union.[677] According to Walter Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, China was "by every standard of national and international conduct under its present regime […] an outlaw nation."[678] Dulles described China in 1957 as being warlike and transgressing

671 The People's Daily quoted in: Scott, *China Stands Up*, 36.
672 Quoted in: Ibid.
673 Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 719.
674 Sutter, *U.S.-Chinese Relations*, 58.
675 The following parts of this chapter draw on the detailed analysis of changing American discourse on China in the course of the 1950s and especially 1960s in: Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*. However, while she focuses on shifts in identity discourses based on self/other distinctions, my interest here is in how these distinctions themselves attain meaning within broader understandings of international order.
676 Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*, 178–9.
677 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 18.
678 Quoted in: Westad, *Restless Empire*, 324.

the "code of civilized nations,"[679] while Dean Rusk condemned China's expansionism in reaction to the Sino-Indian war of 1962.[680] The modification of China's expansionist, aggressive behaviour was one of the goals set in the Basic National Security Policy of the US in 1962.[681] In Washington's eyes, Mao's goals and ideology were flatly incompatible with the principles of international order, and thus China needed to be excluded, contained, isolated and, if possible, rolled back and eliminated.

Two developments in the 1950s questioned this image of a menacing, aggressive revolutionary power: the economic difficulties following the failed policy of forced industrialisation known as the Great Leap Forward, and the appearance of the Sino-Russian conflict. The first put in doubt the level of China's capabilities. "Economic difficulties," among other factors, were seen to indicate "either a lasting erosion of the capability of the regime to effect its communist goals at home and abroad or […] a basic change in orientation."[682] As a memorandum to Secretary of State Rusk stated in 1963, there was a "growing sense in some parts of the world that Communist China is a relatively weak state in power terms."[683] Some argued that China would realise that it needs to abandon the revolution and follow the Western liberal model in order to escape this condition.[684] Others feared that frustration stemming from China's realisation of its weakness might lead to "massive aggression across the borders."[685] For all, however, China's weakness seemed more important than its strength from the perspective of international politics.

679 Secretary of State Dulles in 1957 quoted in: Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 23.
680 Ibid., 25.
681 Basic National Security Policy, BNSP Draft 3/26/62, quoted in *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 8.*, 367.
682 Paper Prepared in the Policy Planning Council, 'US Policy Towards Communist China', Washington, 30 November 1962. *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 22.*, Document 157.
683 'Memorandum From the Chairman of the Policy Planning Council and Counsel of the Department of State (Rostow) to Secretary of State Rusk, Washington, 17 September 1963. *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 8.*, Document 142.
684 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, especially 47, 51, 61.
685 Paper Prepared in the Policy Planning Council, 'US Policy Towards Communist China', Washington, 30 November 1962. *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 22.*, Document 157.

The unexpected breakdown of Sino-Soviet relations was the outcome more of ideological and status conflicts than of clashing national interests.[686] After the death of Stalin in 1953, Mao claimed the leadership of world revolution, a continuation of Chinese efforts to assert their equality in international order.[687] As Wakeman argued, "[i]nherent to the Maoist historical formulation of modernity was the notion of China's exceptional cultural characteristics," just like to "all discussions of modernity in China."[688] As early as 1938, Mao argued that Marxism should be turned "into something specifically Chinese, to imbue it with Chinese characteristics."[689]

In 1963 the US administration noted "the deepening of the Sino-Soviet rift, the growing triangulation of the Cold War, the new diffusion of power and authority in the Communist world."[690] The implications for American foreign policy were less straightforward. There was little expectation that the split would lead to large-scale changes in the bipolarity of international order. George Kennan thought that the possibility of open division depended on the relatively flexible nature of the international situation.[691] The National Intelligence Estimate of 1964 expected the "underlying enmity" of the two Communist powers to "traditional Western conceptions of political and economic life" to be an ultimately stronger force than the factional quarrel.[692] China's appearance as a 'revolutionary rival' was understood first and foremost in terms of Beijing's position "as the more radical and aggressive revolutionary rival."[693] The Chinese were particularly active in

686 Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 9.
687 Ibid., 12, 75.
688 Wakeman, 'Chinese Modernity', 158.
689 Scott, *China Stands Up*, 21.
690 Paper Prepared in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, FE – Office of Asian Communist Affairs, Washington, undated, *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 22.*, Document 190.
691 Ibid., 22.
692 NIC 10-2-64, 'Prospects For the International Communist Movement', Washington, 10 June 1964. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 34.
693 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 37.

supporting national liberation movements in the developing world and were hence seen as a particularly subversive force, even if limited in their capabilities.[694]

5.1.2. China as an irresponsible power

The perception of China as a serious threat to international order, as an "unregenerate regime"[695] and an "international pariah"[696] lived on in the 1960s despite the perception of weakness. But the problem of its compatibility with international order was no longer its identity as a revolutionary power bent on overturning the international system – a trait that suggested exclusion and a quest to depose the domestic regime. Rather, the Chinese threat was re-articulated in terms of an 'irrational' attitude that made the kind of arrangements that guaranteed relative stability in relations with the USSR unworkable in relations with China. Beijing was "passionately anti-American,"[697] "assertive and uncompromising,"[698] exhibiting "irrational militancy."[699] Under the Kennedy administration in particular, the image of a China unconcerned about nuclear annihilation led to fears that the strategy of deterrence would not work against such an 'irrational' enemy "perfectly prepared to sacrifice hundreds of millions of their own lives."[700]

A series of developments in the early 1960s led Washington to question the policy of treating China as an outlaw nation. In 1963, the United States acknowledged that they would have to coexist with Communist China in the long run.[701] Hans Morgenthau noted in an article

694 Ibid., 31.
695 Paper Prepared in the Policy Planning Council, 'US Policy Towards Communist China', Washington, 30 November 1962. *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 22.*, Document 157.
696 Edward Crankshaw in 1965 quoted in: Scott, *China Stands Up*, 41.
697 NIE 13-63, 'Problems and Prospects in Communist China', Washington, 1 May 1963. *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. 22.*, Document 176.
698 NIE 13-9-65, 'Communist China's Foreign Policy', Washington, 5 May 1965. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 85.
699 Dean Rusk quoted in: Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 42.
700 President Kennedy paraphrased in ibid., 27–8.
701 Ibid., 65–6.

in 1965 that the US had to make a choice between trying to conquer China and accepting its predominance on the Asian mainland.[702] The escalation of the conflict in Vietnam made communication with Beijing more urgent, while the first Chinese nuclear tests in 1964 further underlined the importance of involving the PRC in a stable international structure. Moreover, international support for Washington's policy of isolating China was in decline, a trend that became particularly clear in 1964 when de Gaulle unexpectedly granted diplomatic recognition to Communist China. "The real question is no longer whether to disengage from the rigid aspects of our China policy but how and when," Robert W. Komer wrote in November that year.[703] As James C. Thomson pointed out in a memorandum, China had already become significantly integrated with the rest of the world and was expected to be soon voted into the United Nations despite Washington's opposition. He suggested that ending the policy of isolation would "improve our look as a confident, realistic and responsible world power" and "would give us a greater look of maturity and self confidence [as well as …] a greater degree of maneuverability."[704]

Although a policy of isolating China did have its reputation costs, it was also perceived to make the international system unstable. Two partly overlapping discourses emerged on China in this context. The first identified as the main problem China's paranoid self-isolation, its refusal to enter into normal relations with the rest of the world out of an irrational fear of external actors. "It is not we who are isolating Red China, but Red China which is isolating itself" with its subversive and aggressive behaviour, a memorandum to President Johnson argued in 1966.[705] This image of self-isolation was reinforced by the split

702 Morgenthau, 'We Are Deluding Ourselves in Vietnam'.

703 Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, 23 November 1964. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 68.

704 Memorandum From James C. Thomson, Jr., of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, 28 October 1964. Ibid., Document 63.

705 Memorandum From the President's Acting Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, 14 March 1966. Ibid., Document 134.

with the Soviet Union, which was often interpreted as an extreme manifestation of this tendency. A memorandum by Thomson in March 1966 outlined the problem and the possible solution by arguing that the goal of Washington's China-policy should be to "help break down China's acutely distorted view of the outside world that plots her encirclement and destruction," and "to help reclaim the Chinese mainland to responsible membership in the world community."[706] Military containment and support for China's threatened neighbours should, he argued, be complemented with "systematic efforts to help […] induce more rational patterns of behavior on the part of China's leaders and/or their successors."[707]

A responsible China would thus result from the careful manipulation of reactions to China's behaviour in order to provide the appropriate feedback and incentives. Its effectiveness, however, ultimately depended on China reading the signals rationally, and thus on eliminating China's "unmistakeable paranoia."[708] This, in turn, required China's greater participation in the world so that it could learn the 'real' nature of international politics and leave its irrational attitude behind. Thomson recommended "a freeing of the flow of ideas, people, and goods – the instruments of contact, of communications, travel, and trade."[709] The inclusion of China was expected to lead to the moderation of China's policies "because it would have an investment in the world community."[710] By July 1966, the discourse reached the highest levels of the administration. In a speech addressing the American Alumni Council, President Johnson argued that "lasting peace can never come to Asia as long as 700 million people of mainland China are isolated by their rulers from the outside world," and that "a

706 Memorandum From James C. Thomson, Jr., of the National Security Council Staff to President's Special Assistant (Valenti), Washington, 1 March 1966. Ibid., Document 129.
707 Ibid.
708 Paper Prepared by Alfred Jenkins of the National Security Council Staff, 'Thoughts on China', Washington, 22 February 1968. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 303.
709 Memorandum From James C. Thomson, Jr., 1 March 1966. Ibid., Document 129.
710 Gregor, *The China Connection*, 86.

misguided China must be encouraged toward understanding of the outside world and toward policies of peaceful cooperation" through "the free flow of ideas and people and goods."[711]

The second, similarly psychological way of making sense of China's 'irrational' international policies emerged between 1966 and 1968 in the shape of what Goh labelled the 'resurgent China' discourse.[712] This presented China as a humiliated "natural and historical great power," frustrated by the lack of recognition for what it considered its legitimate claims.[713] Dean Rusk noted in 1966 that the Chinese "hold that China's history, size and geographic position entitles it to great-power status," and that they "seek to overcome the humiliation of 150 years of […] domination by outside powers" by becoming the leaders of the Communist world revolution.[714] Its exclusion from the international community only made it feel more its lack of status, driving it towards risky forms of self-assertion.

What did this imply for American foreign policy? Alfred Jenkins argued that even though it would have been desirable to include China into the international community, this was made impossible by Beijing's "absurd" insistence on doing it "on its own terms," its aspiration to become "the 'centre of the universe' again and to refashion the rest of the world in its own image."[715] Others were more positive, arguing that by accepting Communist China's existence and respecting its legitimate interests, it would be possible to draw China into international society as a moderate, responsible power. A study from 1966 recommended "draw[ing] China into activities on the broader world scene where, through exposure to outside reality and successful assumption of international responsibility, she might gain a degree of status and respect which could substitute for the unattainable goals of regional

711 *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 168.
712 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 80.
713 Ibid., 72–3.
714 Quoted in: Scott, *China Stands Up*, 55.
715 Paper Prepared by Alfred Jenkins of the National Security Council Staff, 'Further Thoughts on China', Washington, 9 October 1968. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 328.

domination and super-power status."[716] This added to elements of the discourse on 'paranoid China' the necessity of granting China legitimacy and status – perhaps as a regional great power in East Asia – to such a degree that it could consider that order legitimate.[717]

During the years 1964-1968, however, it seemed that such a match between Chinese expectations about status recognition and American principles of legitimate international order would not come about in the short or medium term. On the one hand, the US was unwilling to seek accommodation with China unless the latter gave up its "pretensions of leading global revolution […] to permit of greater articulation with the world."[718] On the other, China rejected or ignored all American initiatives during the Kennedy administration to improve relations through small-scale measures of opening communication lines or in the shape of thematic meetings on, for instance, the issues of disarmament or the Vietnam War.[719] The view that emerged in Washington in response to Chinese self-isolation was that there was no real likelihood of a change in China's foreign policy toward the US so long as Mao's regime remained in power.[720]

Even though the 1960s witnessed the emergence of discourses of opening and reconciliation towards China, the perceived incompatibility of interests and values did not make it possible for Washington to recognise China as a legitimate actor – even less as a

716 Study Prepared by the Special State-Defense Study Group, 'Communist China: Long Range Study', Washington, June 1966. Ibid., Document 161.

717 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 62.

718 Paper Prepared by Alfred Jenkins of the National Security Council Staff, 'Further Thoughts on China', Washington, 9 October 1968. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 328.

719 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 105–6.

720 "As long as the Maoists retain control, Peking is unlikely to make any important changes in the general line of its foreign policy." NIE-13-7-67, 'The Chinese Cultural Revolution', Washington, 25 May 1967. *FRUS, 1964-1968, Vol. 30.*, Document 267. Alfred Jenkins argued that "[s]o long as the Maoists are in control, then I think we can take it for granted that we will get no response from any bridge-building efforts. Such a response would undermine Mao's basic philosophy.", in: Paper Prepared by Alfred Jenkins of the National Security Council Staff, 'Thoughts on China', Washington, 22 February 1968. Ibid., Document 303. Secretary of State Rusk wrote that "[t]he likelihood of a change in Peking's policies toward the United States is minimal in the next few years, and probably nil while Mao is alive.", in: Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Johnson, 'Policy Toward Communist China', Washington, 22 February 1968. Ibid., Document 302.

legitimate great power. Both of the above discourses moved away from the former understanding of China as a revolutionary actor that must be excluded in order to safeguard international order, and argued that ending China's exclusion was necessary for managing a power that is able to disrupt the normal operation of the system. Both of them, however, articulated the task of inclusion on the basis of the notion of (ir)responsibility identified in the previous chapter, in a sense perpetuating imperialist themes on the position of China in international order. As a result, both of them were trapped in the paradox of wanting to include China in order to make it a responsible actor, but rejecting the existing China because of its irresponsibility, thus running into difficulties as a result of the lack of Chinese response to tentative American initiatives and of the discrepancy between what the US and China considered legitimate.

5.2. Making the Cold War manageable: The US-China opening: 1969-1978

5.2.1. The opening as a matter of a conception of world order

The radical intensification of the Sino-Russian conflict in 1969 and the quagmire in Vietnam both contributed to the Nixon administration's decision to take steps towards establishing better relations with China. It also inherited the discourses of reconciliation described above, as well as their problems.[721] Yet the actual form the reconciliation took, including Kissinger's secret trip to China, the meeting between the two heads of states it paved the way for, and the issuing of the Shanghai Communiqué[722] establishing a relation of equality between the parties, surprised everyone but the initiates. This element of astonishment to a large extent reflected a

721 As also argued by: Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 262–5.

722 Signed on 28 February 1972, the Communiqué amounted to mutual diplomatic recognition between Washington and Beijing. For the text, see: http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique01.htm (accessed 12 February 2014).

sense of disruption, itself elicited by the form of the opening. That the US would gradually open to China had been in the air since at least the Kennedy administration, and the sort of small scale changes that were recommended under the Johnson administration were already under way. What was completely unexpected was the spectacular break with Cold War bipolarity – both ideological and material – by enacting the reconciliation with all the ceremony of a meeting between two equal great powers, and by discussing with China not particular issues but the character and principles of international order.[723] By 1972, new identities were articulated in the official American discourse on Sino-US relations, with China portrayed as an equal and unquestioned great power.[724]

As Evelyn Goh has shown, the deteriorating Sino-Soviet relations opened a number of alternative (tactical) policy options for the US administration, all more or less equally justifiable on the grounds of power politics.[725] She argues that Kissinger's understanding of China was essentially continuous with the previous discourses on Chinese and American identities – with a larger emphasis on the Soviet threat to China, and of his use of a *Realpolitik* frame – that made reconciliation a possible and even desirable option. Very little, however, seemed to justify treating China as a great power in the way Kissinger did. In terms of its military power China only had a recognised capacity for disruption.[726] Neither did the principles of international order seem to allow for a legitimate status for the Chinese regime without a radical change in its character. Washington continued to perceive "little prospect for change in China's attitudes and policies regarding the US" under Mao's rule,[727] while American influence remained very limited over communist leaders, who "still preach violence

723 Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 726–7.
724 Ibid., 182.
725 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 10–11.
726 As, for instance, described in: Response to National Security Memorandum 14, Washington, 8 August 1969. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 23.
727 Summary of the CIA Response to NSSM14, Washington, undated, Ibid., Document 12.

as a permanent way of life."[728] As a consequence, it is difficult to imagine that advocates of the discourses of reconciliation would have been ready to make the drastic move undertaken by Nixon and Kissinger. Goh, however, overlooks Kissinger's emphasis on the statesman's task of creating a new framework for interaction, on the necessity of judgement in turning what is given into an opening to new possibilities. In other words, her analysis does not pay attention to Kissinger's radically new conception of international order within which elements of previous discourses were re-articulated, and which also led him to view China's character differently.

My implied focus here on Kissinger requires justification. If, as I suggest, the opening to China can only be properly understood in light of the conception of international order that informs it, I must first identify whose conception guided the process. At one level, this is made easier by the notoriously centralised conduct of foreign policy in the Nixon-Kissinger administration, in the sense that the President and his national security advisor maintained a special relationship and acted often in secret and without seeking wider approval for their goals.[729] Restricting the inquiry to these two persons should, thus, be a relatively uncontroversial step, keeping in mind the broader discursive context. At this point, however, the issue becomes less straightforward. Although Kissinger is often identified as the author of the opening, it is clear in fact that not only was the move initiated by Nixon, but that Kissinger first received it with scepticism and reluctance.[730]

Nixon's 1967 article in *Foreign Affairs* is often identified as one of the first steps toward the opening. In it, Nixon argued for a policy of "containment without isolation," which followed from the recognition that "[t]aking the long view, we simply cannot afford to leave

728 Address by Secretary of State Rogers at the annual luncheon of the Associated Press in New York City, 21 April 1969, *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 21, Editorial Note.

729 Gaddis, 'Rescuing Choice from Circumstance: The Statecraft of Henry Kissinger', 580–3; Otte, 'Kissinger', 199–200.

730 Thornton, *The Nixon-Kissinger Years*, 24–5; Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect*, 33.

China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbors." What is striking about the article, however, is not so much its novelty, as its continuity with the discourse on reconciliation already present in the Johnson administration. Nixon's primary concern remained the threat China posed to international order, i.e. that "[t]he world cannot be safe until China changes." The cause of China's incompatibility with international order was identified in terms of its outlaw, revolutionary nature. "Dealing with Red China," he argued, "is something like trying to cope with the more explosive ghetto elements in our own country." There was certainly no indication in this of treating China as a power of equal political, strategic or moral standing. Furthermore, Nixon presented the solution in terms of a combination of force, dialogue and education to get China to understand its real national interests and to accept "the basic rules of international civility." Finally, Nixon argued for inclusion without granting formal recognition or UN membership, that is, formal inclusion conditional upon China's attitude. Overall, Nixon still characterised China as an irresponsible power, and thus was left with the same problems concerning reconciliation as the discourses analysed in the preceding section.[731]

Kissinger, in contrast, was not convinced by his argument and was initially reluctant to take seriously Nixon's wish for reconciliation. "Why," he asked, "is bringing China into the world community inevitably in our interest?"[732] For him, the threat posed by China to peace and stability was too low to justify a sudden shift in Sino-American relations that might give increased influence to a revolutionary enemy. The military clashes between the Soviet Union and China in 1969 certainly contributed to his change of mind, but this was no mere conversion. In fact, as I intend to show in the following, when Kissinger accepted the importance of the opening to China, he placed it in a considerably different overall vision, in

731 Nixon, 'Asia after Viet Nam', 122–3.
732 Quoted in: MacMillan, 'Nixon, Kissinger and the Opening to China', 119.

which the question was no longer how to prevent China from disrupting international order but, rather, how to make the new situation concerning China contribute to a larger task of creating international order.

