A GLOBALISED WESTPHALIA? CATEGORISING CHINESE STATEHOOD

FREDERIK KÖNIG AND PAUL NAUDASCHER

ABSTRACT

Globalisation is highly debated in contemporary political science, because it challenges the discipline's focal unit of analysis: The Westphalian nation state. Tectonic plates of global hegemony are shifting, questioning the United States' unipolar position. Often framed as a Neo-Westphalian state, China emerges as the most prominent contender state. However, so far it remains unclear to which degree the notion of Westphalian statehood prevails. This paper assesses the impact of globalisation on statehood by answering the research question: To what extent does China conform to the Westphalian state model? First, current literature on statehood and the concept of Westphalia with regards to China are discussed. Second, Sørensen's concept of state transformation is operationalised along a political, a social and an economic dimension. Third, building on the KOF globalisation index, the framework is applied to China, and the findings are benchmarked to North America – the world's most globalized region. Eventually, the descriptive findings are cross-validated with recent IR literature. We find that China is most globalised in its political dimension, even surpassing North America. This is surprising since much of the presented literature highlights the role of China's economy. In this category, however, China is rather weakly integrated. In the social dimension, in spite of fast increases in the past, China is currently in an intermediate position, suggesting growth potential for the near future. Overall, rather than conforming to the Westphalian state model, China should be considered a state in transformation. This process can be expected to continue through the political leadership of a constitutionally embedded rule under Xi Jinping. Hence, it appears that many scholars have misinterpreted the strong role of government in the Westphalian model. Considering that the most prominent challenger of the liberal world order is actually more embedded in the prevailing system than widely presumed, this has significant implications for the scholarly debate about the transition of hegemony.

1. INTRODUCTION

Past decades were accompanied by the emergence and subsequent dispersion of a seemingly new set of challenges for humanity. The range of potentially affected regions has increased with the same speed as each individual's exposure to distant events – whether it is climate change and environmental disasters, terrorism and other forms of extremism, uncontrollable epidemics, large migratory movements within and across countries or highly professionalized tax evasion. Globalisation is highly debated in contemporary Political Science, because one of its focal units of analysis – the state – is challenged. This is alarming since not only a *reaction* to this transformation is demanded, but also its general *functions* have to be reassessed. The predominant agent within this discipline has traditionally been the *Westphalian nation state*, a box hermetically sealed by sovereignty. Nonetheless, under the conditions of globalisation, it is unclear to which degree this notion of statehood prevails.

Furthermore, while a concerted reaction to these events would require political leadership, tectonic plates of global hegemony are shifting. Scholars of International Relations (IR) and policy strategists alike are divided into 'primacists' and 'declinists', debating whether the United States' unipolar moment is coming to an end (Layne, 2018: pp. 93-94). The most promising, and hence most widely discussed, contender state is the People's Republic of China (PRC). As a point of departure for the assessment of this emerging hegemon, many scholars, again, refer to *Westphalia*, often without reflecting on the suitability of this concept (Hameiri & Jones, 2016). The suspicion of a Neo-Westphalian China has been reinforced by the Communist Party's vote to enshrine President Xi Jinping's name in the constitution and the abolition of term limits on the presidency. Consequently, Western media widely characterizes him as the most powerful leader since Mao Zedong.[1]

Against this background, we assess the impact of globalisation on statehood by answering the research question: To what extent does China conform to the Westphalian state model? We hypothesize that it plays a transformative role. Besides its outstanding relevance in contemporary IR scholarship, a case study of China also has advantages for the research design: Labelled the "new Prussia" (Goldstein, 2003), it can be considered a typical case. The paper addresses the question in three steps. First, we review and discuss both the literature on rethinking statehood and the accuracy of Westphalia with regards to China. Second, we operationalise state transformation along a political, a social and an economic dimension in order to distinguish a globalized *post-Westphalian* state from its *modern* predecessor (Sørensen, 2004). Third, we apply this framework to China, building on the KOF globalisation index (see Gygli, Haelg & Sturm, 2018) and benchmark the findings to North America, which is – according to the index – the most globalized region. Furthermore, we cross-validate the descriptive findings with recent IR literature to reveal how China's global role and its form of statehood are *implicitly* discussed.

2. STATE OF THE ART

To outline the scholarly debate on statehood in general and the statehood of China specifically, three steps are completed. Firstly, the importance of rethinking the role of the state is presented (2.1). Then, three central standpoints in the debate about statehood are brought forward as a response to the problem (2.2). Eventually, the perception of Chinese statehood in academic literature is summarized (2.3).

2.1 RETHINKING THE ROLE OF THE STATE

In the opinion of many scholars, globalisation poses a serious threat to the traditional forms of statehood. Increasing interconnectivity requires old regimes to adapt and allows new ones to evolve. Alexander Wendt provides one of the most prominent and radical suggestions of what a future state system may look like (1994). He argues that the intensive contact of individuals across national borders can result in the creation of a *collective identity*, which then triggers the evolution of an *international state*. This state unifies national differences and hence overthrows the nation state perspective of the Westphalian system that has dominated political theory for the past 350 years. More precisely, this development "points towards a gradual but structural transformation of the Westphalian state system from anarchy to authority" (p. 393). In other words, the anarchic dispute among nation states – as described by neorealist scholars – is settled by a collective global authority replacing the national ones in place.

This vision is not purely fictional. Shaw (1997) notes that "within the West, 'nation-states' are no longer classical nation states. They are 'postmodern' in the sense that they are fully articulated with transnational Western and global power networks" (p. 511). So even without a formal international state in place, nation states seem to grow closer together. In this context, Sørensen (2004) finds that governments become more embedded in complex networks of international government organizations (IGOs) and international non-government organizations (INGOs). Thereby, non-state actors enter spheres that in the past used to be reserved exclusively for government functionaries, proposing new interests and motives to government, nationhood, and economy (Sørensen, 2006: p. 205). Due to the introduction of new actors and a greater diversity of pursued goals, the complexity in the modes of interaction and in the institutions within which action takes place has risen (Cox, 1981: p. 126). However, to date, not all models of statehood have incorporated this complexity. Depending on the polity configuration and global integration of a state, the leverage of international and non-state actors in each dimension differs. In this sense, it is quite possible that different interests challenge the functionality of a mode of statehood.

The evolution of tax havens is a suitable example for this phenomenon. Palan (2002) points out that tax havens are the result of the incompatibility of national sovereignty and the internationalization of capital. While governments attempt to enforce tax laws within their national borders, multinational corporates simply move their capital to those territories with the most favourable laws. In contrast to tax laws, which are

restricted by national territories, capital flows are so globally integrated that borders cannot restrain them. Hence, the nationally bounded character of law plays out to be a major disadvantage in accomplishing the government's goal of making tax evasion impossible. However, tackling this problem is difficult since „[t]he abolition of tax havens would require a degree of cooperation among the major industrialized countries and a limit on the sovereign rights of states, which effectively would spell the end of the so-called Westphalian system" (Palan, 2002: p. 173). Consequently, the role of the state needs to be reassessed in order to remain capable of acting in a changing environment.

2.2 PERSPECTIVES OF STATEHOOD

Sørensen (2004) distinguishes between three views of the state in this reassessment: the state centric or realist view, the liberalist view and the critical view. An overview of these perspectives is given in table 1.

State-centricism and the Westphalian model
The state-centric or realist view focuses on states as its unit of analysis. These states are the major source of power and the governments set the rules for everyone. Consequently, the influence of communities or economic actors is ignored. Traditionally, state-centric accounts aim to limit the influence of actors that could potentially constrain state authority. Kenneth Waltz (2000) states: "What requires emphasis is that, either way, among the forces that shape international politics, interdependence is a weak one" (p. 14). This position clearly opposes the arguments in favour of globalisation brought forward by proponents of a state model that is more world-open (e.g. Cox, 1981; Wendt, 1994, Sørensen, 2004). Nevertheless, it follows a certain strategy: "If I depend more on you than you depend on me, you have more ways of influencing me and affecting my fate than I have of affecting yours" (Waltz, 2000: pp. 15-16). This attitude is also reflected in the perception of international organizations. Realist accounts consider IGOs and INGOs to be a simple tool to pursue national interests (Waltz, 2000: p. 21). Following this argument, a strong nation state is needed, and a retreat would be unfavourable. The view dates back to the conditions established during the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and is hence often referred to as the Westphalian model. Since this model is, by the majority of scholars, still considered the *modus operandi* of international politics, its underlying claims are discussed more in detail.

Westphalia symbolizes "a transition from strict hierarchy to equality or from a vertical ordering with the Pope and the Emperor at the pinnacle, to a horizontal order composed of independent, freely negotiating states" (Simpson, 2004: p. 30). The "package of sovereignty" is commonly perceived to be the core of the Westphalian model. It points out five major claims (Kelly, 2005: p. 375): (1) equality of states within the international community; (2) general prohibition on foreign interference with internal affairs; (3) territorial integrity of the nation-state; (4) inviolability of international borders; and (5) sovereign immunity of the state engaged in state action.

Consequently, any Westphalian state should theoretically comply with all of these categories.

	State-centric (realist)	Liberalist	Critical
Approach	Focus on states as sovereign entities with defined territory, government and population.	Focus on states as a group of people. Government provides rule of law and rights of citizens.	Focus on capable governments interacting with a capitalist world system.
Major actors	States/governments set rules for each other actor.	Individuals and groups in civil society run and set the rules.	States set rules in cooperation with actors from civil society.
Power	Strong states have many power resources. Power concentrated in states / governments.	Non-material, intangible resources of power important. Power diffused among many actors.	Capable states have autonomy, administrative capacity, and are embedded in civil society (infrastructural power).
State in retreat	No	Yes	Transformation

Table 1: Views of the state (adopted from Sørensen, 2004: p. 20).

In practice, however, this hardly happens. Even though many states aim to maintain a state-centric approach, globalisation poses challenges to the practicability of the original model. Therefore, a more applicable *Westphalian sovereign state model* was introduced, which more generally points to "political authority based on territory, mutual recognition, autonomy and control" (Krasner, 2001: p. 18). In this context, territory describes authority as being enforced over a geographic area, rather than over ethnic or religious groups. Mutual recognition outlines that different states reciprocally acknowledge their status and enter contractual arrangements accordingly. Autonomy means that external actors do not possess authority within a given territory. Control defines that all states mutually enforce these principles. Nevertheless, these principles are flexible and allow compromise through conventions, contracting, coercion, and imposition (Krasner, 2001: p. 18).