Kissinger in fact insists in his memoirs that whereas for Nixon the opening was a short-term matter, he himself was "more concerned with the policy's impact on the structure of international relations."[733] Rapprochement was not, he stated, an end in itself for him, but a "geopolitical opportunity" that he already pointed out in a 1968 speech he prepared for Rockefeller.[734] As Jeremy Suri noted, while Nixon focused on tactical steps – such as ending the Vietnam War – for domestic political purposes, Kissinger's goal was to address the overall crisis of America's international position and of international order.[735] To achieve this goal, tactical steps were insufficient. Kissinger argued in 1969 that the government had to recognise that "in the field of foreign policy, we will never be able to contribute to building a stable and creative world order unless we first form some conception of it."[736] It is clear that Kissinger professed the necessity of a vision of international order in advance of the opening, and that he narrated it in terms of a grand strategy afterwards.

5.2.2. Kissinger's Bismarckian problem: creating order out of nothing

Was there in reality such a grand strategy in place that guided Kissinger's foreign policy actions? Many accounts of the opening deny that such a vision was at work in the administration, arguing that its China policy was but a series of uncertain, indecisive, *ad hoc* responses to short-term tactical concerns – primarily in relation to Vietnam and to the need for reducing costs in the backdrop of the economic crisis – and that it was only construed as part

733 Kissinger, *White House Years*, 164.
734 Ibid., 165.
735 Suri, 'Henry Kissinger and American Grand Strategy', 74–5.
736 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy', 97.

of a grand strategy in hindsight.[737] It would follow from this that to treat China as a great power was mere manipulation and rhetoric, mere appearance without substance. Yet the tactical role of certain actions does not rule out a strategic meaning, while one should also make a distinction between the successful and coherent implementation of a vision and the role such a vision might play in the intelligibility of even failed actions. Rather than arguing from the perspective of the results, then, it is important to get as close as possible to recovering what guided Kissinger and Nixon in their opening in China.

A number of commentators suggested understanding the opening in light of Kissinger's work – written some fifteen years earlier – on the creation of post-Napoleonic European international order.[738] Just as Metternich worked to bring revolutionary France back into a restored international system, Kissinger would then have supposedly tried to bring revolutionary China into a framework that it would no longer have been interested in overthrowing.[739] That Kissinger might have wished to resuscitate the order of the Congress of Vienna was a suspicion seemingly confirmed when, in July 1971, Nixon talked of the desirability of an international order based on a balance between five powers: the US, the Soviet Union, China, Europe, and Japan.[740] A number of renowned scholars reacted critically to the idea a year later in the magazine *Foreign Affairs*.[741] Among them, Alastair Buchan referred to Kissinger as the president's "Prince Metternich in the West Wing."[742]

Kissinger, however, was aware of the conditions of possibility, and limitations, of Metternich's system. Reacting to the critical voices in an interview in 1973, he noted that the

737 Bundy, *A Tangled Web*, 100; Gregor, *The China Connection*, 85–7; Pollack, 'The Opening to America', 403; Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect*, 55.
738 Kissinger, *A World Restored*; Kissinger, 'The Conservative Dilemma'; Kissinger, 'The Congress of Vienna'.
739 As interpreted by Freeman in: Tucker, *China Confidential American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945-1996*, 257.
740 Quoted in: Caldwell, *American-Soviet Relations*, 84.
741 Buchan, 'A World Restored?'; Brzezinski, 'Opinion'; Hoffmann, 'Weighing the Balance of Power'.
742 Buchan, 'A World Restored?', 656.

revolutionary changes international order had undergone in the last one and a half centuries – in particular the lack of a shared conception of legitimacy and of a limited geographical area within which the balance could be exercised – made direct historical analogies unusable.[743] He reiterated this position in more detail in an article in 1977.[744] Even more importantly, the original work from 1954 already pointed out that Metternich was a masterly manipulator but lacked the creativity necessary to put forward and realise a new conception of order.[745] His success thus completely depended upon the still available resources of pre-revolutionary tradition: a shared belief among statesmen in the unity of Europe as a political and cultural category, and a shared cultural background linking the diplomats involved in the settlement.[746] His analyses of the "revolutionary period" facing US foreign policy make it clear that he was acutely aware of the absence of any principle of legitimacy similar to what the Austrian statesman still had at his disposal.[747]

"The dilemma of our time," he wrote, was not only created by the disintegration of the old order but was a matter of uncertainty regarding what could take its place.[748] This uncertainty, in turn, was the result of at least three major categories of problems: the divergence of domestic structures and their conception of legitimacy; the rigidity of the increasingly bureaucratic conduct of foreign policy; and the loss of control resulting from the decline in the relative power of the US as well as in the absolute usefulness of military power. Under such circumstances, the making of foreign policy becomes essentially conjectural, centred on "the need to gear actions to an assessment that cannot be proved true when it is made."[749] This very Weberian understanding of the role of the statesman emphasises the act of

743 Caldwell, *American-Soviet Relations*, 85–6.
744 Kissinger, 'The New Goal of Foreign Policy'.
745 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 321–2.
746 Ibid., 319–20.
747 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy'; Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy'.
748 Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', 505.
749 Ibid.

choice and innovation, which thus becomes even more fundamental than it was for Metternich, who could still believe in the underlying rational order of the universe. Thus, Kissinger's understanding of the situation was not, as Goh suggested, that "structural changes automatically induce appropriate, rational responses from states,"[750] that the convergence of interests between China and the US was "obvious" and "automatic."[751] On the contrary, order for Kissinger had to be created practically *ex nihilo* by the politician.

For this task Bismarck – on whom Kissinger published an article in 1968[752] – provided a more pertinent model. Kissinger characterised the German chancellor as a "white revolutionary," (a label Suri used to describe Kissinger's role in government)[753] indicating both the commonalities and the differences between him and Metternich. Both of them were conservative in that they were oriented towards the creation of a stable order, tried to eliminate emotions from politics, and regarded questions of substantive justice as secondary to the necessity of order. Both acted with self-restraint and pursued their goals with the recognition of the limits inherent to relations of power. Yet, while Metternich's task was to bring revolutionary France back into a stable order whose parameters were given to him by the structure of the universe, Bismarck was himself a revolutionary with "a conception incompatible with the existing order and a will to impose his vision."[754] He had to be, since – as he recognised – the existence of Prussia *as a great power* required the unification of Germany that, in turn, was incompatible with the order set up in 1815. Thus he needed to act against the prevailing principles of legitimacy, with sheer force as his only tool and success as his only source of legitimacy.

750 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 4.
751 Goh, 'Nixon, Kissinger, and the "Soviet Card" in the U.S. Opening to China, 1971–1974*', 478, also fn. 11.
752 Kissinger, 'The White Revolutionary'.
753 Suri, 'Henry Kissinger and American Grand Strategy', 74–5.
754 Kissinger, 'The White Revolutionary', 891.

Bismarck and Kissinger therefore faced a similar challenge: to create order out of nothing, without relying on pre-existing frameworks of legitimacy. Bismarck's method was to manage a dynamic balance of forces. To this end, he manipulated the antagonisms between both external and domestic powers in a way that would restrain and discipline them so as to allow for a new order to emerge over time, "reflecting the realities of power rather than the canons of legitimacy."[755] He wanted to create a new order not by replacing one principle of legitimacy by another, but by translating every principle into "forces to be evaluated in terms of the power they could generate."[756] Bismarck's order, hence, could only be founded on the self-restraint emerging from the calculation and dexterous management of relations of power and not on any conception of truth or justice. "Bismarck defended not a principle but a fact," Kissinger writes, "not a doctrine but a reality."[757]

Although Kissinger thus shared Bismarck's problem, he rejected his method of setting up an order merely on the basis of the assessment and manipulation of power resources.[758] Kissinger was very much aware – and here Weber's works probably informed his opinion[759] – that Bismarck's approach ultimately failed, and it did so because it depended entirely on his personal qualities. Bismarck's idea of grounding order on self-limitation rested on "the belief that decisions based on power would be constant, that a proper analysis of a given set of circumstances would necessarily yield the same conclusions for everybody."[760] In fact, however, the functioning of this order was only possible because of Bismarck's "magnificent grasp of the nuances of power relationships."[761] He failed to educate his people politically for

755 Ibid., 913.
756 Ibid., 919.
757 Ibid., 904.
758 On the similarities between Bismarck's and Kissinger's policies at the level of the manipulation of the balance of power, see: Rosecrance, 'Kissinger, Bismarck and the Balance of Power'.
759 Weber, 'The Nation State and Economic Policy'; Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger*, 52.
760 Kissinger, 'The White Revolutionary', 919.
761 Ibid.

continuing this task, and they thus remained in a state of political immaturity.[762] His departure left a system of power without order perhaps sowing "the seeds of [Germany's] twentieth century tragedies."[763]

Thus, for Kissinger, Metternich demonstrated the importance of legitimacy – of an international order "whose structure is accepted by all major powers"[764] – but lacked the ability to innovate. Bismarck, on the other hand, manifested an unmatched ability to conceive and bring about an order *ex nihilo*. Yet he did so purely on the basis of the balance of power, mistakenly taking the effects of his mastery of manipulating power relations for proof of the latter's transparency.[765] The central problem for Kissinger can then be stated as that of creating an order out of nothing while avoiding Bismarck's mistake, i.e. that of bringing about a stable international order without being able to rely on shared resources of legitimacy.

This was a crucial dilemma for Kissinger. He argued that the existence of a legitimate order is a precondition for stability. This is so because the latter depends on the possibility of managing differences through negotiation, and diplomacy can only function if the actors speak the same language, that is, if there exists "an agreement on what constitutes a reasonable demand."[766] If the framework of legitimacy is taken for granted, conflicts take place about specific issues within it and are therefore manageable. Conflicts over the principles of legitimacy, however, are limitless.[767] But if the starting point is the lack of a common source of legitimacy on the basis of which diplomacy could operate, and if without diplomacy the balance of power cannot function, then how might it be possible to bring about

762 Weber, 'The Nation State and Economic Policy', 23–5.
763 Kissinger, 'The White Revolutionary', 922.
764 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 145.
765 A direct juxtaposition of the two statesmen by Kissinger can be found in his *World Order*, 73–6.
766 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 2.
767 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 66.

a stable order? Before I directly address this question, I first present in detail Kissinger's understanding of the crisis of order he faced.

5.2.3. The dual crises of international order and American power

Unlike Bismarck's, Kissinger's revolution aimed at bringing into existence a stable international order compatible with US interests not by overturning an existing framework of legitimacy, but by ending (or at least managing) a situation of crisis characterised precisely by the lack of any shared concept of legitimacy and any common language among the main centres of power. No agreed concept of order straddled the ideological differences and widely diverging domestic structures between the US-led liberal world, the Communist camp of the Soviet Union, and the vivid nationalism of the numerous newly independent, post-colonial states.[768]

Under such circumstances, diplomacy was doomed to be ineffective, as it became "difficult even to define the nature of disagreement."[769] The international system became inflexible, with no room for manoeuvring, a condition that had been at the centre of Kissinger's attention for many years by then.[770] Especially in an age of nuclear weapons, an international system set up on the basis of a struggle between different and antagonistic conceptions of domestic structures meant that "survival seems involved in every dispute."[771] In opposition to many other realists, Kissinger hence found the combination of ideological and military bipolarity inherently unstable and dangerous.[772] One of the main challenges for the statesman, then, was to find a way to by-pass disputes about principles of domestic

768 Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', 503–6.
769 Ibid., 503.
770 See, for instance: Kissinger, 'Force and Diplomacy in the Nuclear Age'.
771 Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', 504.
772 Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 178.

legitimacy and to dislocate the rigid framework they set up, in order to make space for, and bring into existence, a stable order acceptable for all major actors.

This task was made all the more difficult by the increasingly bureaucratic conduct of foreign policy, which also tended to further entrench the incommensurability of domestic structures.[773] Keeping to his Weberian analysis of the vocation of (international) politics, Kissinger argued that, with its focus on objectivity and predictability, the dominance of the "administrative machine" over the executive leads to a loss of flexibility, as decisions are made on the basis of routine rather than that of the creative act of choice. Bureaucratic actors "concentrate on the manipulation of empirical reality which they treat as given"[774] and thus cannot "transform the existing framework"[775] even if it were to be necessary – e.g. in a revolutionary period. The situation in international politics is aggravated by the fact that each administrative structure is directed towards its own internal problems, as well as by the solidification of fluid ideologies into set criteria for bureaucratic decision-making, turning the rigidity of conviction into that of procedure.[776] Kissinger noted that countries with a still dynamic revolutionary ideology – such as China – or with charismatic leader figures – such as some post-colonial states – can thus be more flexible in their international policies, although they rarely pursue the goal of international order and stability.[777] The challenge of the statesman is, then, to find a way to make space for genuine decisions in the face of the inflexibility of both ideological confrontation and administrative routine.

Besides radical ideological division and bureaucratic rigidity, Kissinger's perception of crisis was also grounded in a more generally recognised crisis of American power by the late 1960s, underlined in particular by the USSR's near success in closing the nuclear gap with the

773 Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', 506–13.
774 Ibid., 524.
775 Ibid., 511.
776 Ibid., 511–2.
777 Ibid., 38–42.

US, and by the shock of the Vietnam War.[778] In the aftermath of the Second World War, the United States possessed the resources – intellectual, moral, material – that made it possible for it to act as a model for the liberal world, to impose its design of international economic and political order onto an even larger part of the world, and to exclude the rest as an enemy. By less than a quarter of a century later, this form of ordering the world was increasingly perceived to be impracticable.

A number of interrelated developments contributed to this sense of lost control by making the way power was put to work for the production of order less and less effective. Technological development and quantitative expansion in nuclear weaponry raised the military superiority of the two superpowers to a completely unprecedented level, while it made the effective application of that impressive force much more difficult.[779] Nuclear weapons provided unprecedented destructive power but, precisely for this reason, it became increasingly difficult to employ military force for political aims.[780] As nuclear weapons replaced territory as the measure of power, the direct adjustment of the equilibrium between the poles – such as the system of territorial adjustments in the 19th century – no longer made sense.[781] "As power has grown more awesome," Kissinger lamented, "it has also turned abstract, intangible, elusive."[782]

The problems did not stop with the decreasing effectiveness of the application of military power – the war in Vietnam exposed the economic, political and social limits of Washington's capacity to take on the burden of sustaining international order through a high degree of involvement and intervention. High inflation, soaring levels of national debt, the

778 Ferguson and Maier, *The Shock of the Global*; Thornton, *The Nixon-Kissinger Years*; Zanchetta, *The Transformation of American International Power in the 1970s*.
779 Kissinger, 'Force and Diplomacy in the Nuclear Age'.
780 Schulzinger, 'Détente in the Nixon-Ford Years, 1969-1976', 375.
781 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 129.
782 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy', 61.

intractability of the Vietnam conflict, and growing domestic disorder reaching its peak with the events of 1968, all underlined that "[i]t is beyond the physical and psychological capacity of the US to make itself responsible for every part of the world."[783] Kissinger recognised that the country's international commitments had to be reduced to a sustainable level, but he was also keen to avoid the opposite mistake of isolationism. The US, he argued, could only neglect but not escape its responsibility for maintaining international order. Establishing a new balance between capacity and responsibility was a major undertaking, and it necessarily involved finding a way to strengthen national will and to put it in touch with the realities of power, counteracting a growing force of moral idealism nurtured by the reactive policy of containment.[784]

Adding to the decreasing utility of military power and the relative decline of Washington's capacity to meet its international responsibilities, a further complication resulted from the growing autonomy and increasing number of actors on the international scene. For Kissinger the consequences were ambiguous: "Rigidity is diminished, but so is manageability."[785] The inflexibility of ideological confrontation and the mechanical logic of administration posed a problem, but so did the freedom of actors without the recognition of limits that make order possible. With the economic emergence of Washington's European allies and of Japan, and as a consequence of the rupture of Sino-Soviet relations, the world had become politically multi-polar while remaining in a state of military bipolarity. The new nations of the developing world showed increasing political initiative while lacking any interest in or understanding of their responsibilities for international order. Their potential to become sources of international instability was exacerbated by their weak domestic structures

783 Kissinger speaking to Fellows from the Harvard Center for International Affairs, 7 December, 1971, quoted in: Suri, 'Henry Kissinger and American Grand Strategy', 69.

784 Schulzinger, 'Détente in the Nixon-Ford Years, 1969-1976', 377; Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 151–2.

785 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy', 57.

that made them easy targets of domestic intervention and potential loci of revolutionary movements.[786] The dispersion of economic power and political autonomy took place without a corresponding adjustment of burdens for stability, and Kissinger found the widening gap between actors' capacity for autonomous action and their sense of responsibility for systemic order disturbing.[787] In a memorandum to Nixon written in October 1969, Kissinger summarized the implication in the following manner:

> The increased fragmentation of power, the greater diffusion of political activity, and the more complicated patterns of international conflict and alignment that have emerged over the past decade have limited the capacity of the US and the USSR to control the effects of their influence and have revealed the limits of their capacity to control the actions of other governments except by direct military means. At the same time, the US has discovered the great obstacles to using military power directly to achieve political ends.[788]

The emergence of political multi-polarity implied for Kissinger that the unity of political will and political power over the liberal world in the hands of Washington had ended, and that the management of relations between the two superpowers was no longer sufficient for maintaining stability in the absence of an actual capacity to impose their concerted – or at least co-ordinated – will on the rest of the world. As Kissinger noted, since 1945 the US sought to impose a "direct 'operational' concept of international order," relying on its military predominance and directly transforming the domestic structures of other states by the transfer of American technologies and managerial skills.[789] The new condition of political multi-polarity made this direct form-giving role impossible. A practice of exclusive spheres of influence – advocated during the Kennedy administration – within which the superpowers would keep their allies under control for the sake of stability, was similarly impracticable.[790]

786 Ibid., 80–1.
787 Ibid., 74.
788 Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, Washington, October 20, 1969. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 41.
789 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy', 57–8.
790 Trachtenberg, 'The Structure of Great Power Politics, 1963-1975', 482.

Kissinger's revolutionary period was thus characterised by a combination of ideological and bureaucratic rigidity with a decreasing manageability of international interactions. The former kept the world at the edge of nuclear annihilation and undermined attempts at transforming the world into a more stable system. The latter signalled that traditional forms of exercising power for the sake of managing international order were unworkable: military power "no longer [translated] automatically into effective influence,"[791] the US had no capacity to take on the level of international responsibility it used to, while the end of American economic hegemony and the process of decolonisation led to a diffusion of capacity for autonomous political action that undermined the viability of providing order through the imposition of norms and designs. Kissinger thus needed a new way of utilising American power for the purpose of making the international realm governable, and this required a radical readjustment of responsibilities for international order to reflect the new realities of power.