That such compromise is indeed needed becomes evident when considering the atrocities committed in the 1990s in the Balkans and Rwanda, where political leaders purposefully infringed upon the human rights of their peoples and used the principle of autonomy to shield their actions. The United Nations (UN) reacted in contrast to its charter, art 2, para. 7[2], with the introduction of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) at the World Summit 2005, which concluded that territorial integrity can be infringed upon, in accordance with the security council, if "genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" can be observed (UN, 2005). This shows that the Westphalian state had to open legally in the past and that its principles are not completely irrefutable.

This trend can also be observed in areas where nation states lack the capabilities to enforce the Westphalian model. Demchak and Dombrowski (2014), for example, use the term *Cyber Westphalia* to label the challenges that are brought by the internet. They proclaim the evolution of a "new interstate system, based on a resurgent Westphalian state will not, in all likelihood, display the same characteristics as in periods prior to the digital information age" (p. 30). Since digital information does not physically cross borders and can nowadays be anonymously uploaded and accessed, the control of nations' cyber territories has advanced to be one of the major challenges of the Westphalian state model. If the control and enforcement of the described principles are almost impossible to realize, is the retreat of the state an adequate alternative?

Liberalist view

In contrast to realists – who base their assumptions on the configuration of capabilities – liberals believe that the configuration of state preferences is most important in world politics. This belief is based on three core assumptions. Firstly, liberals assume that the central actors in politics are individuals and private groups. Secondly, politicians are supposed to represent the interests of these individuals and groups, changing state interests accordingly. Thirdly, they assume that the interaction of interdependent state interests determines state behaviour. In this bottom-up approach, the government simply executes the will of the people (Moravcsik, 1997: p. 513; 516-521). Accordingly, the realist hierarchic pyramid with the government on top is turned upside down. In brief, it may be that "the drug barons of Colombia ... are just as important as states in determining the who-gets-what questions" (Strange, 1996: p. 68). Consequently, the government loses meaning, resulting in a *retreat of the state view*.

Kenichi Ohmae's book "The End of the Nation State" (1996) outlines in a rather populist way what a state in retreat could look like. The author demands the introduction of regional states whose borders are determined by their economic affiliations. In a way, he prefers economic over historical, cultural or geographical variables in drawing borders. Hence, states should simply formalize "natural economic zones" (p. 80). In contrast to Westphalian states, these regional states do not look to central governments, but to the global economy as a guideline for solving their problems. In consequence, their boundaries are highly flexible and adapt to economic circumstances. Since the retreat of the state perspective does most certainly not apply to China, it is primarily presented as a matter of completeness and is not as extensively discussed as the other views.

Critical view

The critical view focuses on state transformation. By that, it adopts insights of both the state centric and the retreat perspective, but also criticizes major shortcomings of the approaches (Sørensen, 2006: p. 191). It argues that states must develop in harmony with their environment in order to remain competitive. This view is multidimensional and includes transformations in economy, politics, community and sovereignty. Economic transformation describes the internationalization of economic spaces, the formation of regional economic blocs – as noted by Ohmae (1996) – the growth of more local

internationalization through the development of cross-national economic ties, the extension of multinational companies, the widening of international regimes and the introduction of global norms and standards (Sørensen, 2004: p. 27). To deal with these challenges, the state has to transform from its former statist and nationalist orientation towards a more "polymorphous entity, diffused into complex networks involving a range of other actors" (p. 36).

Political transformation involves the transition from national government to multinational governance. This urge arises out of the increasing number of interstate relations across government organizations, the expansion of trans-governmental relations among government agencies and eventually the expansion of transnational relations between non-state actors (pp. 60-61). Due to the persisting dominance of the Westphalian model, to date no comprehensive system of global governance has been established. However, the growing role of public policy networks indicates a shift towards the organization of politics on a more global level.

The transformation of community includes two dimensions: the community of citizens and the community of sentiment. While the first refers to the relation between citizens and the state, the latter describes the relation between citizens as a group. The major challenges for the community of citizens is based on the loosening state-citizen relation, which is caused by the guarantee of certain (e.g. human) rights, by global (e.g. UN) or supranational (e.g. European Union (EU)) institutions, reducing the peoples' dependence on national governments (pp. 86-90). The community of sentiments is challenged by the peoples' change of identity. Since self-identity has become a project for the individual, the identity assigned through nationality is not necessarily accepted. Many Westerners consider themselves to be rather global than national citizens and accordingly seek collective identity in movements 'above' the nation (pp. 90-96).

The transformation of sovereignty is initiated by problems that either cannot be administered nationally due to their global size and relevance (e.g. financial markets, climate change) or that cannot be reliably controlled and restricted by national governments because of their fast pace and agility (e.g. computerized data transmissions, media broadcasts, global companies) (p. 107). For the future, this could mean that while the constitutional sovereignty will most likely prevail (core of sovereignty), regulated intervention in internal and domestic affairs will have to be made possible to enforce global security (regulative rules). Also, it is likely that the substance of statehood will change from a territorially defined polity – based on the Westphalian model – to multilevel governance structures incorporating economic cross-border networks and supranational community movements (p. 115). In opposition to realist accounts – with state-centricism – and liberal accounts – with the retreat of the state – the critical view is process-oriented. This particular strength enables us to consider states as historically grown and evolved entities. To summarise these changes that are still underway, Sørensen proposed the term 'postmodern state' to express the inability to name where we are going, while being certain to tell where we departed (2006: pp. 204-205). We get back to this concept in the research design.