5.2.4. Responsibility as maturity as Kissinger's foundation for a manageable order

As Secretary of State Rogers noted in 1971, one of Nixon's major goals was "to achieve a better balance of responsibilities to reflect the growing shift of political-economic power in the world."[792] The administration addressed this task in a number of ways, including the sweeping neoliberalisation of international order in the course of which the task of governing the global economic system and international development was gradually transferred to the Bretton Woods organisations and to market forces.[793] The Nixon – or Guam – Doctrine also belonged here. Announced in 1969, it placed the responsibility for self-defence on the

791 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy', 60.
792 Address by Secretary of State Rogers, Washington, 1 December 1971. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 100.
793 Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century*, 68, 278.

shoulders of America's Asian allies, in order to "avoid the kind of policy that will make countries in Asia so dependent upon us that we are dragged into conflicts such as the one we have in Vietnam."[794] In his address to the UN General Assembly, the president argued that as the distribution of power changes, "the pattern of […] obligations and responsibilities changes." The latter should come about not by American edict but as a reflection of "the concepts and wishes of the people of those nations themselves."[795] If the imposition of order was impossible, it had to result from the willing cooperation of independent actors. The removal of American guarantees for economic order and for the security of allies was expected to result in the adjustment of actors' understanding of their interests by forcing them to take responsibility for their own decisions and to take into account the realities of power.

Kissinger agreed that the US could "no longer impose its preferred solution; it must seek to evoke it."[796] He advocated the elimination of structures that encouraged unilateralism by the US, risk-seeking by the USSR, and irresponsibility on the part of allies.[797] He remained, however, sceptical of the actual effectiveness of responsibilisation through the declared removal of guarantees. As he later wrote, such declarations were not credible so long as the affected countries could gamble on America's interest in defending them – or the system they benefited from – irrespective of how responsibly they behaved or what burdens they took on.[798] He pursued a deeper transformation of the international order, one involving a different conception of responsibility. To make any redistribution of responsibilities possible, it was necessary to first move the system away from the rigidity of ideological schism and administrative logic, which froze the superpowers into an inflexible and unmanageable relationship. Both ideology and bureaucracy provided determinate frameworks for action, and

794 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 29, Editorial Note.
795 Ibid., Document 37, Editorial Note.
796 Kissinger, 'Central Issues of American Foreign Policy', 94.
797 Ibid., 74.
798 Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 707–9.

those present frameworks were clearly not working. The task Kissinger set himself was that of "rescuing choice from circumstance."[799]

The role of choice in Kissinger's conception of politics was deeply influenced by his thought about history.[800] Already in his bachelor thesis he confronted the paradoxical relation between the seeming retrospective inevitability of the historical process and our inward experience of having the freedom of choice. To address this paradox, he turned to a form of Kantian transcendental idealism, according to which the laws of nature and history are "in fact only our own impositions on the appearance of reality."[801] The meaning of history, accordingly, must be imparted to reality by the thinking and acting free subject.

Following Kant, Kissinger believed that such freedom is not possessed by everybody. In fact, only a few great individuals are capable of achieving it. Real freedom stands in one's ability to set the law for oneself – in self-limitation. Simply accepting externally given moral laws does not amount to real freedom. But neither does acting in the world on the basis of pragmatism. Kissinger rejected the positivism and empiricism of the scientific methodologies that dominated IR in the Cold War, because they sought knowledge of a reality independent of the observer.[802] Pragmatism, he wrote, "seeks to reduce judgment to methodology and value to knowledge."[803] Real freedom for Kissinger was a function of the actor's responsibility – or maturity – that allowed it to act and think autonomously of given frameworks of morality and facts.[804] Mature individuals took responsibility for their lives and world and were conscious of the limits of their power. They did not feel justified by moral certainties irrespective of the

799 Kissinger, *White House Years*, 54.
800 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*; Beisner, 'History and Henry Kissinger'; Noer, 'Henry Kissinger's Philosophy of History'.
801 Guyer, *Kant*, 3.
802 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 35.
803 Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice*, 342.
804 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 206.

consequences of acting upon them, but neither were they the prisoners of calculations of the latter.

It is not difficult to recognise Weber's ethics of responsibility in this, and the German sociologist certainly had a large influence on Kissinger.[805] Indeed the connection has often been pointed out, although it frequently comes with a reduction of Weber's ethics to a distinction between the ethics of conviction and the ethics of responsibility, the latter standing for "the efforts of the statesman to minimize the consequences of a political act."[806] As I argued in Chapter 2, Weber's concept of responsibility as maturity is simultaneously directed against the ethics of conviction – ideology – and the responsibility of empiricism – bureaucracy. Its main ground is therefore not a calculation of consequences, but rather the actor's recognition that, due to the groundless character of human condition, neither transcendental truth nor empiricist pragmatism delivers them from having responsibility for the consequences of their actions. The responsibility at issue is hence not merely a responsibility for consequences but a facing up to the necessity of making judgements – or autonomous choices – as the only ground for value and meaning. The responsible actor – the statesman – is a revolutionary who "operates best without the constraint of pre-existing rules, in a state that is always exceptional."[807]

805 This is, for instance, stated by Strong, 'Reflections on Kissinger's On China'. Strong also points out important similarities with Carl Schmitt. Links to Weber and Kant are also explored in Gismondi, 'Tragedy, Realism, and Postmodernity', Esp. 446–453. Further sources of Kissinger's thought have been identified in Hegel and German historicism – Weber, 'Kissinger as Historian'; Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*; Mazlish, *Kissinger.*, – as well as in Spinoza: Curley, 'Kissinger, Spinoza, and Genghis Khan'. It seems to me, however, that these do not alter significantly what can be recovered through my present focus on Kant and Weber, who were certainly most central to his understanding of responsibility.

806 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 59; See also: Brandon, 'Henry Kissinger's Approach to Foreign Policy'.

807 Strong, 'Reflections on Kissinger's On China'.

Even though Kissinger always emphasised Kant over Weber,[808] the significance of the latter also follows from Kissinger's view of international relations. Just as for Weber, morality for Kissinger was restricted to a domain internal to nations. He understood nations as historical and moral entities, but the international domain had no similar resources to back up a common notion of justice that could provide a framework for order. As he wrote, "[t]o itself, a nation appears as an expression of justice […]. To others, it appears as a force or an expression of will."[809] As opposed to Kant, Kissinger did not believe in the existence of a transcendental self that would remove the arbitrary character of this will. In relations between nations, therefore, choice becomes even more central than in domestic politics, because stability resulting from spontaneous action on the basis of moral consensus is not available.[810]

How, then, does this emphasis on responsibility address the problem of stability in a context where neither moral background resources are present (Metternich), nor can stability be based on a precise calculation of the balance of power (Bismarck)? Responsibility as maturity is not in itself a solution to this problem, as it does not provide a common framework of legitimate order within which differences can be negotiated. But it does make it *possible* to move towards such a framework. "For Kissinger," writes Tracy B. Strong, "any given political event is in principle evitable as long as one has adequate skill and understands politics as autonomous."[811] Ideology and administration are two major obstacles to such autonomy in Kissinger's assessment, as both deny the actor's responsibility *to make* choices and *for* those choices. Actors that do not rely on order and meaning residing in either a fully transcendental realm, or in the immanent relation of causes and consequences, will have to

808 Kissinger's somewhat idiosyncratic reading of Kant – by denying that the categorical imperative provides an absolute standard of morality – in itself brings him very close to Weber's position. Scheuerman, 'Realism and the Kantian Tradition', 467–8.
809 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 144.
810 Murray, *Reconstructing Realism*, 146–7.
811 Strong, 'Reflections on Kissinger's On China'.

fall back on their arbitrary choice. Yet, being conscious of facing an 'abyss,' and recognising the limits to their power in implementing their will, they might try to establish a common order through communication – a more Kantian than Weberian hope. The consciousness of responsibility at least potentially moves the problem of order away from the imposition of transcendental truth and from the manipulation of empirical facts to the realm of politics, to a responsiveness to the other's horizon.

The possibility of innovation and creativity hence depends on the availability of the virtue of responsibility as maturity, and Kissinger relies on this for an uncertain path to order. The problem of order is hence not merely that of redistributing responsibilities, but that of evoking a particular disposition of responsibility in actors, a form of real autonomy. His central problem is hence precisely that the superpowers in whose hands the structure of international order lies lack such a character. The USSR had developed into a bureaucratic machinery grounded on ideological criteria.[812] The United States, on the other hand, remained politically immature, suffering both from an idealism that views international politics in moral and legal categories, and from a "Newtonian" culture of dualism and empiricism.[813] America's leaders were, according to Kissinger, insecure, lacking the conviction and assertiveness of great politicians. They were products of a business culture with skills that are "narrowly manipulative rather than conceptual."[814] While domestically they sought to avoid the responsibility of making a choice by searching for consensus, internationally they believed that diplomacy could only function once peace and order had already been achieved by the application of strength.[815]

812 Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', 512.
813 Ibid., 528.
814 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 117.
815 Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice*, 175–180.

Education was one way in which Kissinger tried to address this situation, in an attempt at avoiding Bismarck's mistake of leaving the population politically immature.[816] He aimed at leaving behind a new tradition of foreign policy thinking – first at Harvard and in his publications, later in his speeches and policy documents during his time in government.[817] That was, however, only the domestic side of Kissinger's conception of the statesman's role. Maturity also was in the focus of his international vision, and the rapprochement with China had an important role to play in this. As Kissinger reconstructed it later, the objective of the opening was "to give us a balancing position to use for constructive ends", but also "to purge our foreign policy of all sentimentality."[818]

5.2.5. Communist China as a great power

How, then, does the treatment of China as a great power fit into this picture? The opening to China was clearly a central part of Kissinger's attempt at realising his conception of world order,[819] so much so that it continues to serve as his main example for how to go about doing it.[820] Its significance is commonly interpreted in terms of a balance of power system based on national interest: the opening allowed increased diplomatic manoeuvrability, and made it possible for the US to dynamically balance between the two other actors for the sake of stability and American interests.[821] Increased flexibility was, in turn, an important precondition for redistributing responsibilities, since in a rigid bipolar system other actors were not interested in taking them on as the US could not credibly claim not to stand in for them if they fail to do so.[822]

816 See e.g.: Caldwell, 'The Legitimation of the Nixon-Kissinger Grand Design and Grand Strategy'.
817 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 73–5; Strong, 'Reflections on Kissinger's On China'.
818 Kissinger, *White House Years*, 191–2.
819 Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 181.
820 Kissinger, *World Order*, 10.
821 Goh, 'Nixon, Kissinger, and the "Soviet Card" in the U.S. Opening to China, 1971–1974', 475–6.
822 Rosecrance, 'Kissinger, Bismarck and the Balance of Power', 49–50.

This interpretation of the opening as an instance of the operation of mere balance of power, however, goes against Kissinger's stated belief that in itself it can provide no foundation for order. Decades later, he explicitly pointed to problems with the opening in so far as it was only conceived at the level of balance and national interest: "It depended on the ability of all sides to sustain comparable calculations from case to case."[823] This would not happen naturally but was itself dependent on the existence of some shared framework that provided a similar interpretation of events and hence made the operation of the balance of power relatively spontaneous.[824] My suggestion is that the significance of China and its status as a great power are connected to the possibility of having such a framework in which power relations can be defined.

Neither should the opening be taken to stand in clear continuity with the resurgent great power image of the Johnson administration as Goh would argue.[825] Kissinger reported having "no illusions about the depth of [China's] ideological hostility to us."[826] He understood Beijing's opening towards Washington as a matter of using the US as a counterweight against the Soviet Union,[827] with Mao using "one barbarian (the United States) to control another (the Soviet Union)."[828] As opposed to Nixon, who saw the Soviets as the more aggressive and the Chinese as the more reasonable power,[829] Kissinger found the latter "just as dangerous [as the Russians], in fact […] more dangerous over an historical period."[830] Insofar as this ideological

823 Kissinger, *On China*, 285.
824 The functioning of any *Realpolitik* always depends on shared practical knowledge about reality among the relevant actors. Guzzini, 'The Enduring Dilemmas of Realism in International Relations'.
825 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 165.
826 Memorandum of Conversation, Meeting with the Business Council, Henry Kissinger, Washington, 1 December 1971. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 101.
827 Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, 3 August 1973. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 38. Part 1.*, Document 15. In 1969-70, the State Department understood China as being only interested in better relations with the US for short term strategic gains. Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 148.
828 Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, Washington, 19 February 1972. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 193.
829 Nixon at the meeting of the National Security Council, 14 August 1969, quoted in: Tudda, *A Cold War Turning Point Nixon and China, 1969-1972*, 28.
830 Kissinger to Nixon before the President's trip to China, 14 February 1972. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 192.

distance stood in the way of reconciliation with China during the previous period, the situation did not change at all.

I suggest, therefore, that for Kissinger China's status as a great power reflected neither considerations of an objective balance of power nor the idea of granting China legitimacy in order to draw it into a pre-existing framework of an international community. Instead, it followed from Kissinger's understanding of China's character and from the significance of such a character for the realisation of his conception of international order. The feasibility of Kissinger's conception of order depended on the availability of mature actors. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union was one. But to a certain extent – at least in Kissinger's eyes – China was, and it could thus be his partner in his revolutionary transformation of international order away from the determinate frameworks of ideology and empiricism and towards a political construction.

In 1972, Kissinger portrayed the leaders of China as being "both fanatic and pragmatic. They are tough ideologues who totally disagree with us on where the world is going, or should be going. At the same time, they are hard realists who calculate they need us because of a threatening Soviet Union, a resurgent Japan, and a potentially independent Taiwan."[831] Kissinger regarded the communist government as "deeply ideological, close to fanatic in the intensity of their beliefs."[832] He contrasted American pragmatism in foreign policy with China's insistence on acting on principle, Washington's focus on peace and compromise with Beijing's emphasis on justice and truth.[833] He did find China pragmatic and reliable, but only "within the framework of their principles."[834]

831 Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, Washington, 19 February 1972. Ibid., Document 193.
832 Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, San Clemente, California, 14 July 1971. Ibid., Document 144.
833 Memorandum of Conversation, New York, 5 May 1972. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 111.
834 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 144.

For Kissinger, what allowed the Chinese to combine ideological dynamism with pragmatism based on "an extraordinary depth of understanding about the world situation"[835] was their sense of "inward security."[836] This term was central to Kissinger's conception of freedom as responsibility, as discussed above: an actor's capacity to transcend determinacy was grounded in an inward genesis of a will combined with a similarly inward recognition of limits. In his analysis, China understood itself as a natural great power and, moreover, as a power whose position is further secured by its virtuous character. Its belief in its historical greatness made it into something of "a natural cultural anchor for stable relations."[837] Lacking such self-assurance, the Russians tried to secure their position through physical domination, which inevitably failed. "What they can't dominate, they don't really know how to handle," Kissinger told Nixon.[838] In contrast Mao, together with Zhou Enlai, was for Kissinger the embodiment of inward security, of a combination of visionary leadership and pragmatic flexibility.[839] Furthermore, Kissinger regarded China as one of the "non-Newtonian" civilisations not permeated by empiricist assumptions about reality.[840] Instead of looking for security in fixed legal arrangements or mechanical equilibria, the Chinese exercised the "art of understanding matters in flux."[841] In Kissinger's view, to face that everything was in flux was to face the human condition.[842]

The greatness of China's leaders, for Kissinger, lay in their sense of security that allowed them to act outside the rigid frameworks of the Cold War, to make choices transcending both ideological and pragmatic considerations, and to bring them together in an act of mature freedom. China became a third pole in the Cold War, he later wrote, purely out

835 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 1.*, Document 101.
836 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 144.
837 Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 181.
838 *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 192.
839 Ibid., Document 193.
840 Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', 528.
841 Kissinger, *On China*, 235.
842 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 42.

of its own making: it followed a risky and assertive foreign policy of "giving offense in all directions," challenging the two superpowers simultaneously, while flaunting its disregard for the apparent rules of the atomic age by "creating the impression of being impervious to nuclear devastation."[843] For many this was folly and irresponsibility, but for Kissinger this was an asset. If he regarded himself as a white revolutionary, creating order out of nothing, Mao was his peer. As Kissinger later noted, Mao acted "without law, without heaven," not in the name of order but in that of a not yet existing form of justice.[844] Kissinger was not preoccupied – in contrast with his predecessors – with taming this unpredictable power: it was precisely China's ability to act outside the given parameters that made it a potential partner in a discussion about the principles of a legitimate order.

As opposed to the United States that tended to treat international issues as managerial problems, and to the Soviet Union that always focused on particular, tactical issues, the Chinese insisted on setting the conceptual foundations of the relationship.[845] They understood that limits to their power necessitate diplomatic interaction. Kissinger was not alone in perceiving China as a culture that emphasises moral suasion over force, and stresses the importance of self-restraint in the use of the latter.[846] Without this ability to step outside the fixed terms of ideology and the presuppositions of bureaucratic action in order to negotiate principles, moving towards more manageable relations had proved impossible. For a long time Kissinger believed that the threat of thermonuclear war and thus of death would provide enough of a ground for establishing the limits necessary for order in relations with the Soviet Union.[847] Yet, in the absence of mature leadership the crisis of the Cold War order remained necessarily unaddressed. Thus it was precisely Mao, with his declared lack of concern about

843 Kissinger, *On China*, 148–9; See also: Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 142.
844 Kissinger, *On China*, 228–9.
845 Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 726–7.
846 Klein, 'Chou En-Lai - Henry Kissinger Talks'.
847 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 144.

nuclear annihilation, whom Kissinger saw as a leader with whom the contours of a global order could be negotiated.

Enacting the opening in such a way in itself demonstrated America's political power in Kissinger's eyes: it "established a unique bond," since "[n]o other country today has either the strength or the will to treat the Chinese as equals."[848] Although relations with the Soviet Union remained of unparalleled significance in terms of military power, in a certain sense China played a more central role in defining international order as a whole. As Kissinger recollected, "the Nixon administration would try to solve practical issues with the Soviet Union while maintaining a dialogue on global concepts with the Chinese."[849] The opening to China was not taken as a step against the Soviet Union, but it did aim to evoke increased cooperation and improved relations with Moscow.[850] But China's role went deeper than merely 'playing the China card' against the Soviets[851] – the idea of which only appeared in concrete terms only after Kissinger's first visit to Beijing in 1971.[852] Kissinger argued that "other powers are not factors to be manipulated but forces to be reconciled,"[853] and thus China was not a card but a partner in diplomacy for creating a new framework of order and "to correct [… and] discipline the Russians."[854] Kissinger attempted to remake the character of America's relations with the Soviet Union and of international order through political relations with China. At the Moscow Summit of 1972, he presided over the signing of the "Basic Principles" between the USSR and US as one step in this direction.[855]

848 Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, Washington, 27 June 1972. *FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 234.
849 Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 730.
850 Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974*, 252.
851 The opposite is argued by Zanchetta, *The Transformation of American International Power in the 1970s*. But her analysis assumes that it was possible for the US simply to arrive at a pragmatic balance of power policy by de-emphasising ideology, and that the opening was a result of this.
852 Tudda, *A Cold War Turning Point Nixon and China, 1969-1972*, 207.
853 Kissinger, *A World Restored*, 326.
854 Kissinger to Nixon, 14 February 1972*FRUS, 1969-1976, Vol. 17.*, Document 192.
855 Nixon, 'Text of the "Basic Principles of Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."'; Suri, 'Henry Kissinger and the Geopolitics of Globalization', 187.

Kissinger's China was not the responsible actor imagined as a tamed member of international society. It was its autonomy, its inward security, its mature although revolutionary character that made it an indispensable partner in making the Cold War governable. As he believed that the structure of an age was defined by the interaction between the great powers, he thought that ordered relations between them would be sufficient to stabilise the whole of the system.[856] Greatness for him lay in a mature disposition that allows the creation of order out of chaos, and Kissinger's perception of the character of its leaders identified China for him as a great power.

Conclusion

As the American policy of isolating China as an enemy state was no longer sustainable, in the 1960s Washington re-defined China's identity as that of an irresponsible power that could not be disciplined by force but perhaps could be made more rational by drawing it into the international community. This transformation would have taken place as a result either of the corrective effects of free international interaction, or of giving China a stake – a legitimate status – in the maintenance of international order. These attempts were articulated in a language of responsibility that took the international community as a given and derived a proper rationality and a set of obligations from it, hence effectively treating China as an inferior power.

Kissinger turned this view of China on its head: the problem was not how to make China responsible to preserve international order. The real issue was the crisis of international order, and thus the lack of clear standards of responsibility. Kissinger wanted to break with the solidified certainties of ideology and power relations that, in his view, made the Cold War

856 Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 46, 199–200.

unmanageable. For this he relied on mature actors able to transcend the determinacy of transcendental beliefs and of settled laws of power relations by setting the law for themselves, thus moving a radically different, Kantian-Weberian understanding of responsibility at the centre of his conception of international order. He perceived China as possessing such an inner quality and hence as an equal, great power.

Somewhat paradoxically, Kissinger's project of breaking with the Cold War disorder was based on assumptions some of which were only plausible precisely because of the nature of the Cold War international system, and which became increasingly unrealistic as that system gradually began to change.[857] The absolute technological and military superiority of the two superpowers coupled, with the centrality of this form of power to the structure of the system – including the core problem of thermonuclear war –, supported the plausibility of a clear distinction between the great powers and the rest. Even more importantly, it also contributed, together with other factors, to the relative ease of acting with Weberian maturity. Such a form of responsibility depended on the autonomy of politics, on a clear separation of the public and private domains. The omnipresence of the possibility of war and death reflected in the idea of 'Cold War' also defined, for Weber, the realm of politics. Moreover, the relative separation of the administrative spheres underlying the domestic stability and power capabilities of the major actors – the relative isolation of the economies of the two blocks – also facilitated the conception of the international domain as a public space in relative autonomy from the realm of management.

By the mid-1970s, however, changes in these conditions had already begun to complicate the realisation of Kissinger's political project. A series of regional crises that Kissinger tried to subordinate to – and fix through – triangular diplomacy proved to be driven

857 I would like to thank Alexander Astrov for drawing my attention to this point.

by ‘small powers,’ questioning the exclusive importance of great power relations.[858] In addition, the emerging importance of a global administrative field put pressure on the autonomy of politics. Following the oil crisis of 1973 even Kissinger began to pay attention to the forces of interdependence, as economic and social questions pushed politico-military problems to the background.[859] The extension of societal interaction resulting from the policies of détente and linkage further increased the role of the administrative dimension in great power relations, and Kissinger ended up having to support the socio-economic order of the Soviet Union for the sake of geopolitical stability.[860]

Soon after his departure from government, it was precisely China, the central player in Kissinger's game of politics, that fundamentally altered the dynamics of the Cold War by deciding to abandon the Soviet model in favour of gradual integration into the Western capitalist order.[861] China's reorientation towards economic development through participation in global economic circulations[862] undermined the primacy of politics in US-China relations, and so did the new American focus on human rights and liberal democracy.[863] By the end of the Cold War the emergence of a global administrative field, a belief in the universal triumph of liberal democracy and the receding importance of questions of survival, made Weberian maturity difficult to sustain, while leaving China's relation to this new order an unresolved question of international politics.

858 Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect*.
859 Sergent, ‘The United States and Globalization in the 1970s’; Cleva, *Henry Kissinger and the American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 199–200.
860 Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 182–3.
861 Westad, ‘Conclusion: Was There a Global 1989?’, 272–3.
862 Kim, ‘China in the Third World: In Search of a Peace and Development Line’, 156–7.
863 Tulli, ‘‘Whose Rights Are Human Rights?’.

6.
Global Governmentality and Joint Management in the Post-Cold War World: EU-China-Africa Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation

In the post-Cold War period, the seeming triumph of the Western liberal model as a new global standard of legitimacy and as a rapidly globalising system of governance made the Chinese party-state an anomaly and Kissinger's concept of great power management irrelevant. The experience and discourse of the rapprochement did, however, leave behind an image of China as a non-ideological, pragmatic power with whom it is possible to co-exist.

The West widely believed that this pragmatism would eventually lead China to embrace their superior liberal order. As China defied expectations, however, and continued to increase its wealth and global influence without adopting Western political standards, the problem of maintaining a common global system reappeared. Due to concerns about China's political character, the liberal West was reluctant to grant China a position of authority in deciding the rules of international order. Yet, while China was thus largely excluded from ordering the world in terms of rule-making, it did begin to reshape the world through its increasing influence on the conduct of other actors in world politics, that is, at the level of global administration.

China's new-found influence in the developing world brought this into particularly sharp light. In Africa[864] especially, Western actors voiced their concerns about China's impact

864 I use Africa to refer to sub-Saharan Africa primarily, even if in some cases it also includes countries of the

on the continent's future development. Yet, diverse Western actors also responded by inviting China to cooperate in the field of Africa's development. These initiatives have been interpreted in various ways as interest-based strategic responses, pragmatic problem-solving efforts, and ways of bringing China under the existing normative framework of development.

In this chapter I identify in one of these initiatives the presence of a different rationality, one that takes into account both the ways in which China's influence on the domain of governance undermines any straightforward framework of strategic or pragmatic response, and the ways in which China's power and the freedom of non-Western actors in the system makes the imposition of norms on China unlikely. Analysing the competing rationalities behind the EU's Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation (TDiC) initiative, I locate among them a form of great power management that combines the neoliberal governmentality dominating the development discourse with a reliance on China's responsible character. In this arrangement greatness and responsibility are equated by pushing the liberal understanding of responsibility as calculability into its form as a virtue. This character trait operates prior to any determined framework, in an exceptional space oriented towards an order this time defined in terms of creating and maintaining a calculable domain of administration from the bottom up rather than, as for Kissinger, by setting global principles.

I begin this chapter with a brief overview of China's changing position in contemporary international order with the purpose of locating TDiC in a wider context. This is followed by a discussion of development policy as a central site for managing the globe outside the Western core, with special attention to the way the states of Africa are inserted into international order through a neoliberal development regime. In the next section I zero in on the concrete case of China's intensifying relations with Africa and to the ways in which it

Maghreb.

forms part of broader changes related to the impact of emerging powers on the global development regime. Finally, I analyse the conceptual framework of EU-China-Africa Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation in order to reconstruct the rationality on the basis of which China could appear as an equal partner in jointly managing Africa's development.

6.1. China and the post-Cold War international order

The last decade of the 20th century brought about the combination of the hegemonic position of the United States[865] and of the Western socio-economic model. The (neo-)liberal model of economic development seemed to form a new standard of civilisation.[866] Liberalism, democracy and human rights not only provided widely accepted criteria of legitimacy,[867] but were also understood as elements of a form of governing superior in the production of power to all its alternatives.[868] A globalising system of transnational economic and civil society actors was perceived to offer rules, standards and norms independent of the sovereign authority of states, leading to a "new balance of power" between states and the global civil society.[869]

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, China remained the only country with considerable and rapidly growing power outside the new international consensus on the standards of legitimacy, rejecting the universality of political rights and upholding the principle of state sovereignty.[870] It created carefully circumscribed spaces for external economic interaction in conformity with international standards, but integrated them into a

865 Krauthammer, 'The Unipolar Moment'; Krauthammer, 'The Unipolar Moment Revisited'.
866 Gong, 'Standards of Civilization Today'; Foot, 'Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State'.
867 Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 137–141.
868 Neumann, 'Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007'.
869 Clark, *International Legitimacy and World Society*, 184.
870 Tucker, 'Restoration and Convergence: Russia and China since 1989'; Hurrell, 'Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order'; Feigenbaum, 'China's Challenge to Pax Americana'; Carlson, 'More than Just Saying No: China's Evolving Approach to Sovereignty and Intervention since Tiananmen'; Hughes, 'China and Global Liberalism'.

domestic system that functions according to a different logic.[871] It continued to contest the authority of non-state actors and not state-exclusive organisations while keeping non-governmental organisations under firm state control.[872]

Yet, despite its difference, China was generally not regarded as a danger to international order. The legacy of the Nixon-Kissinger opening played a considerable role in this, as it left behind the long-lasting impression that China is a "pragmatic power" that eschews ideology, or at least subordinates it to its pursuit of economic development and domestic stability.[873] Hence, Beijing has been viewed by many as a state with whom co-existence is possible, and which is open to negotiation and cooperation in the pursuit of mutual gains. This perception also goes some way towards explaining why, in the 1990s, China continued to be "overrated as a market, a power, and a source of ideas."[874]

Since liberal thought posited a necessary positive relationship between liberal politics, economic success and domestic stability, reminiscent of Cold War discourses about the transformative capacity of China's inclusion into inter- and transnational interactions discussed in Chapter 5, China was expected to have only two possible futures: it would either undergo a transformation to liberal market democracy, fully assimilating into the normative and institutional structure of the post-Cold War international order, or it would collapse under the weight of internal tensions before it could become a real challenge.[875] China's pragmatism was "assumed to be nothing more than what intelligent people the world around would do in China's situation," and hence was thought to lead Beijing towards the second option.[876]

871 Westad, *Restless Empire*, 385.
872 Greenhalgh, 'Governing Chinese Life', 158; Mueller, 'China and Global Internet Governance: A Tiger by the Tail'.
873 Fox and Godement, *A Power Audit of EU-China Relations*, 8; Millar, 'The Triumph of Pragmatism'; Pye, 'On Chinese Pragmatism in the 1980s'; Zhao, 'China's Pragmatic Nationalism'; Kurlantzick, 'China's New Diplomacy and Its Impact on the World'.
874 Segal, 'Does China Matter?', 24.
875 Mann, *The China Fantasy.*
876 Pye, 'On Chinese Pragmatism in the 1980s', 207.

The American strategy towards China since the Clinton administration was described as 'hedging,' a combination of supporting the integration of China with structuring its international environment in such a way as to make it a more responsible power.[877] The European Union's declared goal was to assist China in the transition to a liberalised economy, an open, democratic political system, and strong rule of law.[878] It followed a policy of 'constructive engagement' aiming to transform China through increased political and economic contacts and by embedding it into international organisations, instead of applying direct interventions or criticism.[879]

By the mid-2000s, however, it no longer seemed sufficient merely to manage China from the perspective of a more or less operative liberal order. China was by then deeply integrated into not only global trade but also transnational production chains,[880] and it became increasingly clear that most global problems could not be solved without its cooperation. As the United States could not unilaterally impose order, the incorporation of China into the governing structures of the world became urgent.[881] Due to its global weight, "there literally *is no* alternative but to continue to integrate China into the institutions, rules, laws and norms of the international community."[882] The 'responsible stakeholder' discourse, analysed in Chapter 3, offered a response to this problem, but complemented it with an analysis of how China's increasing influence impacted the operation of the liberal system..

877 Nye, *Soft Power*; Nye, 'Work With China, Don't Contain It'; Nye, 'Should China Be "Contained"?'.
878 Cameron, *An Introduction to European Foreign Policy*, 150.
879 Holslag, 'The European Union and China: The Great Disillusion'; Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, 320; Panebianco, 'Promoting Human Rights and Democracy in European Union Relations with Russia and China'.
880 Steinfeld, *Playing Our Game: Why China's Rise Doesn't Threaten the West*.
881 Jia and Rosecrance, 'U.S.-Chinese Interactions over Time', 200.
882 Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, 250, emphasis in original.

There still did not exist a "grand alternative" to the liberal order.[883] The challenge China posed was not directly military, economic or ideological.[884] Rather, its rapidly increasing economic power was perceived to create "new connections that increasingly circumvent the traditional architecture of Western power."[885] Actors could escape having to comply with the requirements of the liberal order by entering into this new space combining, at its centre, capitalism with an illiberal, non-democratic political system. Without the momentum provided by China, the other emerging powers and many smaller actors would arguably have had no possibility to limit their integration into the Western order. China hence neither merged into the *status quo* system nor conflicted with it directly. Instead, it became a central node in a system of new interconnections that "made the Western order progressively less relevant."[886] While China had no capacity to directly contest the liberal order, it was now thought to be capable of undermining its effectiveness by providing an alternative source of wealth creation, business relations and political patronage, thus removing some of the incentives characterising the global milieu in which actors manoeuvred. China's force field posed a challenge to global governmentality as a form of power operating through the 'conduct of conduct,' and through the exclusion and disciplining of those actors that could not be governed as free actors within its structures.

883 Ikenberry, 'The Rise of China: Power and the Western Order'; Ikenberry, 'The Liberal International Order and Its Discontents', 512; Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0'.

884 On those challenges, see: Chan, *China, the US and the Power-Transition Theory*; Levy, 'Power Transition Theory and the Rise of China'; Zhu, *US-China In The 21 Century*; Kirshner, 'The Tragedy of Offensive Realism'; King, *Losing Control*; Friedberg, 'Bucking Beijing'; Kagan, 'League of Dictators?'.

885 Halper, *The Beijing Consensus*, 27.

886 Barma, Ratner, and Weber, 'The Mythical Liberal Order', 8.

6.2. Africa's development as governmentality, and the role of the EU

The perceived problem of China's increased influence on the administrative level of global governance without assimilation into the latter's normative structures and forms of domestic governmentality has been particularly visible in the context of China's growing presence in Africa. Since the late phase of the Cold War, Africa has been "at the *forefront* of a globalised project of neoliberal reform,"[887] and a major target of global transformative projects seeking to turn states into liberal market democracies. The region was also, until recently, characterised primarily as a crisis space of poverty, disease, hunger and conflict, and hence was often portrayed in moralistic terms as a set of states and populations in need of assistance or saving.[888] Tony Blair emblematically stated that "[t]he state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world."[889] Yet, in the same speech he also argued that, in an era of global interdependence, a "deeper and angrier" Africa posed a threat to transnational security and international stability.[890] The continent has been a major location for the moral interventions of international and transnational non-governmental organisations, serving as "the capillary ends of the contemporary networks of power."[891] In the absence of strong states, here perhaps more than anywhere else these actors play the role of the bearers of universal moral – as opposed to national – interests, identifying problems, making judgements about particular situations, and calling on governments to act upon their recommendations.

Practices of international development policy provide today the main modality of inserting Africa into the liberal international order. International development policy is often portrayed as a moral project or as serving the narrow national economic interest of the former

887 Harrison, *Neoliberal Africa*, 4., emphasis in original.
888 Harrison, *The World Bank and Africa*, 13–16; Gallagher, 'Healing The Scar?'; Reid, 'Horror, Hubris and Humanity'
889 'Full Text: Tony Blair's Speech'.
890 Ibid.
891 Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 313.

colonisers, yet it is also a way in which the post-colonial world was sought to be made compatible with the requirements of international order. Despite exceptional practices of international territorial administration or 'surrogate sovereignty,'[892] direct administration of these regions typical of the colonial period largely gave way to more indirect forms of control. Some of these concerned supporting authoritarian rulers for the sake of stability and compliance. The economy and security of most post-colonial states continued to depend on their former masters, and thus remained "a special European responsibility" within the West.[893] More broadly, however, the governance of these new states as free, sovereign actors was conducted above all in the new field of international development policy.[894]

The idea of 'development' as a "conscious set of policies to promote improvement and progress" goes back to the 1930s if not to the Enlightenment.[895] "Development as world making," however, was first set out only in the context of the Cold War in Truman's Point Four Program of 1949 as a way of managing "the threat to the developed world by the rage of the world's rapidly breeding poor."[896] Hence, during the Cold War, development was not only an important stage for ideological confrontation between the domestic models of the United States and the Soviet Union.[897] By disrupting or eliminating traditional sources of social and political order in the societies concerned, modernisation was expected to generate disorder and vulnerability.[898] The task of the practice of development was not only to bring about modernisation of a particular kind, but always also to prevent it from generating transnational

892 Wilde, *International Territorial Administration*; Jackson, *Surrogate Sovereignty? Great Power Responsibility and 'Failed States'*.
893 George Ball, American Under-Secretary of State in the Kennedy administration, quoted in: Cumming and Chafer, 'From Rivalry to Partnership?'.
894 Watson, *The Limits of Independence*, 64–67.
895 Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 3.
896 Mazower, *Governing the World*, 273, 275; Escobar, *Encountering Development*.
897 Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 112, 155.
898 Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 210.

threats or international instability by reconstituting order.[899] It was "counterinsurgency morphed into social engineering" and handed over to economists and engineers.[900]

Thus, development served a novel function during the Cold War: it was neither the direct colonial imposition of particular norms of socio-political organisation on subject populations, nor a matter of economic co-ordination among the developed states for the sake of stability. Development emerged as an instrument and "conceptual framework"[901] for shaping the field of action, internal organisation, and aspirations of the large number of weak but sovereign states emerging from decolonisation, by inserting them into a framework within which power was constructed and exercised through the production of knowledge about economic progress and poverty.[902] It served to "accelerate, channel and direct" the post-colonial transformation of the globe towards "a functioning international system along liberal lines."[903]

Until the 1970s, state-centric development models dominated, but were brought to question by the clear failure of this strategy in Vietnam and by concerns about the growing economic nationalism of post-colonial states. By the 1980s a new, neoliberal framework began to emerge to discipline the new-found activism of the Third World, a problem to which Kissinger could never respond properly in his great power framework.[904] From a world-wide state-centric project of modernisation, development policy was transformed into a regime concerning exclusively the global South.[905] In the new framework of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), states that were previously required only to execute the project plans for

899 Duffield and Hewitt, 'Introduction', 11.
900 Mazower, *Governing the World*, 265.
901 Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 201.
902 Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 9.
903 Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 2.
904 Harrison, *The World Bank and Africa*; Taylor, *The International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa*, 115–6; Tan, *Governance through Development*, 62.
905 Tan, *Governance through Development*, 112.

which they received financing now also had to adjust their general policy frameworks in order to get access to credit and other external financial resources. Corresponding to this shift, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) moved to the centre of formulating and administering development policy, and penetrated the internal structures of states.[906] These institutions set the standards and regulative frameworks for the new policy conditionalities – directed at rolling back the state and giving an extended role for the market and for private investment[907] – while also performing the task of surveillance, backed up by the disciplinary force of cutting off credit disbursement.[908]

After the end of the Cold War, Africa's importance for the West greatly diminished.[909] Having lost its strategic importance, and having entered into a long period of crisis, it appeared as a failed continent, a category of its own within the *problématique* of development.[910] Western relations with Africa were at first dominated by the belief that the forces of globalisation would bring about development automatically, if states and societies related to them in a proper manner.[911] Washington introduced a series of economic and political conditionalities for accessing its trade-based development instruments and largely delegated its Africa policy to the international financial institutions (IFIs), who acted as "surrogates" for US interests.[912] The former colonial powers, Great Britain and France, also shifted their Africa policy to global institutions of development and to the European Union.[913]

906 Ibid., 83.
907 Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 234.
908 Tan, *Governance through Development*.
909 Rothchild and Emmanuel, 'United States: The Process of Decision-Making on Africa', 58–9; Rothchild, 'The U.S. Role in Promoting Peaceful African Relations'; Hurt, 'The European Union's External Relations with Africa after the Cold War', 157–8.
910 Clapham, 'The Evolution of Africa's International Relations', 35.
911 Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*, 261.
912 Hentz, 'The Contending Currents in United States Involvement in Sub-Saharan Africa', 29; Rothchild and Emmanuel, 'United States: The Process of Decision-Making on Africa'; Copson, *The United States in Africa*.
913 Williams, *British Foreign Policy Under New Labour*; Porteous, *Britain in Africa*; Kroslak, 'France's Foreign Policy towards Africa: Continuity or Change?'; Chafer, 'Franco-African Relations'; Médard, 'France and Sub-Saharan Africa: A Privileged Relationship'; On the remaining national differences, see: Cumming and Chafer, 'From Rivalry to Partnership?'.