2.3 PERSPECTIVES ON CHINESE STATEHOOD

Coming back to our initial case, it is reasonable to ask which of the presented perspectives matches China best. Especially in Western literature, the country is frequently portrayed to be state-centred and hence 'Westphalian' in nature. Goldstein (2003), for example, calls it the "new Prussia". For reasons of practicability, we decided to only focus on Western perspectives. Since the Westphalian model has its origins in the West, so does its philosophical foundation. That makes it difficult to wholeheartedly apply Eastern (i.e. Chinese) perspectives to the model without implicitly confusing or mixing up different conceptions. A prominent claim is, for example, that the Chinese state has constituted its very own interpretation of Westphalia, namely *Eastphalia*. Although both terms are often used synonymously, there are several differences in the justification of a quite similar type of statehood. First of all, "[t]he key difference of the two is that in the West, the Empire 'failed' and … in the East, the Empire won" (Coleman & Maogoto, 2013: p. 254). Moreover, in contrast to the Westphalian model, which traces back to the *package of sovereignty* established during the Westphalian Peace, the Eastphalian model draws from the five principles of peaceful co-existence. These are: (1) mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) mutual non-aggression; (3) mutual non-interference in internal affairs; (4) equality and mutual benefit; and (5) peaceful coexistence (Coleman & Maogoto, 2013: p. 244). Comparing these principles with the five traditional principles of Westphalia – as outlined in the preceding section – it becomes evident that they also include moral claims. Especially the principles (2) mutual non-aggression, (4) equality and mutual benefit and (5) peaceful coexistence leave room for interpretation and provide rather a motive of action than a fixed set of rules. While one has to be aware of the variety of perspectives on Chinese statehood, we find that a conceptual consideration of both could impede a clear analysis and cause confusion due to certain implicit differences.

From a purely Western perspective, the conception of China as a Westphalian state is highly contested. Hameiri and Jones (2016) demonstrate that it is "in reality a complex, multilevel governance system driven by contending interests" (p. 90). This development was primarily caused by the country's shift from Maoist state socialism to state-managed capitalism, enabling international state actors and multinational corporates to shape Chinese policy (pp. 82-84). However, following the authors' claims, hardly any Western country fulfils the criteria of a Westphalian state either. Consequently, they rather show that the original Westphalian system is generally outdated and that it is not revived by Chinese statehood. Nevertheless – as could be shown in the preceding section – many attributes of the original Westphalian model are still valid for numerous states. Referring to a more contemporary definition of the term – such as the one provided by Krasner (2001) – China could still be labelled Westphalian. It is also notable that some authors seem to associate the Westphalian model with being in favour of globalisation. Wang (2015), for example, states: "The imposed Westphalia system forced the Chinese to see a much bigger real world that their rulers were simply unable to keep away" (p. 53). Thus, it appears that in some

instances, Westphalia is only a set phrase without a definition that is commonly agreed upon. Accordingly, before labelling China 'Westphalian', it should be mentioned whether a classical or contemporary definition of the term is chosen. That's why, in the following, we opt for a contemporary definition of the term as provided by Krasner (2001), referring to "political authority based on territory, mutual recognition, autonomy and control" (p. 18).

Looking at China's history, a change of attitude is visible. During the Early Republican Era (1911 - 1949) and under Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s and 1990s, the country followed the motive *taoguang yanghui* (韬光养晦), which can be translated as "hide capacities and bide time". However, it is widely agreed upon that since the beginning of Xi Jinping's rule, a development towards *yousuo zuowei* (有所作为) or *fenfa youwei* (奋发有为) – loosely translated as striving for achievement – can be observed. In this context, Gottwald and Bersick (2013) argue that the global financial crisis of 2007 and 2008 has pushed the PRC to the centre of economic governance, opening it for foreign influences. And more obviously, a number of initiatives, such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), along with the foundation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, indicate that China today is keen on taking on a leading role when it comes to global institutions and politics. Nevertheless, these power aspirations follow a much less aggressive approach than, for example, the colonial strategy of the British Empire or the arms race of the USA and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. That is why, "a China-centred world, should it emerge, might be a more peaceful one than the Europe-dominated world of the past few centuries" (Ginsburg, 2010: p. 37, 40).

In sum, it is contested whether China is a Westphalian state or not. This can be explained by different definitions for the same terms and diverging or incomplete units of analysis (economy, politics and nationhood). Ergo, a well-structured and comprehensive empirical analysis is needed to further our understanding of the research question: To what extent does China conform to the Westphalian state model?

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Based on the findings of the literature review we aim to provide a comprehensive analysis to determine whether China meets the criteria of a contemporary Westphalian state. In the state of the art, we outlined the three main perspectives of statehood: the retreat of the state view, the state-centric view – which is in line with the Westphalian model – and the state transformation view. This helped us to map the scientific landscape and then to allocate the specific debate on China's position within this field. We have seen that a vast amount of the literature on China applies a state-centric view. Nevertheless, the discussion of the perspectives on Chinese statehood have also shown that the concepts applied are either incomplete or unclear. Furthermore, we argue with the transformationalists that we cannot use this concept to test whether the claims of state transformation as a consequence of globalisation apply to our case, simply because it is too static. Its categories solely draw a distinction to the *pre*-Westphalian

state, but can hardly be operationalised for assessing its future development. In consequence, testing 'non-intervention' as one of its core-defining pillars against reality, such as humanitarian interventions under the R2P doctrine, would not arguably *prove* the end of Westphalia. Nonetheless, it does fundamentally challenge sovereignty claims and emphasises the necessity to develop categories for assessing a potential *post*-Westphalian state.