The EU thus became the main political actor in Africa's international relations. Its Africa policy was conducted in an increasingly stringent framework of conditionalities based partly on the EU's values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and partly on the development framework set by the IFIs.[914] While the 1975 Lomé agreement between the EU and Africa originally had the form of an agreement between equal sovereigns,[915] its fourth revision in 1990 put in place political conditionalities in line with the EU's global development policy, according to which democracy and human rights should be seen as both objectives and conditions of successful development.[916] The next revision of Lomé in 1995 and its successor, the Cotonou agreement of 2000, deepened and broadened the economic and political requirements, increasingly centred EU-Africa relations on the question of development, and integrated it further into the global neoliberal development architecture and its emphasis on good governance.

By the early 2000s, in both Washington's and Brussel's relations with Africa, the liberal goals of development were increasingly subordinated to questions of security, especially regarding failed states, terrorism and migration.[917] All major Western actors – with the partial exception of reluctant France – hence converged on locating Africa in global order primarily as a problem to be managed, and on conducting this task in the framework of an increasingly securitised development policy. Moreover, all of these actors increasingly acted through and formulated their own policies in line with an international architecture of governance and surveillance centred on the IMF and the World Bank.[918]

914 Hurt, 'The European Union's External Relations with Africa after the Cold War'; Taylor, 'Governance and Relations between the European Union and Africa'.
915 Brown, *The European Union and Africa*, 3–4.
916 Taylor, *The International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa*, 109.
917 Khadiagala, 'Euro-African Relations in the Age of Maturity'; Youngs, *The EU's Role in World Politics*; Olsen, 'Promoting Democracy, Preventing Conflict: The European Union and Africa'; Walle, 'US Policy towards Africa'.
918 Williams and Young, 'The International Politics of Social Transformation'; Tan, *Governance through Development*, 208–213; Harrison, *Neoliberal Africa*, 24.

After 1990, this international architecture itself underwent transformations in three significant directions, partly as a reaction to the failure of SAPs and partly reflecting the emerging dominance of the discourses of new institutional economics and new public management.[919] These changes towards target-led and more harmonised global development policy were ultimately enshrined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness signed under the aegis of the OECD-DAC, the main forum of major donor countries.

First, from 1989 onwards the focus of development shifted from a neoliberal roll-back of the state to a concern with 'good governance.' Instead of limiting the role of the state, policies now aimed at reconstituting and in some ways strengthening it as an institutional basis that can support the proper functioning of the market.[920] Conditionalities focusing on narrowly technical issues of economic policy gave way to requirements related to the "generic functioning" of the state, including the broader social and cultural environment of the process of policy-making.[921] Civil society, national and international NGOs, private economic actors and local governments were mobilised and empowered against the central government for the purpose of reconstituting the nature of state conduct.[922] In this "historically unprecedented reconfiguration of state forms in post-colonial Africa,"[923] development acquired an increasingly anticipative and preventative character: sanctions for non-implementation were largely replaced by incentives to reform, while the discourse on failed states requiring direct international intervention transformed into one on 'fragile states' in need of developing proper institutional frameworks.[924]

919 Harrison, *The World Bank and Africa*, 81.
920 Hewitt, 'Empire, International Development and the Concept of Good Government', 36.
921 Harrison, *The World Bank and Africa*, 18.
922 Hewitt, 'Empire, International Development and the Concept of Good Government', 36–38.
923 Harrison, *The World Bank and Africa*, 3.
924 Duffield, 'Liberal Interventionism and the Fragile State'.

Second, with the introduction of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in 1999 as the central documents organising development policy, responsible self-governance was given emphasis in the governance of African states.[925] In line with the new central term of 'ownership,' developing states are expected to prepare their own national development strategies – hence removing the element of direct imposition of models by the IFIs – that are evaluated by the international institutions with the purpose of deciding which countries are eligible for access to development financing. While this formally gives more freedom to the states concerned, it also disciplines them as they try to prepare their comprehensive national development strategy according to the guidelines of the IFIs in order to guarantee successful application for funds. This results in 'voluntary' self-policing that works through, rather than against, the formal autonomy of governments, with their conduct conducted by the structure of incentives and the intellectual and discursive hegemony of the IFIs. As Tan argues, this is tantamount to a move from "Foucault's disciplinary society to a society of control," where government takes as its principle the freedom of the governed and guides that freedom by shaping their milieu as well as their subjectivity.[926] The PRSP framework is hence an instance of a particularly liberal form of governmentality aiming at refashioning "states and societies not so much by constraining them from without as by effecting changes from within, such that they become fit for and fit into the newly developing global architectures."[927]

Finally, PRSPs provide a shared standard that enables the coordinated and effective operation of the "global administrative space" of "network governance" characterising the current development landscape.[928] They are symbolic of the new, decentralised yet deeply integrated and coherent field of regulatory power and authority that encompasses local civil

925 Tan, *Governance through Development*; Tan, 'The New Biopower'; Harrison, *Neoliberal Africa*.
926 Tan, *Governance through Development*, 127.
927 Williams and Young, 'The International Politics of Social Transformation', 111; See also: Hardt and Negri, *Empire*.
928 Tan, *Governance through Development*, 208–213.

society as well as the state, development NGOs or trans- and international actors into a single development community.[929] Instead of standardising norms for statehood and economic policies, this new system of development effects the "transnationalization of public administrative system and administrative law and policy."[930] By providing shared standards of discriminating responsible and irresponsible governments, it also minimizes the room for manoeuvre available for recipient states to turn to various donors.[931]

In the post-Cold War era, Africa has increasingly been portrayed as a problem to be managed, and this task increasingly undertaken in the framework of a global development architecture organised around the OECD-DAC within which various goals could be accommodated. The instruments and policies of development provide a "regulatory technology of security" by which these states can be transformed in a way that simultaneously supports their administrative power for the purpose of contributing to both regulating a transnational space of civil society and economic processes as well as to the provision of human security, and renders their sovereignty relative to the performance of these tasks.[932] The effectiveness of this framework of governmentality, however, depends on the coherence of the overall milieu within which the states whose conduct is thus conducted act, as well as on the discursive dominance and common sense nature of the forms of knowledge underlying it. China's entry into Africa's political and economic scene as a trading partner, investor and – to a lesser extent – donor must be understood in relation to this administrative space, this system of governmentality centred on development, into which the states of sub-Saharan Africa are inserted.

929 Williams and Young, 'The International Politics of Social Transformation', 109.
930 Tan, *Governance through Development*, 208–9.
931 Thomas, 'The International Financial Institutions' Relations with Africa', 185–6.
932 Duffield and Hewitt, 'Introduction', 10; Duffield, 'Liberal Interventionism and the Fragile State'.

6.3. The Chinese challenge and Western responses

The People's Republic of China (PRC) entered the space of African development partly as a result of its 'going out' policy that provided incentives for Chinese companies to seek markets and experience abroad. By the mid-2000s, China became one of the leading trade and investment partners of the continent.[933] Although the PRC offered little in terms of development aid compared to the EU or the US, it provided significant amounts of finance to Africa for export-facilitating purposes and was also active in the delivery of softer forms of international assistance, ranging from the construction of public buildings, technical cooperation of experts to human resource development and cultural exchange.[934]

China's economic expansion could build on long-standing bilateral political relations. Although, after the beginning of its economic opening in 1978, Africa lost its importance for China as a platform of world revolution, in the period after the Tienanmen crackdown an isolated Beijing received invaluable political support from countries of the continent.[935] Beijing weaved together economic expansion and impressive diplomatic presence with references to a common history of fighting against Western imperialism.[936] China's political impact was supported by Beijing's policy of treating African states as equals and important international actors. Every year since 1991, the first destination of the foreign minister of China is Africa, and the PRC organises a triennial Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) since 2000. The 2006 meeting in Beijing, where the delegates of 48 African states, among them 35 heads of states, were present, has been characterised as the ultimate wake-up call for the West that the balance of influence in Africa is quickly shifting to the advantage of

933 Alden, *China in Africa*, 104; Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*; Shinn, *China's Growing Role in Africa*.
934 Brautigam, 'Chinese Development Aid in Africa'; Brautigam, 'Aid "With Chinese Characteristics"'; 'The China-Africa Toolkit'.
935 Kim, 'China in the Third World: In Search of a Peace and Development Line'.
936 Alden, *China in Africa*, 27–28; Shinn, *China's Growing Role in Africa*.

China.[937] China's presence is further enhanced by its network of cultural institutes, large-scale exchange programs, media services, peacekeeping forces, and various programs of know-how transfer.[938]

Some saw in China's new presence the potentially greatest single change in Africa's situation since decolonization, an end of Western hegemony over the future of Africa.[939] Initially, Beijing played up this political dimension of its 'return' to the continent. At the first two meetings of the FOCAC in 2000 and 2003, China's leaders heavily criticised western "hegemonism" as a major force beyond the continuing unevenness of development, and called for a common South-South front to promote the democratisation of international relations and "to establish an equitable and just new international and economic order."[940] By the time of the FOCAC meeting of 2006, however, China moderated its anti-hegemonic discourse and turned towards the business jargon of "win-win" relationship.[941] References to the common struggle against colonization gave way to an emphasis on common experience in economic development and peacekeeping, and on the record of economic cooperation between the two sides in the preceding years.[942]

Western reactions were mixed, some emphasizing the opportunities expanding relations with China provided for Africa, others deeply critical about its effects. The mainstream media was starkly negative about China's impact, placing it in an often false contrast with Western influence.[943] China was accused of undermining Western efforts "to

937 Yu, 'China's Africa Policy: South-South Unity and Cooperation', 136.
938 Shinn, *China's Growing Role in Africa*.
939 Cheru and Obi, 'Introduction - Africa in the Twenty-First Century: Strategic and Development Challenges', 1.
940 Jiang, 'China and Africa-Usher in the New Century Together'; Shi, 'To Intensify China-Africa Cooperation for a Brilliant Future'; Wen, 'Let Us Build on Our Past Achievements and Promote China-Africa Friendly Cooperation on All Fronts'.
941 Alden, *China in Africa*, 121.
942 Hu, 'Address by Hu Jintao President of the People's Republic of China at the Opening Ceremony of the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation'; Wen, 'Strengthen China-Africa Cooperation for Mutual Benefit'.
943 Hirono and Suzuki, 'Why Do We Need "Myth-Busting" in the Study of Sino–African Relations?';

spread democracy and prosperity" by its new, "colonial" presence.[944] It was characterised as a "new imperialist power," a beast devouring Africa and its riches.[945] Diplomatic actors often struck a similar chord, accusing China of replicating the patterns of colonialism: extracting the continent's abundant natural resources in a completely unequal economic relation, and leaving nothing but the illusion of development behind.[946] A German State Secretary in the Development Ministry raised the possibility of "a new process of colonization,"[947] while both the European Parliament and Hillary Clinton warned China not to repeat the mistakes of European colonialism.[948]

The impact of expanding relations with China on Africa's economic development was a major concern. The advantages of infrastructural development and growing investment levels were contrasted to the costs of unbalanced external trade relations, while the apparent irresponsibility of China's lending practices was feared to lead Africa into a new debt trap.[949] The effects on the political evolution of African countries were expected to be even more unambiguously negative.[950] Paul Wolfowitz, then president of the World Bank, strongly criticized China for lending to African countries without conditionalities on human rights and environmental standards.[951] China was accused of sheltering non-democratic regimes from international pressure by insisting on the principle of sovereignty and by ignoring Western

Mawdsley, 'Fu Manchu versus Dr Livingstone in the Dark Continent?'.

944 'China: The New Colonialists'.

945 Lorenz and Thielke, 'The Age of the Dragon'; Halff, 'The Panda Menace'.

946 This charge was made – among others – by Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa: 'Mbeki Warns on China-Africa Ties', see also: Fisher, 'In Zimbabwe, Chinese Investment With Hints of Colonialism'.

947 Quoted in: Taylor, 'The EU's Perceptions and Interests towards China's Rising Influence on Human Rights in Africa', 129.

948 European Parliament, Committee on Development, 'Draft Report on China's Policy and Its Effects on Africa (2007/XXXX(INI))', 11; 'Clinton Warns against New Colonialism in Africa'.

949 Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*; Broadman, 'Chinese-African Trade and Investment: The Vanguard of South-South Commerce in the Twenty-First Century'; Broadman, *Africa's Silk Road*; Clapham, 'Fitting China In'; Goldstein and Pinaud, *The Rise of China and India*; Yu, 'China's Africa Policy: South-South Unity and Cooperation'.

950 Taylor, 'The "All-Weather Friend"?'; Tull, 'China's Engagement in Africa: Scope, Significance and Consequences', 339.

951 Crouigneau and Hiault, 'Wolfowitz Slams China Banks on Africa Lending'.

sanctions, thus undermining the fragile process of liberal democratic transformation on the continent.[952] China's domestic political system and lack of respect for human rights and democratic aspirations further stoked these fears.[953] Washington feared that China was "gain[ing] a stranglehold on precious African natural resources, and undo[ing] much of the progress that has been made on democracy and governance in the last 15 years."[954]

China's rise as a development player in Africa has taken place in the context of a broader transformation of the global development system.[955] By the 2000s that system experienced a large deficit of both input and output legitimacy. Its major institutions – the World Bank and the OECD-DAC – continued to be dominated by donor countries, while the policies they promoted had little results to show for them. This crisis coincided with an external challenge posed by the considerable influence actors outside the DAC consensus on development began to exert on the field.[956]

Many of these actors – including China – claimed to continue a long-standing tradition of South-South cooperation (SSC).[957] SSC rejects a number of fundamental elements of the DAC system.[958] It stands for a horizontal partnership for mutual benefits based on political equality and strategic needs. Instead of a one-way transfer of a universal model of development from the developed countries, it emphasises mutual learning from diverse forms of experience. Rather than establishing a hierarchical donor-recipient relationship with its moral connotations and through the instrument of aid, it stresses equality and interest-driven

952 Carlson, 'More than Just Saying No: China's Evolving Approach to Sovereignty and Intervention since Tiananmen'; Large, 'From Non-Interference to Constructive Engagement?'; Taylor, *China's New Role in Africa*.
953 Brown and Sriram, 'China's Role in Human Rights Abuses in Africa'; Brookes and Shin, 'China's Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States'.
954 Quoted in: Alden, *China in Africa*, 106.
955 Six, 'The Rise of Postcolonial States as Donors'; Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim, 'A "Post-Aid World"?'.
956 Walz and Ramachandran, 'Brave New World'.
957 Renzio and Seifert, 'South–South Cooperation and the Future of Development Assistance'.
958 Kopiński and Sun, 'New Friends, Old Friends?'; Six, 'The Rise of Postcolonial States as Donors'; Quadir, 'Rising Donors and the New Narrative of "South–South" Cooperation'.

pragmatism for mutual development. Emphasising the absolute principle of political autonomy, it rejects conditionalities attached to development cooperation.

These general features of the SSC do not necessarily mean either that the emerging countries all follow the same model or that this model in fact describes their individual policies. They do, however, point to a number of important differences with the DAC system (development rather than aid, equality rather than hierarchy, etc.) and contribute to the impression that Western hegemony in global development is waning. The rise of new centres of development cooperation outside the traditional discursive space challenges the definitional and normative hegemony of the West and ends the relative unity of the epistemic community that underlay the power of these norms.[959]

In the case of China these concerns came together in the idea of a 'Beijing Consensus,' supposedly providing an alternative to the Washington Consensus on international order and development.[960] Although experts remained sceptical about exporting the Chinese experience, the very existence of a successful alternative to the liberal path of development gave "an impetus to the breakdown of any universal dogma."[961] Dealing with China was attractive to developing states not so much because of a copyable model as for "the lack of projection of any model."[962] China's rise was thus seen to end the taken-for-granted position of the Western liberal development model.

In response to these changes, Western development actors shifted their discourse from aid to development while simultaneously downplaying hierarchies and stressing horizontality and equal partnership.[963] There have also been moves to loosen conditionalities and standards

959 Esteves and Assunção, 'South–South Cooperation and the International Development Battlefield', 1782; Six, 'The Rise of Postcolonial States as Donors'.
960 Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus*.
961 Kennedy, 'The Myth of the Beijing Consensus', 476; Ferchen, 'Whose China Model Is It Anyway?'.
962 Breslin, 'The "China Model" and the Global Crisis', 1338.
963 Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim, 'A "Post-Aid World"?'.

in order to gain some ground back from the emerging players.[964] Beginning already in 2005, the West also took steps to directly engage the new actors.[965] The OECD, the World Bank and the United Nations all set up multilateral fora for North-South dialogue and knowledge exchange, while questions of international economic governance were largely shifted from the G7 to the G20, which latter also includes powerful members of the developing world. Western countries and development agencies also partnered with new development actors to deliver projects in a third country in a framework called trilateral development cooperation (TDC). The OECD's Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 in Busan granted official legitimation to the new development agents and an agreed framework for trilateral cooperation.

China's central role in these developments as the emerging power with the largest clout was manifest in that Busan's success was secured only when Beijing decided to sign the agreement.[966] By that time China had already been involved in, or invited to, a number of cooperation initiatives touching upon Africa's development, including the DAC-China Study Group, civil society[967] and inter-governmental[968] dialogue with the United States, the European Union's Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation (TdiC),[969] and an initiative by Britain in 2010.[970]

964 Kopiński and Sun, 'New Friends, Old Friends?'.
965 Abdenur and Da Fonseca, 'The North's Growing Role in South–South Cooperation'; Esteves and Assunção, 'South–South Cooperation and the International Development Battlefield'; Mawdsley, *From Recipients to Donors*.
966 Mawdsley, Savage, and Kim, 'A "Post-Aid World"?', 30.
967 Africa-China-US Dialogue: Report of the First Meeting of the Trilateral Dialogue; Africa-China-U.S. Trilateral Dialogue Summary Report. See also: http://www.thebrenthurstfoundation.org/thought-leadership-2007.htm.
968 U. S. Department Of State. The Office of Website Management, 'Joint Press Release on the First Round of the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue'.
969 Council of the European Union, '10th China-EU Summit, Beijing, Joint Statement, 16070/07 (Presse 279)'. Council of the European Union, 'Joint Statement of the 12th EU-China Summit, Nanjing, China, 16845/09 (Presse 353)'.
970 'UK Seeks China Aid Partnership in Africa'.

In light of the importance of the practices and principles of Western development policy, and of the centrality of moral and political concerns to framing Africa, these initiatives raise the question of the rationality within which China could appear as a partner. A major role has certainly been played by pragmatic considerations aiming to increase the efficiency of development by combining the experience and resources of the OECD and China on the basis of their presumed complementarity.[971] Pragmatic problem-solving, however, presupposes that the problem is already clearly described in a way that is shared between those participating in its resolution. Given that China's presence was perceived to question the underlying liberal assumptions about the nature of development, cooperation initiatives in this field at first sight appear problematic. The very existence of such cooperation efforts, in fact, signal precisely the lack of a common framework, as they need to be conducted with partners that do not operate within the settled rules of development cooperation set by Western institutions.

It is not surprising, then, that experts, African states and China alike noted the potential of such cooperation for reproducing the dominance of the Western development system and its norms.[972] Traditional donors could harness the emerging actors as "cheap contractors" while maintaining their hegemony in setting the agenda of development.[973] By sharing the success of South-South projects and appearing as their promoters, they could also gain much needed legitimacy. Cooperation with SSC has been seen as a way of maintaining Western relevance and power, but also as a way of socialising new actors into the OECD's framework of norms through interaction.[974] This recalls both the hopes of the 1960s about

971 For doubts about such complementarity, see: Patey and Large, 'Cooperating with China in Africa'.
972 Grimm, 'The China-EU Strategic Partnership on Development: Unfulfilled Potential'; McEwan and Mawdsley, 'Trilateral Development Cooperation'; Abdenur and Da Fonseca, 'The North's Growing Role in South–South Cooperation'.
973 McEwan and Mawdsley, 'Trilateral Development Cooperation', 1197.
974 Abdenur and Da Fonseca, 'The North's Growing Role in South–South Cooperation'; Gallagher, 'Ruthless Player or Development Partner?'.

taming and educating China into becoming a responsible power through inclusion (see Chapter 5), and the post-Cold War belief in the effective operation of the same mechanism. Yet, while in the case of less powerful emerging actors this might work, precisely in the case of China hopes of socialisation clash with pragmatic concerns about China's immediate impact on the maintenance of an effective development regime. Insofar as such initiatives are concerned not only with education but also with managing China's growing influence, they also react to a problem defined in terms of the liberal rationality of government.

Grappling with the limitations of pragmatism, co-option and socialisation, however, another rationality of cooperating with China despite the significant normative differences was also formulated in at least one of the initiatives, the EU's TDiC. This, I show in the following section, was a form of great power management that breaks with both the *status quo* orientation of pragmatism and with projects of socialising China, opening up the framework of norms to negotiation and dynamic change while keeping it directed at a neoliberal governmental form of international order.

6.4. EU-China-Africa Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation

The EU's policy of Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation was formulated during the years 2007 and 2008.[975] The possibility of cooperating with China on Africa was first raised in 2005, and first discussed with China during the 9th EU-China Summit of 2006, before its incorporation into the EU's 2006 China strategy in the fields of energy security and development.[976] On 15 June 2007, a first meeting between Africa Directors of the EU and China was organised in Beijing, followed by a conference organised by the EU involving

975 For a detailed process tracing analysis of the initiative, see: Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa'.

976 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China, and Africa: Global Governance Through Functional Multilateralism', 69, fn. 1; 'Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Jiang Yu's Press Conference on February 15, 2007'; European Commission, 'EU-China: Closer Partners, Growing Responsibilities, COM (2006) 631 Final'.

experts and politicians on 28 June 2007. On 28 November the same year, the Joint Statement at the end of the Tenth China-EU Summit already included a reference to a "dialogue on African issues," and to the active exploration of "effective ways and channels of cooperation among China, the EU and Africa in appropriate areas."[977] In July 2008, the European Commission published a report on a public consultation held earlier that year,[978] the results of which were channelled into the Commission communication "The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation" published in October the same year, which shifted the framework from a bilateral to a trilateral form.[979]

The TDiC was initiated by civil servants in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Development (DG DEV). In order to reconstruct the rationality beyond it, I rely on the broader context set by the EU's strategies on development, global governance and Africa, as well as on a number of articles authored by Uwe Wissenbach, who served as coordinator of the EU-China dialogue on Africa in DG DEV at the time the policy was created,[980] and whose idea of 'functional multilateralism' formed the basis of the original formulation of the initiative.[981]

6.4.1. The paradoxes of cooperation

The EU's development policy has at its core a combination of liberal values, good governance and African ownership. The Cotonou Agreement, concluded with Africa in 2000, was considered by Brussels as exemplary for its relationship with third countries since, besides the "essential elements" of human rights and democracy, it also included the rule of law and good

977 Council of the European Union, '10th China-EU Summit, Beijing, Joint Statement, 16070/07 (Presse 279)'.
978 European Commission, 'Report on the Public Consultation...'
979 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641'.
980 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*.
981 Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa', 212.

governance.[982] These values were also placed at the centre of the "European Consensus on Development" as well as of the Commission's Africa strategy in 2005, and of the joint EU-Africa strategy of 2007.[983] The centrality of good or democratic governance to the EU's development policy was even discussed in a separate document.[984]

Since 2005, the EU's policy also emphasised the principle of African ownership, shifting to the developing states "the primary responsibility for creating and enabling domestic environment for mobilising their own resources, including conducting coherent and effective policies."[985] Instead of imposing prescriptions or using sanctions as policy devices, it stressed African agency and the use of incentives, while emphasising the necessity of moving beyond donor-recipient relationship, and of conducting relations on the basis of "a genuine partnership of equals" and of mutual and complementary interests and benefits.[986] The new policy of "going beyond development cooperation, beyond Africa, beyond fragmentation and beyond institutions" referred to this new partnership of equals, to treating Africa as a single actor and to extending cooperation to global issues and to civil society.[987]

The TDiC initiative granted such formally equal status to Africa by lifting the task of responding to China's increasing influence in Africa out of the framework of the China-EU Strategic Partnership, but it also meant that the EU would not delegate the issue to the OECD-DAC.[988] It shared with other TDC initiatives the goal of coordinating aid policies in order to

982 European Commission, 'The European Union's Role in Promoting Human Rights and Democratisation in Third Countries, COM(2001) 252 Final', 4.
983 European Parliament, Council and Commission, 'The European Consensus on Development'; Council of the European Union, 'The EU and Africa: Towards a Strategic Partnership, 15961/05 (Presse 367)'; Council of the European Union, 'The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership: A Joint Africa-EU Strategy, 16344/07 (Presse 291)'.
984 European Commission, 'Governance in the European Consensus on Development, COM(2006) 421 Final'.
985 European Parliament, Council and Commission, 'The European Consensus on Development', para. 14.
986 European Commission, 'Beyond Lisbon: Making the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership Work, SEC(2007) 856'.
987 European Commission, 'From Cairo to Lisbon, COM (2007) 357 Final'.
988 Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa'.

avoid the negative consequences of unnecessary competition and to maximise efficiency.[989] TDiC was defined as a pragmatic approach aimed at building common goals from practical, sectoral and functional cooperation on the ground (in the fields of peace and security; support for African infrastructure; sustainable management of the environment and of natural resources; and agriculture and food security), but also with a view to the broader horizon of development policy.[990]

Given the significant and acknowledged differences between the values and models of the EU's and China's development framework, however, conceiving of such cooperation was not without difficulties.[991] In April 2007, the European Parliament published a highly critical report on China's record in Africa in the fields of human rights, democracy and sustainable development, and called upon Beijing to adopt adequate standards.[992] It pointed out that China's socialization into the values promoted by the EU or the international community has its "limits determined by the poor level of basic rights, freedoms and accountability enacted at home."[993] The EP also warned the EU not to emulate in its response to China's emergence "China's methods and aims, since that would not necessarily be compatible with EU values, principles and long-term interests," and demanded the continuation of "positive conditionality" in the EU's policy towards Africa in order to act "consistently with its own values, principles and commitments."[994]

The advocates of cooperation acknowledged the existence of significant differences in values, but argued it should not be a problem for cooperation. In February 2007, Javier

989 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*.
990 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641', 5.
991 Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa'.
992 European Parliament, Committee on Development, 'Draft Report on China's Policy and Its Effects on Africa (2007/XXXX(INI))'.
993 Ibid., 12.
994 Ibid., 5, 7.

Solana, then High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU, called for closer cooperation between the EU and China on the basis of shared responsibility and interest in Africa's development.[995] In the same year, Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, talking to the participants of the conference preparing the TDiC, rejected the "barrage of criticism that some in the West directed at China's mounting role in Africa."[996] Yet problems were acknowledged. Wissenbach noted China's "colonial" practice of bundling trade, investment and a quest for natural resources as a worrying phenomenon,[997] just as he did China's denial of the nexus between the goals of security, good governance, human rights and development in its own development model.[998] In the Commission document on TDiC, differences were clearly acknowledged: the aims of the EU are "to eradicate poverty, reach the Millennium Development Goals and promote security, human rights, democratic governance, sustainable development, regional integration and integration into the world economy," whereas China's Africa policy is based on "the focus on sovereignty, solidarity, peace and development with non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit as key principles."[999]

The real question was how exactly this normative divergence mattered from the perspective of development cooperation. Wissenbach argued that ideological and moralistic reactions to China's rise in Africa followed from a mistaken and ideological view of China, and from an emotional-moralising image of Africa. He contended that those who reprimanded China for not being a responsible stakeholder made the mistake "not to engage China as it is, but to ask China to become as we would like it to be."[1000] Such an approach paralysed China-

995 Solana, 'Challenges for EU-China Cooperation in Africa'.
996 Michel, 'UE-Chine-Afrique: D'Une Relation de Concurrence à Un Partenariat Triangulaire Pour Le Développement de l'Afrique, SPEECH/07/442' My translation.
997 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China and Africa: Working for Functional Cooperation?', 251.
998 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China, and Africa: Global Governance Through Functional Multilateralism', 70.
999 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641', 1–2.
1000 Wissenbach, 'A New Seoul Consensus on Development', 26.

policy and – due to China's weight in the international system – also stalled global governance. He also stressed the importance of leaving behind a charity and assistance approach to Africa, and to see the continent in terms of business opportunities and African agency.[1001] He thought China should be welcome in Africa by the West as a player that is effective, brings resources, and delivers real results. Its prioritisation of economic over humanitarian motives also made the EU perceive Africa differently, as a place with which relations could be built on the basis of mutual benefits.[1002]

Coordination with China, at one level, was justified in terms of efficiency, as a way to avoid losses due to the duplication of efforts and conflicting approaches.[1003] This effectiveness of development, however, was conceptualised broadly, in terms of a system of global governance. In Wissenbach's words, "[i]nterdependence between the different state and non-state actors, domestic and external policies, political and commercial activities or mutual reactions form a complex web of opportunities and challenges that cannot be captured by simple power games such as the EU against China or by rigid normative templates."[1004] Lack of coordination with China would undermine the force of Western conditionalities: "EU/US policies and sanctions do not work if China seizes the resulting opportunities to asymmetrically strengthen its positions and interests."[1005] "Great Power competition" and "ideological rivalry" over Africa might even spill over to the global level.[1006]

In the broader context, however, TDiC was also understood as the testing ground of the EU-China partnership in the management of global affairs. One early policy paper on the topic asserted that "[t]he improvement of cooperation in Africa is especially important

1001 Wissenbach, 'The Renaissance or the End of Geopolitics? Towards Trilateral Cooperation in Africa', 54.
1002 Wissenbach, 'A New Seoul Consensus on Development', 26.
1003 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641', 5.
1004 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China and Africa: Working for Functional Cooperation?', 262.
1005 Wissenbach, *The EU's Effective Multilateralism - but with Whom?*, 9.
1006 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China and Africa: Working for Functional Cooperation?', 260.

because it is part of setting up a credible cornerstone for the EU-China Strategic Partnership in global affairs. […] Thus cooperation in Africa will be seen as a litmus test for the EU and China as strategic global partners."[1007] The 2008 Commission communication stated that "[t]he trilateral co-operation will contribute to enhancing our shared responsibility for global governance and development," and the policy was framed in terms of the effective multilateralism promoted by the EU in its relations with China.[1008]

Effective multilateralism first entered the core of the EU's foreign policy vocabulary with the European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003.[1009] Although not clearly defined, it referred to the goals of strengthening the multilateral frameworks of international law, of the UN and other international and regional organisations and regimes, and of further developing a rule-based international order. An important condition of effective multilateralism was located in the appropriate domestic structure of participating states,[1010] defined as "well-governed democratic states."[1011] The spread of political and institutional reform through trade and development policies was defined as a core instrument of strengthening international order and achieving security. This definition of effective multilateralism seems to exclude, within its terms, cooperation with China.

Such an understanding of effective multilateralism belongs to a form of thinking that takes the existing order for granted and evaluates China from that position. As we have seen, Wissenbach rejected such an approach as not only unrealistic but as making 'effective' multilateralism ineffective. As he argued, China could not be ignored but neither could it be contained and excluded, as it was already changing the global landscape. China moved from

1007 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*, 2.
1008 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641', 5.
1009 Council of the European Union, 'European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World'.
1010 On the link between multilateralism and domestic order see: Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*.
1011 Council of the European Union, 'European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World', 10.

independence to interdependence in the post-Cold War world, but it stayed "short of integration," and hoping for China to change or trying to reform it were mistaken policies.[1012] In the context of development policy it was unlikely, he thought, that China would be brought into the framework set up by the OECD-DAC.[1013] For Wissenbach, excluding China for moral reasons is the rejection of reality – one could perhaps say it is an instance of Weber's ethics of conviction. But precisely because of widely diverging principles, pragmatic cooperation is not without its own problems. Some form of multilateralism is still necessary to arrive at a common framework with China, but for this it is necessary to break with the false alternatives of China either entering the system or challenging it.

6.4.2. 'Functional multilateralism'

The year he contributed to writing the primary reference for TDiC, Wissenbach authored a paper with the telling title: *The EU's Effective Multilateralism – but with Whom?* "The EU's security strategy is built around effective multilateralism," he observed in the first sentence "[b]ut the EU cannot be multilateralist alone."[1014] The surprising partner he recommended was none other than China. He portrayed the United States as a unilateralist power with imperial tendencies, and Russia as a self-isolating state. Neither of them was thus open to real negotiations. More troubling, he also perceived the existing multilateral institutions, on which the ESS relied, to be dysfunctional and stalled. In fact, for Wissenbach, the world was characterised by a "crisis of multilateralism and a renaissance of power politics."[1015] This made it difficult to address the manifold problems and security challenges of a deeply interdependent world.

1012 Wissenbach, *The EU's Effective Multilateralism - but with Whom?*, 6.
1013 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*, 23–4.
1014 Wissenbach, *The EU's Effective Multilateralism - but with Whom?*, 1.
1015 Ibid., 2.

Standard definitions of multilateralism refer to three or more states coordinating their national policies in the context of "generalized principles of conduct"[1016] or at least of a "minimal consensus on global rules and norms among major powers."[1017] It is a form of coordination in accordance with "principles which specify appropriate conduct for a class of actions, without regard to the particularistic interests of the parties or the strategic exigencies that may exist in any specific occurrence."[1018] This shared framework of principles is supposed to distinguish multi-polarity from multilateralism. Yet the condition Wissenbach describes is characterised precisely by the lack of such common global rules and norms. What form of multilateralism is achievable in such circumstances?

Global multilateralism that would include all or most of the states, Wissenbach writes elsewhere, is inadequate as it leads to the lowest common denominator.[1019] Territorial multilateralism is perhaps workable but cannot address the most important, global challenges. Neither can one rely on the institutions and rules of Western multilateralism, since its membership is not comprehensive enough to tackle the challenges facing international order. Without the participation of rising powers, multilateralism remains ineffective, but there is no shared framework of rules that could easily replace the Western one. If, then, multilateralism cannot be based on consensus on principles and norms, what can it be founded upon?

Wissenbach's proposed alternative is functional multilateralism, which is not organised around substantive or procedural norms but around challenges, problems to be addressed and managed. As he writes:

> Functional cooperation regimes can be created on the basis of shared and jointly defined interests and objectives to address particular international challenges. They don't require a normative consensus, but they do require that

1016 Caporaso, 'International Relations Theory and Multilateralism', 601.
1017 Laïdi, 'The Cooperation Crisis'.
1018 Ruggie, 'Multilateralism', 571.
1019 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China, and Africa: Global Governance Through Functional Multilateralism'.

> stakeholders respect each other as equals when addressing a particular task while leaving more fundamental differences to bilateral relationships.[1020]

Functional multilateralism requires no institutional or normative framework to begin with, It is an open-ended form of integration centred on concrete issues of common interest, in the process of which norms are set multilaterally.[1021] Membership in such a cooperation regime is not delineated by a rule with independent authority (such as the equal voice and universality of democracy or particular normative requirements that participants must fulfil to begin with) or by an explicit recognition of a right to participate. It is fundamentally based on who is affected and who has capacity in a particular functional field. The first of these is a matter of stakeholding. The second is connected to the allocation of responsibility: to say that someone has power over a certain matter is to allocate responsibility for its condition.

Not all stakeholders and not all those responsible can, however, in fact be partners for functional cooperation. China's power implicates it in all functional fields of global importance in terms of both its stake and its responsibility. Moreover, since functional multilateralism is a response to a lack of an adequate order, the problem of China's exclusion or integration does not even arise. What makes it a possible partner, however – as opposed to, say, the United States –, is its appropriate disposition, which Wissenbach identifies in its pragmatic character. Beijing is not a revolutionary or revisionist power – its lack of conformity to Western international order is primarily due to its focus on narrow national interest defined in terms of self-strengthening, and to its lack of transparency.[1022] Its concentration on its domestic agenda makes China particularly interested in "a maximum of stability and predictability abroad."[1023] In fact, Wissenbach contrasts China's approach to international politics to Western approaches, and presents it as an example for effective

1020 Wissenbach, 'A New Seoul Consensus on Development', 28.
1021 Wissenbach, *The EU's Effective Multilateralism - but with Whom?*, 3.
1022 Ibid., 8–9.
1023 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China, and Africa: Global Governance Through Functional Multilateralism', 75.

multilateralism: “China's own way of responding to complexity and interdependence point to the need for pragmatic, functional cooperation and bargaining, not ideology or hedging strategies to deal with development challenges.”[1024] The EU might learn to become more responsible and less emotional by working on building global order in cooperation with China. For both global governance and for the restricted case of Africa's development, China hence appears not as a threat but as a source of stability, not “as the cause of the problem but as part of the solution.”[1025]

6.4.3. Responsible great powers and global governmentality

Although the TDiC is conceived as a trilateral forum, the framework of functional multilateralism makes its hierarchical nature even more apparent. It should be noted that the initiative was mostly developed within the EU, partly in consultation with Beijing. To appreciate the implicit hierarchy, it is enough to consider that there have not been similar initiatives for, for instance, EU-China dialogues on India or on the United States, nor has there been one for an EU-Africa dialogue on China. Furthermore, the TDiC is not only a forum between rather unequal partners from the perspective of power, but a forum on the development and security of *one* of the participants. Thus, from a functional perspective, Africa appears as what is managed through the cooperation, while the management of development is linked to managing EU-China relations. The TDiC thus resembles the practice of joint great power management – and its contemporary relation to development – as described in Chapter 1.[1026]

1024 Wissenbach, ‘The EU, China and Africa: Working for Functional Cooperation?’, 259.
1025 Ibid., 261.
1026 Watson, *The Limits of Independence*.