	The modern state (Westphalia)	The postmodern state
Government	A centralized system of democratic rule, based on a set of administrative, policing and military organizations, sanctioned by a legal order, claiming a monopoly of the legitimate use of force, all within a defined territory.	Multilevel governance in several interlocked arenas overlapping each other. Governance in context of supranational, international, trans-governmental and transnational relations.
Nationhood	A people within a territory making up a community of citizens (with political, social and economic rights) and a community of sentiment based on linguistic, cultural and historical bonds. Nationhood involves a high level of cohesion, binding nation and state together.	Supranational elements in nationhood, both with respect to the 'community of citizens' and the 'community of sentiment'. Collective loyalties increasingly projected away from the state.
Economy	A segregated national economy, self-sustained in the sense that it comprises the main sectors needed for its reproduction. The major part of economic activity takes place at home	'Deep integration': major part of economic activity is embedded in cross-border networks. The 'national' economy is much less self-sustained than it used to be.

Table 2: Three dimensions for transformation of statehood (adopted from Boxes 1.1 and 9.1 in Sørensen, 2004: pp. 14, 162).

This line of thought is picked up by Sørensen's dynamic model for a transformation of statehood (2004). By pointing to the importance of history, he outlines three historical dimensions along which this development can be observed: the government (i.e. the system of rule and institutions), nationhood (i.e. the community of citizens, culture, ideas) and the economy (i.e. the degree of integration in the world market). He goes on to explain the modern, Westphalian ideal type of state (pp. 7-14), with an emphasis on the structural differences to what would constitute a *post*modern state (p. 162). This framework helps us to operationalise state transformation and apply it to our case of China. We can now scrutinize the changes that have occurred in these three theoretical dimensions and assess whether these are sufficient to label China a postmodern state

or whether it is in fact still a modern (Westphalian) state. We hence test the robustness of the Westphalian model under the expectations of the transformationalist perspective. The categories for analysis are summarised in table 2.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Sørensen (2006) proposes to operationalise the postmodern state according to a comprehensive index for measuring globalisation, the A.T. Kearney Foreign Policy Globalisation Index (pp. 204-205). It served as a prototype for more recent indices, like the one developed by the KOF Swiss Economic Institute of the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) in Zürich, which is used for this analysis.[3] The KOF Index is now widely cited in the literature (see Potrafke, 2015). In its latest update in 2018, it measures the political, social and economic globalisation in the period from 1970-2015 on a scale from 1 to 100. Social globalisation consists of three subcomponents (an interpersonal, informational and a cultural dimension); economic globalisation of two (a trade and a financial dimension). The (sub)components comprise of *de facto (df)* and *de jure (dj)* variables, hence distinguishing between *activities* and *policies*. This is important, because often legal frameworks are not implemented, or action precedes regulation (Gygli, Haelg & Sturm, 2018: p. 7). We argue that the three primary components of the index and their constitutive variables cover the three dimensions of state transformation: government (political); nationhood (social); and economy (economic globalisation). A summary and description of the indices and variables can be found in the Appendix. The data can be accessed via the institute's homepage[4] and a description of the methodology is provided by Gygli, Haelg, and Sturm (2018).

Relying on the data from the KOF has one limitation: since the variables are already grouped into the (sub)components of the index, it is not possible to use single variables. This is not optimal, because alternative and more suitable groupings are made impossible, although this could lead to more valid results, considering that some (sub)components cover very diverse variables. But overall, the indices are sufficiently distinct for the analysis. Furthermore, the authors provide convincing and very detailed arguments for the chosen methodology, which is well in line with the literature on globalisation and points of critique that were expressed in reaction to previous indices (Gygli, Haelg & Sturm 2018: pp. 13-17).

The analysis proceeds as follows: with a particular emphasis on the changes since 2004, the year of publication of Sørensen (2004), we test whether his approach is now applicable to non-European or non-Western countries – an idea he was then critical of (Sørensen, 2006: p. 205). Moreover, we test whether the *state-centric,* and hence *Westphalian* state model, applies to contemporary China. This is done by gathering data on China along the dimensions mentioned above. Subsequently, we compare this data to North America, which is the most globalized region, according to the index. The degree of similarity helps us to evaluate whether China can still be considered a Westphalian state under the conditions of globalisation. In this context, a relatively low

value on the KOF index is an indicator for a state-centric or modern state, while a high value is an indicator for a transformative or postmodern state. Furthermore, we include articles from the field of IR and International Security in order to cross-validate our descriptive findings. The articles will help us understand the following questions: how do recent publications (not older than 2012) discuss China's role on the global stage *implicitly?* Do authors describe it as a *Westphalian (modern)* state?