African politicians clearly perceived the TDiC – as well as other cooperation projects – as aiming to reduce their sphere of manoeuvre by coordinating over their head.[1027] One cable made public by Wikileaks stated that "[w]hen the EU put together a policy paper on trilateral development cooperation in Africa, many African countries were annoyed because they were not consulted on the issue. They argued that the third party in these nominally trilateral discussions was conspicuously absent."[1028] China's non-committal response to the TDiC was partly a reaction to this African unease, as well as a result of China's discomfort with setting up a quasi-hierarchical international arrangement.[1029] It was also motivated, however, by the impression – reinforced by the European Parliament's above-mentioned report – that the EU would use the cooperation to impose its norms on China.[1030]

At this point, it is worth comparing the 'functional multilateralism' of the TDiC and Kissinger's project of great power management. Both start from the assumption that the existing order is dysfunctional, and set out to create a new one. Both reject a moral-ideological approach, as well as reliance on administrative routine, as paralysing the system and contributing to an unmanageable international order. Accordingly, both reject the assessment of China as an irresponsible power on these grounds. Both believe that China's character (its attitude towards the world) makes it a potential partner for bringing about order. This disposition is linked to the fundamental understanding that the 'truth' underlying order is found neither in ideology nor in the accumulation of knowledge about empirical facts, and that since one's power is too limited to impose one's own view of it, order can only emerge *between* actors, in some form of political interaction.

1027 Grimm, 'The China-EU Strategic Partnership on Development: Unfulfilled Potential'.
1028 'Wikileaks : US-China Development Cooperation in Africa'.
1029 Ibid.
1030 Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa', 213.

There is also a glaring difference, however. Wissenbach's functional multilateralism does not leave behind the empirical realm of administration. The language of TDiC is scientific and managerial: best practices, economic growth, efficiency of aid delivery, evaluation of development policies and donor coordination meetings.[1031] The cooperation should lead to "results-oriented joint initiatives," and is expected to generate knowledge about different sectors of cooperation.[1032] Whereas for Kissinger the fundamental condition that grounds the interaction between the responsible actors is that the world is mere chaos without the human attribution of meaning to it, for Wissenbach it is a knowable but not definitive empirical domain of government: development. Kissinger's responsible actor recognises limits due to reasons of existential nature. For Wissenbach, limitations follow from the nature of the art of governing.

These limitations emerge from the managerial problem of the "overwhelming power of the circumstances."[1033] As Wissenbach notes, the appearance of China in Africa means that Africa now has a choice, and this diminishes the effectiveness of European sanctions and incentives that guide development. Yet he argues that this choice should be embraced and brought into the framework of the TDiC's functional multilateralism.[1034] As he and Berger perceptively note, "[i]t is not possible for either the EU or China to define a partnership with the African continent, while insisting on a 'monopoly of legitimacy' for their own approach."[1035] Africa's increased freedom of manoeuvre hence provides an opportunity for developing a common framework of order with China. It makes existing ideological or

1031 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641'.
1032 Ibid., 8.
1033 Koskenniemi, '"Not Excepting the Iroquois Themselves": Sociological Thought and International Law', 22.
1034 Wissenbach, 'A New Seoul Consensus on Development', 27.
1035 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*, 7.

pragmatic frameworks dysfunctional, but it also provides something for the EU and China to manage in common.

Africa thus occupies an ambiguous position in the project. On the one hand it should be an equal, or perhaps leading, player in setting the new normative framework. The communication by the Commission stresses the guiding principle of the "full association and agreement at each stage with interested African parties."[1036] The initiative is portrayed as "an opportunity for Africa to collectively assume responsibility internationally for its own development."[1037] The functional foundations of the cooperation, however, go against the equal political role of the continent. Even Africa's equal status is, in a sense, justified by governmental considerations: the EU and China must avoid "condominium," as it would make the Africans passive, and functional multilateralism impotent.[1038] Wissenbach raises the possibility that the norms of the cooperation might converge and develop around the normative structures of the African Union and NEPAD.[1039] This would go against the idea of functional multilateralism, which does not begin from an existing normative framework. It is possible, however, to understand Africa's norms and agency not as matters of political principle but rather as empirical conditions that successful functional cooperation must take into account – it must work through the preferences and rationality of the governed.

The EU, for instance, has to recognise that, in the eyes of most African states, China *is* a responsible power.[1040] China, on the other hand, must acknowledge that neglecting the issues of human rights and democracy in Africa provokes reactions in the affected societies, increasing the political and economic costs of its presence.[1041] The more China invests in

1036 European Commission, 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation, SEC(2008) 2641', 5.
1037 Wissenbach, 'The EU's Response to China's Africa Safari', 670.
1038 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*, 9.
1039 Wissenbach, 'The EU's Response to China's Africa Safari', 670–1.
1040 Wissenbach, 'A New Seoul Consensus on Development', 26.
1041 Berger and Wissenbach, *EU-China-Africa Trilateral Development Cooperation*, 14.

fragile countries, the less it will be able to sustain its policy of non-interference. Sooner or later Beijing will have to realize that it is in its interests to promote good governance in Africa in order to defend its business objectives from a backlash or from disorder.[1042] Wissenbach even states that "[t]he sovereignty of governments in producer countries can act as an obstacle to the sustainable exploitation of resources, thus increasing business and political costs for investors," and that experiencing this might prompt China to re-evaluate its attitude towards the protection of state sovereignty.[1043]

Despite differences in basic principles, Wissenbach argues, China is beginning to realise the importance of good governance for its own interests.[1044] In the long run Beijing is expected to understand that any viable economy and society in these countries depends on good governance and the rule of law, and that democracy and human rights are not ideological issues but pragmatic policies to address poverty and development.[1045] At these points TDiC comes close to the idea of allowing China to participate for the sake of socialising it into the right norms. This is, however, explicitly rejected by Wissenbach, who points out that functional multilateralism does not aim at integrating China into a Western normative order, but instead at identifying common interests under conditions of normative divergence, and at engaging in "a process of social learning and constructing new norms for the future world order."[1046] Insofar as this can be identified as a liberal project of socialisation, it is hardly based on the values of cosmopolitanism.[1047] Instead, it shows the other face of liberalism: not the principle of freedom, but its practice as governmental rationality, within which norms itself appear as elements – rather than foundations – of the task of governing populations.[1048]

1042 See also: Grimm, 'The Triangle of China-Africa-Europe - Why Co-Operate and How?'.
1043 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China and Africa: Working for Functional Cooperation?', 249.
1044 Ibid., 249.
1045 Wissenbach, 'The Renaissance or the End of Geopolitics? Towards Trilateral Cooperation in Africa', 53–4.
1046 Wissenbach, 'The EU, China, and Africa: Global Governance Through Functional Multilateralism', 87.
1047 Gallagher, 'Ruthless Player or Development Partner?'.
1048 Hindess, 'Liberalism: Rationality of Government and Vision of History'; Hindess, 'Liberalism - What's in a Name?'.

Thus, we should take Wissenbach's notion of good governance – that China should accept as a responsible power – not as a particular set of norms, but rather as a modality of approaching the problem of development and of governability. Good governance here stands for something like "effective governance" – pragmatic and end-driven – that can be contrasted to a value-laden concept of good governance.[1049] More than that, however, it also marks a whole conception of government that is essentially neoliberal in its character. Like liberal governmentality, it approaches the problem of government through the rationality of the governed, but it does not conceive of the administrative field as possessing its own natural standard of truth. Instead, for neoliberalism, order must be produced in accordance with adequate regulating principles, and by permanent and active governmental interventions.[1050] Empirical experience does not in itself lead actors to common conclusions. The world is neither fully knowable nor already ordered, and thus an art of government is needed, a set of norms that allow those governing to evaluate their experience in a comparable manner.

Wissenbach's way of posing the problem of order in fact comes close to the question that neoliberalism tried to answer in post-Second World War Germany, as described by Foucault. For 18th century liberalism, the problem was the limitation of the police powers of a given, legitimate state, the standard for which was found in the natural mechanisms of the domain to be governed. For Germany the question was, in contrast, that "given a state that does not exist, how can we get it to exist on the basis of this non-state space of economic freedom?"[1051] How can order be established on the basis of an administrative space conceived in terms of its calculability, instead of being founded on a principle of legitimacy or on an order inherent in that space?

1049 Zhang, 'Good Governance vs. Effective Governance: The European and Chinese Engagement with Africa'.
1050 A primary such regulating principle is competition, see: Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*.
1051 Ibid., 86–7.

"Legitimacy," Wissenbach writes, "is derived from efficiency, results and political leadership."[1052] Efficiency and results are produced by an art of government, and they, in turn, produce legitimacy. In Foucault's words, "[t]he economy produces political signs that enable the structures, mechanisms, and justifications of power to function."[1053] Legitimacy is a matter of guaranteeing the operation of this art of government, and the guarantors are the responsible actors. For Wissenbach, as we have seen, debating whether China is a responsible power on the basis of fixed norms is a counterproductive exercise. Yet he does describe participation in the TDiC as an opportunity for China to become "a responsible (great) power."[1054]

This indicates a transformation of the concept of responsibility organising the interaction. It is not the liberal heteronomy described in Chapter 4, where the administrative field of commercial circulation supplied the rules according to which responsible action could be specified. It is more similar to the responsible disposition identified by Zoellick, in that the great powers are not simply external elements that can disturb the natural operation of the system, but their active and responsible contribution is a condition of possibility for the functioning of that order. Yet, whereas for Zoellick responsibility is derivative of a system already in place, Wissenbach reverses this relationship by positing the primacy of the responsible character trait to both moral-legal and empirical standards of responsibility.

This move resembles Kissinger's prioritisation of the mature character of China over the existing order, and does in fact rely on the image of China as a deeply pragmatic actor, which has its origins in the opening under the Nixon administration. Wissenbach's responsibility, however, is not a matter of maturity or radical autonomy, understood as the ability of an actor to completely break away from sources of heteronomy, as it was for

1052 Wissenbach, 'Regional Integration in Europe and East Asia', 29.
1053 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 85.
1054 Wissenbach, 'The EU's Response to China's Africa Safari', 670.

Kissinger. For him, autonomy is muted by the recognition of the limits arising from having to order a field of actors, processes and interactions by making the whole calculable. This concept of responsibility is a close relative of Mill's liberal virtue as a form of *eco*nomy: a disposition that, as discussed in Chapter 2, concerns action outside pre-given rules or institutions – just like autonomy – but is defined in terms of the relation between the actor and a field of calculability it responds to. Lacking a shared ground of norms, the availability of such a disposition of responsibility is what makes the co-creation of order possible, and Wissenbach implies that China's pragmatism offers such a hope. Hence, whereas for Kissinger order emerges out of chaos through a political or diplomatic interaction founded on an existential sense of limits related to the omnipresent possibility of military conflict and of thermonuclear war, for Wissenbach order results from a political process of setting the principles of the art of government on the basis of a governmental sense of limits linked to the deep interdependence of actors and thus to the recognition of an economic context.

In contrast to the 'responsible stakeholder' discourse, then, the virtue of responsibility becomes primary to order since government, although related to and responsive to an external domain, is understood as an art. In line with the neoliberal thinking dominating development policy, the norms of government are not dictated by the nature of the governed. Good government is not minimal government, or government according to the laws internal to the field governed. Instead, the general framework of government is a matter of choice that nevertheless provides internal limitations identifiable through adequate calculations. Adequate institutions, incentives, and even subjects must constantly be produced through the practice of government.

This, of course, also establishes a hierarchy among the participants of the trilateral cooperation. In the context of neoliberal governmentality, the practice of great power

management does not aim to define global principles of order as it did in Kissinger's formulation. Instead, it is organised around the joint management of a restricted domain (developing countries) that is understood to fall out of the Western liberal core. Africa is primarily the domain to be governed and, hence, it is linked to the partners through economic responsiveness. The EU and China, in contrast, are supposed to connect through political responsiveness in an exceptional space linked to the maintenance of order as governmentality. The initiative can also be placed in the context of the EU's ambition to become a global power.[1055] As Wissenbach's emphasis on ordering the world through this form of multilateralism – in contrast with the American preference for imposition – implies, such interaction is also supposed to emancipate the EU from Washington's dominance. Cooperation with China would be a sign of the EU's responsibility and, hence, the mutual recognition of the EU and China as responsible powers would reveal both of them as great powers.

Conclusion

Although the liberal West is reluctant to grant China an equal voice in shaping the rules of international order, the latter's growing power and influence have already begun to transform the world at the administrative level. In this chapter I inquired into the rationality according to which China – whose fundamental principles are understood to conflict with the values integral to the Western development model – could appear as a partner in one segment of global administration: in guiding and assisting the development of Africa. I argued that, beyond the logics of pragmatic empiricism and socialisation, in the original formulation of the EU's TDiC initiative one can recognise a form of great power management articulated without the position of authority that defined 19th century Great Powers and without its generic

1055 Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa'.

juridical form. Instead, this mode of great power management is based directly on the art of administration and on an inner quality of responsibility that allows actors to take on that task collectively. I argued that in the EU's initiative it was the combination of such an understanding of China's pragmatic character with the neoliberal form of govermentality characterising development policy that allowed China to appear as an equal partner.

This is not to make the claim that all trilateral cooperation initiatives follow a similar logic. Pragmatic empiricism, socialisation, and other rationalities might offer equally adequate reasons for actors to engage in such practices. By the time it emerged from internal debates within the EU in the form of a Commission communication, even the TDiC appeared as a much tamer initiative, with most of the controversial elements removed.[1056] The interest of its original formulation, however, is in its relatively explicit formulation of a practice of great power management in a discursive context that disallows the traditional idea of great powerhood as a position of authority. In other words, it is of significance because it demonstrates the potential that a neoliberal understanding of governmentality has for accommodating practices belonging to the lineage of great power management.

The actual presence of such a rationality in other forms of administrative cooperation is a separate empirical question. I would suggest, however, that the increasingly neoliberal and result-oriented reconfiguration of development policy in combination with the perceived responsible character of certain emerging powers might provide foundations for such, perhaps even undeclared, practices of great power management in other instances as well. Wissenbach is not alone in seeing cooperation with the new players as a way of breaking out of what is perceived as rigid moral and bureaucratic categories of development policy in order to work in a framework organised around outcomes and economic efficiency.[1057]

1056 Carbone, 'The European Union and China's Rise in Africa'.
1057 Mitchell, 'Emerging Powers and the International Development Agenda'.

The actuality of any such practice based on responsibility as a character trait would nevertheless remain a fragile one. It is always possible and tempting to shift to either a strategic or a moral framework and leave the responsibility for the political task of bringing about order behind. Great power management also requires a partner. China's reluctance to participate in the TDiC was partly due to its concerns about the EU's use of it as a way of imposing its norms on China. As Kissinger's example shows, however, the potential partner might also turn out not to live up to expectations. Not long into the process of rapprochement, Kissinger had to realise that instead of acting as an aloof, responsible great power, China began to act as an ally.[1058] It is similarly possible that instead of engaging in a common determination of the technologies of good governance, the prospective partner adopts the existing norms. China's informal convergence with DAC norms points to this possibility.[1059] Its growing sensitivity to global governance might, however, only signal its convergence on the neoliberal form of governmentality without accepting its substantive norms.

1058 Goh, 'Nixon, Kissinger, and the "Soviet Card" in the U.S. Opening to China, 1971–1974'.
1059 Kragelund, 'Towards Convergence and Cooperation in the Global Development Finance Regime: Closing Africa's Policy Space?'.

General Conclusion

In this thesis I addressed the complex historical relationship between great powerhood and responsibility in response to the paradoxical relation of the two concepts whenever responsibility is understood in terms of obligations and order as a human artifice. The nature of the paradox is as follows: to be responsible is to fulfil the obligations and to meet the expectations specified by a fixed order. Greatness, in contrast, manifests itself in the actors' ability to break with existing standards, and to reveal oneself on one's own terms. A state that accepts the conditions and standards laid down by another state can never be truly equal to the one setting those prerequisites. It is, hence, difficult to conceive how a state could become a great power by proving itself as a responsible power. To respond to this problem, I offered a partial genealogy of the co-articulation of the concepts of greatness, responsibility and order.

The paradox at issue is a fundamentally modern problem. A natural, traditional, or divine order provides a ground for distributing both status positions and corresponding responsibilities without itself being in need of justification and, therefore, without the availability of a position external to it. Such an order operates with an "ethico-legal delimitation" of "the sphere of possible political interests," that is, with a moral basis that does not simply restrict the pursuit of certain interests, but does not even allow them to be conceived of as interests in the first place.[1060] Whenever the basic roles and rules of a society approximate such a settled condition, greatness and responsibility can be united by the shared underlying assumptions about the fundamental principles and categories of social order.

1060 Morgenthau, 'International Affairs: The Resurrection of Neutrality in Europe', 483.

Within the boundaries of such a framework there might be contestation over who occupies a particular status, but not over the existence or fundamental characteristics of a status position. At times when the very framework becomes contested, however, the question of order has to be pushed back to a more fundamental level.

As I argued in Chapter 3, great power management emerged as a practice, at the beginning of the 19th century, precisely in response to such radical questioning of the principles and categories of European order. A major source of this challenge was the Enlightenment's claim that every authority, rule, and responsibility must be justified without "reliance on preexisting authority," thus introducing the problem of autonomy or self-legislation.[1061] The compatibility of such freedom and order, as the course of the French Revolution seemed to demonstrate, required setting some limit to human will. But if all rules and authority were subject to human decisions, where could such limits be found?

The emergence of scientific empiricism and its view of the world as an objective and calculable domain offered its laws of causal determinacy as a source of rules. Yet, as the failures of the balance of power in the late 18th century indicated, it offered no guarantee for order in itself. On the contrary, these forces had to be mastered by human will and skill in order to maintain a stable system. Such mastery, in turn, depended on the maintenance of comparable calculations among actors, for which no common standard could be derived from the empirical world itself.

Modernity hence opened a double *problématique* for the possibility of order: the question of liberating human choice from reliance on the determinacy of calculus and from the remnants of transcendental sources of order, and the problem of setting limits to the freedom so attained. I argued that the category of Great Powers, created by 1815 as "the

1061 Strong, *Politics without Vision*, 14.

missing concept needed to stabilize the system," was fundamentally linked to this modern problem of the possibility of order.[1062] Together, the Great Powers could impose their concerted will on the rest of Europe and hence define order through their agreement. Occupying a permanent position of both sovereign and executive power, they had to set the law for themselves. Their will, however, could find its limit not only in the will of the other Great Powers, but also in the European spatial order in relation to which their status was defined, and in whatever was left behind from the ethico-legal limits shared by an aristocratic class of European diplomats. The balance of power was inscribed into this system by subjecting its definition to the agreement of the Great Powers, hence creating the possibility of deciding on a common standard for calculation.