4.1 GENERAL TRENDS

Before we briefly summarise global trends in globalisation and outline the general patterns for China and North America, we give a working definition for this concept. According to the authors of the index, who are building on the work on globalisation by Nye and Keohane (2000), it is defined as:

> "the process of creating networks of connections among actors at intra- or multi-continental distances, mediated through a variety of flows including people, information and ideas, capital, and goods. Globalisation is a process that erodes national boundaries, integrates national economies, cultures, technologies and governance, and produces complex relations of mutual interdependence" (Gygli, Haelg & Sturm, 2018: p. 5).
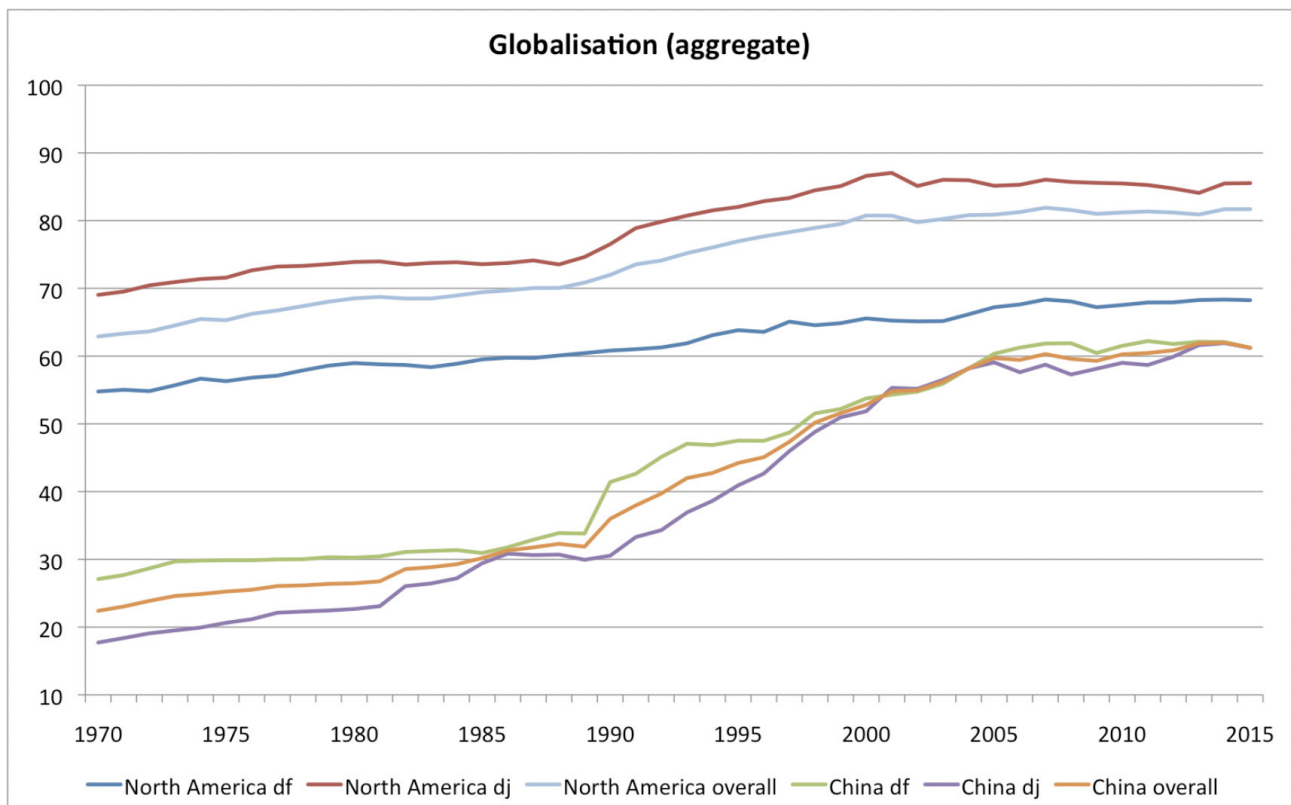

Chart 1: Globalisation (aggregate), own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

After having witnessed long years of continuous globalisation on a global level, this trend appears to have come to an end in 2015, when the KOF detected decreasing figures for the first time. According to a KOF Director Jan-Egbert Sturm, this trend can

be expected to continue in the near future – supposedly as a consequence of the isolationist turns in Western countries, such as the US and Britain.[5]

Additionally, China and North America have continuously globalized since the 1970s. Around the end of the Cold War and well throughout the 90s, this trend became more nuanced, with China catching up significantly until 2005. Since then, both regions are in stagnation, reflecting – or rather preceding – the global development outlined above. Comparing *de facto* to *de jure* globalisation, it is the former where China has narrowed the gap to North America more. This has certainly to do with a general lower level of North American globalisation in this area (see Chart 1). In order to further differentiate between the three dimensions of state transformation, let us now turn to the main components of that index: the political (4.2); the social (4.3); and the economic dimension of globalisation (4.4).

4.2 GOVERNMENT: POLITICAL GLOBALISATION

The first dimension of state transformation encompasses "[m]ultilevel governance in several interlocked arenas overlapping each other [in the] context of supranational, international, transgovernmental and transnational relations" (Sørensen, 2004: p. 162). We hence assess the development of relations between, across and above at least two governmental institutions. The KOF component "Political Globalisation" does not have subcomponents as the other two. It provides us with a *de facto* index comprising the absolute number of foreign embassies, the personnel contributed to UN Security Council Missions per capita and the number of INGOs in a particular country. Its *policy* counterpart counts membership status in IGOs and the number of signed international (investment, bi- and multilateral) treaties (see Annex). To begin with, this is the only component where China has not only *caught up* with, but even *surpassed* the most globalized region in the world. It is even more interesting that this happened as early as in the 1980s, or in the 1970s for *de facto* variables, respectively. Overall, Political Globalisation has been rising steadily in China, while figures for North America have been stagnating since the 1990s (see Chart 2).

A differentiated investigation into the variables considered for this component helps to shed light on the question of where exactly this development originated. Two observations shall be highlighted. First, *de facto* political globalisation in China rose above North American figures as early as the late 1970s, and skyrocketed after the end of the Cold War, eventually reflecting the effective state-led implementation of Deng Xiaoping's opening policies. In consequence, the number of foreign embassies, INGOs and Chinese personnel in UN missions now account for about half of China's lead in political globalisation vis-à-vis North America, whose numbers do not show much variance since the collection of the first data point. This observation, which reflects a strong engagement in *activities* of global governance, is supported by Chen (2016), who outlines the potential, which stems from a rising China to contribute to global peaceful order-shaping via multilateral cooperation mechanisms. This claim is particularly interesting in the light of the background of the author; he is not the only Chinese

scholar having internalized liberal institutionalist thought of this kind, as we see in the following section on informational globalisation.
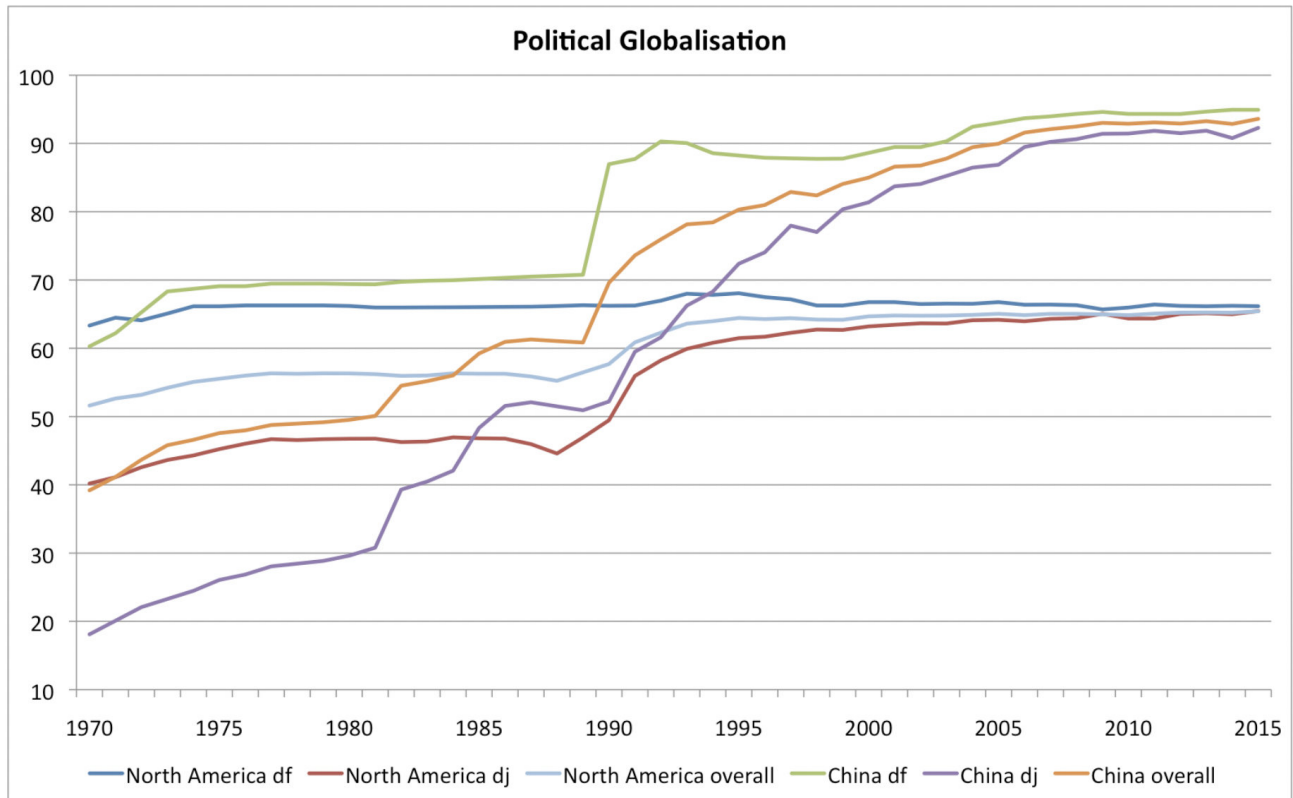

Chart 2: Political Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

Second, *de jure* variables on the other hand started from much lower levels in both cases – particularly in China. Against this background, it is striking that China was able to increase its figures by more than 400% to over 90 index points in 45 years, while North America added 'only' 50% in the same period. This long-term and steady rise in membership status in IGOs and the number of treaties signed is even more revealing than the *de facto* figures mentioned above. It reflects how rising powers like China are being transnationally integrated into the institutional governance framework established by the liberal West (Stephen, 2014), while at the same time challenging the existing system through new institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Belt and Road Initiative (Layne, 2018).