At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, Britain failed in its attempt to extend the rules of European great power diplomacy beyond its spatial and cultural boundaries to include relations with a reluctant China. As an alternative, a concept of order was projected upon China, circumventing its refusal to participate in defining it, on the basis of the laws internal to the nature of commercial circulation, i.e. in the form of liberal governmentality. This empiricist account of order specified a form of liberal responsibility as calculability, from the perspective of which China could be understood and treated as an irresponsible power endangering the natural functioning of commercial economy. Ultimately, the norms of what Britain considered responsible conduct were imposed upon China through a disciplinary act of imperial violence.

These developments in East Asia foreshadowed the difficulties of ordering the world once the European spatial and cultural order ceased to provide an adequate foundation for it. In China's case, the solution was ultimately found in enforcing on it the standards of

1062 Osiander, quoted in: Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, 86–7.

responsible conduct. Creating order through the imposition of one's convictions and standards, however, is not always an option. And if one cannot rely either on a pre-existing and unquestioned authority and corresponding limits on what is regarded as a conceivable interest, on what could order possibly be founded?

As I argued in Chapter 2, responsibility as a matter of character came to occupy a central role in ethical thought as one response to this condition in which responsibilities as obligations lost their ground of authority. Through it, both the capacity for freedom and the limits to this freedom were ultimately located in an inner quality of the individual. Kant's and Weber's mature, responsible actor was fully conscious of the human condition that one must set one's laws for oneself and cannot rely on the heteronomy of responding to external authority or causal determinacy. One must therefore determine his own will and to bear the limits that follow from a choice when it is made. This notion of responsibility functioned in a space outside and prior to any fixed framework of order, thus not only could it be compatible with greatness, but it in fact stood for a new articulation of greatness that could not be assessed on the basis of prior criteria or standards.

I analysed two cases where responsibility as a character trait came to constitute a form of great powerhood in the context of the development of Western conceptions of China in relation to the task of governing the world. In both cases actors, relying for their rationality of government on the internal quality of responsibility, perceived the existing state of the world as one of crisis, in which neither *status quo* rules, nor moral norms, nor technical-empirical solutions could provide adequate foundations for order. Instead, they depended on the qualities of a restricted number of agents whose responsible character enabled them to take on the task of human creation. While these attempts constituted a form of great power management – a collective management of the world by equal great powers interlinked with

managing relations with each other –, they did so without the framework of formal rights and authority characterising the Great Power concert of the 19th century.

Kissinger deployed such a notion of responsibility in an attempt to break with a Cold War order he found unsustainable. Since the United States did not possess the capacity to impose new meaning on the international situation – a condition that makes responsible character of utmost significance –, making the Cold War governable required having adequate partners. Kissinger relied on what he saw as an exemplary Kantian-Weberian responsibility or maturity characterising the leaders of China in order to evoke a new order through diplomatic interaction with China as an equal great power. By redefining China as a responsible – and hence great – power, Kissinger broke with the liberal calculability-responsibility that defined China's position for the previous century, and posited the primacy of responsible character over the substance of order.

From the 1970s, growing interdependence and a thickening fabric of global governance undermined the high levels of foreign policy autonomy Kissinger's concept of responsibility relied on. The existential nature of foreign policy decisions got increasingly entangled with considerations of the transnational economic space underlying power and well-being. This development brought back to prominence the liberal understanding of responsibility as a function of the operability of a calculable system of management. Thus, there were now two images of China available simultaneously: a mature, responsible China attuned to the problem of order, and an irresponsible China that did not meet the standards of the existing, liberal international order.

In this general context, I identified among the rationalities informing the European Union's invitation of China into the Trilateral Development and Cooperation Initiative a synthesis of these two ways of relating responsibility to order. Relying on the image of China

as a pragmatic power, this rationality granted a liberal, Millian, virtue of responsibility primacy over the order of liberal governmentality. The ability to transcend existing conditions, as the hallmark of responsibility, here did not find its limits in existential groundlessness – as for Kissinger –, but in the constraints immanent to the condition of interdependence and complexity. Responsible great powers in this formulation would collectively set the norms of an art of government limited (but not defined) by the internal tendencies of the domain to be governed. China appeared as an equal, responsible great power in managing Africa's development through the combination of a neoliberal problematisation of international order with a liberal concept of responsibility re-articulated in the form of a virtue.

Despite the paradoxical relationship between greatness and responsibility as obligation, my episodic genealogy showed the two terms coming together in responsibility as a character defining actors' relations to international order. Furthermore, these rationalities articulated forms of great power management operating partly outside the framework of legitimacy and ultimately referring to order not as a set of rights and responsibilities, but as a milieu in which government as the 'conduct of conduct' is exercised.

These results emerge out of a genealogy of the relationship between great powers and responsibility that, given the time-scale and complexity of the question at hand and the constraints of a dissertation, I decided to restrict to tracing Western conceptual frameworks of Sino-Western relations. Even within the context of the relations between China and the West, further work is necessary to bring the Chinese perspective into the narrative on different levels. First, responsibility as an ethical concept has its particular history and distinct set of meanings within Chinese thought,[1063] which would complement the developments in Western thinking here described in Chapter 2. Second, no space could be dedicated in the present work

1063 Chan, 'Power and Responsibility in China's International Relations'.

to China's 'century of humiliation' between 1842 and 1949, the period which existing analysis shows was formative of China's own views on great powerhood and on modern international order.[1064] Third, including China's very direct contribution to contemporary responsible power language ever since its careful response to the Asian financial crisis in 1997-8[1065] would probably reveal a more contested and uneven discourse than what I present here. Finally, all three case studies downplay Chinese agency in order to have a clearer analysis of the Western approach, and hence further research is needed to bring the two together for a more comprehensive genealogy. These limitations notwithstanding, the findings of the thesis have a range of implications for our understanding of great powers and great power management in international order, and raise new questions about the role responsibility plays in that relation.

Great powers and responsibility

The findings of the thesis run counter to the recent tendency of identifying great power management – against Bull's insistence on the contrary[1066] – as merely a special case of hegemony with no essential qualitative distinction.[1067] This erasure of difference have resulted from conceiving the institution of great powers as defined entirely in terms of legitimacy or of a legal-institutional framework, both of which presuppose the existence of a unitary set of criteria pertaining to great powerhood. Indeed, if great power management is conceived solely in terms of legitimacy or institutional accountability, there is no reason in principle against having a single great power. If, however, greatness is understood in terms of transcending

1064 Mitter, 'An Uneasy Engagement'; Schell and Delury, *Wealth and Power*; Wang, *The Chinese Way*; Wang, 'China and the International Order'; Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War.*

1065 Gao, 'China as a "Responsible Power": Altruistic, Ambitious or Ambiguous?'; Johnston, *Social States*, 146–150; Ren, 'The Moral Dimension of Chinese Foreign Policy'; Scott, 'China and the "Responsibilities" of a "Responsible" Power—The Uncertainties of Appropriate Power Rise Language'.

1066 Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 194.

1067 Ikenberry, *After Victory*; Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*; Clark, *The Hierarchy of States*; Clark, 'China and the United States'; Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*; Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*.

order, the horizontal political relationship between a plurality of equal great powers takes place in a space of transcendence, and thus cannot be subsumed under any existing framework of legitimacy. In both Kissinger's and Wissenbach's formulation, the political dimension of great power management is primary to the conception of order (which is then defined through it) and hence it is qualitatively distinct from the vertical relationship of hegemony.

Although great power relations are thus partially exterior to the framework of legitimacy, they do not thereby fall back on pure power politics or empirical problem-solving. Instead, a criterion for deciding the nature of the interaction might be found in the character of the states concerned. Our understanding of great power relations is dominated by an opposition between power as right and power as fact. According to the first, norms are constitutive of power, and responsibility can be understood as "representing a test of membership" in the club of great powers.[1068] For the second, norms are imposed by the materially powerful, and hence great power politics is conducted in order to avoid conflict between the established and the rising power during a phase of power-transition.[1069] This thesis suggests a third possibility beyond this binary opposition between socialisation and power politics: that great power relations take place outside the structures of legitimacy, yet are not founded on pure power, but instead on perceiving one's peers as being responsible. This character trait is perhaps what is sought for in the quest for the elusive 'trust' as the ultimate ground of US-China relations, and indicates that the basis of such trust cannot simply be 'verified.'[1070]

The role of responsibility in this context, however, cannot be reduced to the special responsibilities of the great powers as a "modality for responding to global problems" in the

1068 Clark, 'International Society and China'.
1069 Erickson and Liff, 'Not-So-Empty Talk'.
1070 Nye, 'Work With China, Don't Contain It'; Chase, 'China's Search for a "New Type of Great Power Relationship".'

context of sovereign equality and inequality of power,[1071] or to creating order among major powers on the basis of "an ad hoc, problem-solving approach to global governance" that precedes the construction of institutions or a world order.[1072] China has repeatedly refused to engage in practical problem-solving efforts prior to its recognition as an equal partner.[1073] This is in line with Kissinger's distinction, analysed in Chapter 5, between Russia's focus on particular practical issues and American managerialism on the one hand, and China's insistence – worthy of a great power – on negotiating fundamental principles on the basis of equality. There is a significant difference between engaging another power over already defined problems, and first recognising a relationship of equality on the basis of which problems can then be collectively defined. This is what distinguishes Wissenbach's approach, discussed in Chapter 6, from those which seek to define great powerhood starting out of problems to be solved. Recognising a state as an equal partner in defining and collectively managing global problems is often a precondition of problem-solving.

The thesis suggests that what might act as a criterion for conducting great power relations on the basis of equality and outside strategic interaction, common values, or common interests regarding an already defined or perfectly transparent set of global problems, is perceiving or recognising a common quality of character that is in turn defined in terms of a shared form of order it is directed to. Correspondingly, one should complement the analysis of the dynamics of major power relations in terms of "debates over the definition, allocation and performance of special responsibilities," with the role of responsibility as an inner quality.[1074] Insofar as great powerhood is understood to be defined by standards of greatness and by special responsibilities, the process through which emerging powers seek such status – and

1071 Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*, 15; Reus-Smit, 'Power, Legitimacy, and Order'.
1072 Barma, Ratner, and Weber, 'The Mythical Liberal Order'.
1073 White, Weihua, and Jianmin, 'A New Type of Great Power Dialogue?'.
1074 Reus-Smit, 'Power, Legitimacy, and Order', 355.

through which it is possible to move from unipolar hegemony or multipolar anarchy towards some form of great power management – can be described and analysed in terms of the acceptance, rejection, contestation and perhaps reconstruction of the norms pertaining to great powerhood and of the allocation and content of the special rights and responsibilities.[1075] I argued in the present thesis that the dynamics of relations between major powers might reflect, in contrast, shifts between, and contestation over, fundamentally different understandings of what being responsible requires, including: a) fulfilling legal and moral responsibilities on the basis of a conception of order; b) possessing a (liberal) responsible character defined from the perspective of sustaining the operation of a system of governance primary to the great powers; c) possessing a Kissingerian maturity-responsibility or d) possessing liberal responsibility as a character trait primary to any given structure of order.

An advantage of looking at responsibility as a character trait, rather than in terms of fixed standards and obligations, is that it captures an important quality in the context of dynamically changing normative frameworks.[1076] Major powers might be called upon to take on responsibilities corresponding to their global weight, while simultaneously being seen as not ready to assume them. China's recent moves to contribute to global development finance by setting up the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, for instance, met with considerable resistance by the United States not only for strategic reasons but also because of concerns that China might undermine global governance with this new institution and its different, and lower, standards.[1077] Being seen as a responsible actor hence might act as a precondition for legitimately assuming the responsibilities of a major power. Assessments of character might

1075 Jones, 'Constructing Great Powers'; Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities*; Foot and Walter, *China, the United States, and Global Order*; Deng, *China's Struggle for Status*.
1076 Clark, 'International Society and China', 333–4.
1077 Lipscy, 'Who's Afraid of the AIIB'.

then better capture considerations regarding a future order than thinking in terms of *status quo* standards, as Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate.

This implied role played by the character of states play in international order can open a new direction in the literature on the 'state as person.'[1078] In world politics states are regularly anthropomorphised, that is, interpreted through metaphorically attributing human subjectivity to them. But just as humans understand themselves simultaneously in different categories – in terms of will, character, manifold desires, etc. – the anthropomorphised state can also take different shapes. The state-as-person as sovereign, rational decision-maker with a will and interests, an idea that emerged in post-Renaissance Europe, has dominated both international political discourse and mainstream International Relations.[1079] States are less often described in academic works as having a character,[1080] but this thesis suggests that moral character traits play a role in how states are made sense of as actors in international politics and are, consequently, constitutive of international order.[1081]

Interpreting states in terms of their character brings different concerns forward and makes different actions available. Whereas, for instance, the image of the rational, sovereign state poses problems of strategic action and of the validity of supra-state law, considerations of character might focus instead on credibility, the strength or weakness of will, consistency, steadfastness or restraint as lasting qualities. Such interpretation, however, also brings up a new set of questions for research. To what extent can international practices be based on perceptions of character rather than, say, identity, rules or strategic thinking? On what basis

1078 Wendt, 'The State as Person in International Theory'; Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State'; Jackson, 'Hegel's House, or "People Are States Too"'; Neumann, 'Beware of Organicism'; Wight, 'State Agency'; Lomas, 'Anthropomorphism, Personification and Ethics'; Schiff, '"Real"?'; Oprisko and Kaliher, 'The State as a Person?'; Kustermans, 'The State as Citizen'.

1079 Ringmar, 'On the Ontological Status of the State'.

1080 See, however: Kissinger, *World Order*.

1081 On the role of individual character traits in constituting international society, see: Gaskarth, 'Where Would We Be without Rules?'; Gaskarth, 'The Virtues in International Society'.

are judgements of character made? What is the relative role of domestic institutions, historical experience, cultural or racial categories, exemplary or ordinary actions, and the personality of leaders or diplomats in these assessments? What difference does perceiving states in terms of character make to thinking about international interactions and global order?

Great powers and global governance / governmentality

The exploration of the relation between greatness and responsibility indicates that although the status of great powers is connected to power as both capacity and legitimacy, at the most fundamental level it is related to historically changing understandings of the conditions under which international order can be made governable.[1082] Iver B. Neumann has proposed that recognition as a great power is conditional upon meeting the dominant standard of good domestic governance.[1083] This thesis suggests, in contrast, that merely to "appear 'normal'"[1084] in this sense is insufficient for being recognised as a great power. Instead of reflecting the quality of their attributes at the state level, great powerhood reflects a particular, exceptional, position to the dominant conception of good international governance. As conceptions of international order and the corresponding rationalities of government change, so does the absence or presence of a discourse on great powers and – if such a discourse exists – so do the notions of great powerhood employed by that discourse and the circle of states who are thought to possess that status. Hence, there is a close connection between great powerhood and the various foundations for conceptions of international order as the regulated exercise of power – from a transcendent Truth, through sovereign will, to calculability.[1085]

1082 Following Hindess's distinction, great powerhood is a matter neither of capacity nor right but of governmentality. *Discourses of Power.*
1083 Neumann, 'Russia as a Great Power, 1815–2007'.
1084 Ibid., 138.
1085 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 311–2.

The relationship between the task of governing and great powers is not unidirectional. Recent works in global governance have argued that under conditions of pervasive interdependence and of the increasing role of a network of non-state actors, the role for collective government by major powers is reduced and replaced by "non-polarity: a world dominated not by one or two or even several states but rather by dozens of actors possessing and exercising various kinds of power."[1086] This reflects the more general replacement of government by governance that, as a result of a set of changes in the material and ideational bases of power, forces states (but also international organisations and other centres of power) to disaggregate their parts and activities, to participate in networks and transnational forms of cooperation, and to rely on a wide range of non-state or private actors in order to regain capacity both domestically and internationally.[1087]

The analysis of the concept of functional multilateralism in this thesis suggests, in contrast, that certain formulations of great power management can play a fundamental role in making the functioning of structures of governance possible. Instead of global governance replacing the rule-making role of states, and of great powers in particular, more attention needs to be accorded to the exact manner in which the great powers and their relations are linked to spaces and modes of governance. In terms of governmentality, this forces us to look beyond how "the rationality of international government allows for a calculus of the difference in size between the major and minor powers,"[1088] and to analyse how different rationalities of government have at their core different problematisations of great powers. This lends support to arguments for bringing states and great powers back into our understanding of international governance.[1089]

1086 Haass, 'The Age of Non-Polarity', 44; Hurrell, *On Global Order*, 65–67, 95–117; Krasner, 'The Durability of Organized Hypocrisy'; Rosenau, 'Global Governance as Disaggregated Complexity'.
1087 Slaughter, *A New World Order*.
1088 Dean, *Governmentality*, 240.
1089 Neumann and Sending, *Governing the Global Polity*; Wolf, 'The New Raison d'État as a Problem for

The world today is moving towards multipolarity in the context of a global governance network of unprecedented density and significance. Providing a better understanding of the interaction between great power relations and global governmentality is, therefore, an important task for research. This thesis draws attention to the problem of great power management at the level of global administration. While in general the relationship of rising powers to global governance remains in question,[1090] China in particular has attracted attention by putting in place elements of a shadow governance architecture, leading to a potential bifurcation of the institutions of global governance.[1091] Further research is needed to establish whether this should be seen as the same form of governing the world put into the service of competing national interests, or as constituting a bifurcation at the deeper level of global governmentality. Insofar as there remains a commonality at this deeper level, there is potential for building on it practices of great power coordination. Major questions remain, however, as to how great power coordination might emerge in practices of governance on the ground, i.e., regarding the micro-practices of norm-development in concrete instances of co-management.

The potential for great power convergence at the level of administration raises further questions regarding the agency of lesser powers. Within the juridical framework of 19th century great power management, smaller powers exercised their agency by contesting the special rights of the Great Powers and by trying to place more obligations on them. In the context of great power co-managerial practices based on neoliberal governmentality, research

Democracy in World Society'; Astrov, 'Great Power Management without Great Powers?'; Astrov, 'Glorification and Its Modes: Emulation, Recognition and Acclamation'.

1090 Chan, Lee, and Chan, *China Engages Global Governance*; Kahler, 'Rising Powers and Global Governance'; Kahler, 'Rising Powers and Alternative Modes of Global Governance'; Kivimäki, 'Soft Power and Global Governance with Chinese Characteristics'; Laïdi, 'Towards a Post-Hegemonic World'; Stephen, 'Rising Powers, Global Capitalism and Liberal Global Governance'; Stephen and Zürn, 'Contested World Orders: Rising Powers, Non-State Actors, and the Politics of Authority Beyond the Nation-State'; Stephen, 'Rising Regional Powers and International Institutions'.

1091 Rudolf, Huotari, and Buckow, 'Chinas Schatten-Außenpolitik'.

should rather focus on the ways non-great powers might attempt to repoliticise administrative practices and associated great power relations.

Finally, in the light of recent developments regarding Russia's policies in the Ukrainian crisis and China's South China Sea disputes, the future of global order might be profoundly shaped by the conceptual and practical frameworks major powers develop and deploy to address the intersection of great power relations within global governance with tensions organised around concepts, such as spheres of influence, associated with the more anachronistic form of collective great power authority that has no place within the liberal international system.

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