The figures clearly indicate that China has globalized rapidly and steadily on the governmental dimension, including in the past 20 years during which North American figures came to a halt. *De facto*, China is willing to accept foreign (non)governmental influence on its territory and to pool resources on a multilateral level. *De jure*, the continuous efforts to enhance cross-border communication between different governmental levels and agencies demonstrate a clear desire to create networks, which – considering that the number of *distinct* partners is included in the index – can be considered truly global. All in all, on a political level, China fulfils all the criteria to be considered a postmodern state.

4.3 NATIONHOOD: SOCIAL GLOBALISATION

According to Sørensen (2004), the second dimension of state transformation refers to "[s]upranational elements in nationhood, both with respect to the 'community of citizens' and the 'community of sentiment'. Collective loyalties [are] increasingly projected away from the state" (p. 162). We are hence interested in detecting a sociological dimension of globalisation, one that is more closely linked to human interaction and points both in- and outwards of the state.
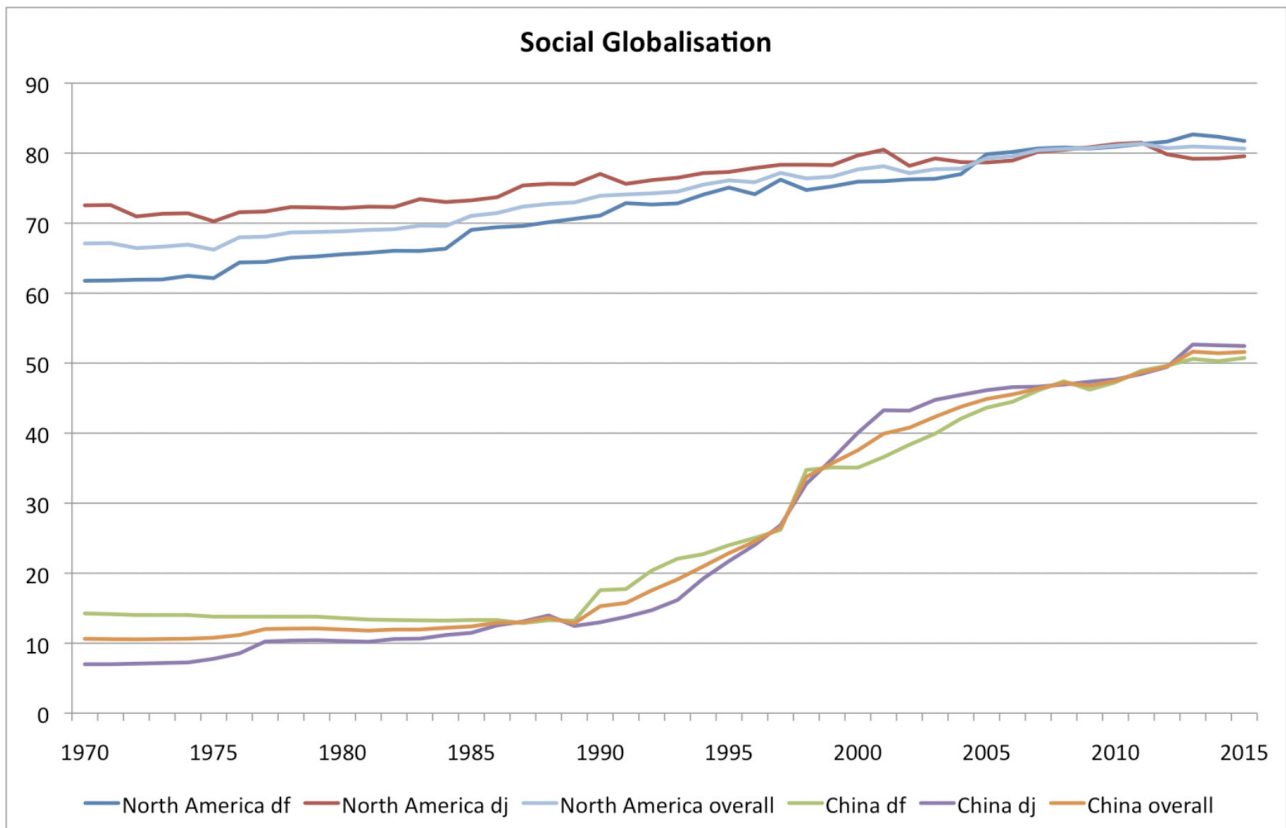

Chart 3: Social Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

The KOF component "Social Globalisation" assembles a wide range of indices and variables for measuring the *practical* and *legal* diffusion of ideas, culture and technology, interactions like telecommunication or cross-border movements, and the enhancement of civil and press freedom, education and gender parity (see Annex). Most of the variables control for a country's population size. Overall, since 1970, social globalisation in China has increased four times as fast as in North America. Considering its significantly lower level of departure, this is not necessarily surprising (see Chart 3).

Let us now take a more specific look into the three subcomponents: 1) interpersonal, 2) informational and 3) cultural globalisation (see Charts 4, 5, 6). Two observations stand out: first, the general trend of China catching up in terms of social globalisation, as indicated above, is particularly evident in five of the six possible groupings. Chinese *de jure* figures for interpersonal, and its *de jure* and *de facto* figures for both informational

and cultural globalisation can be expected to continue narrowing the gap – especially because North American figures stagnate or retrocede.
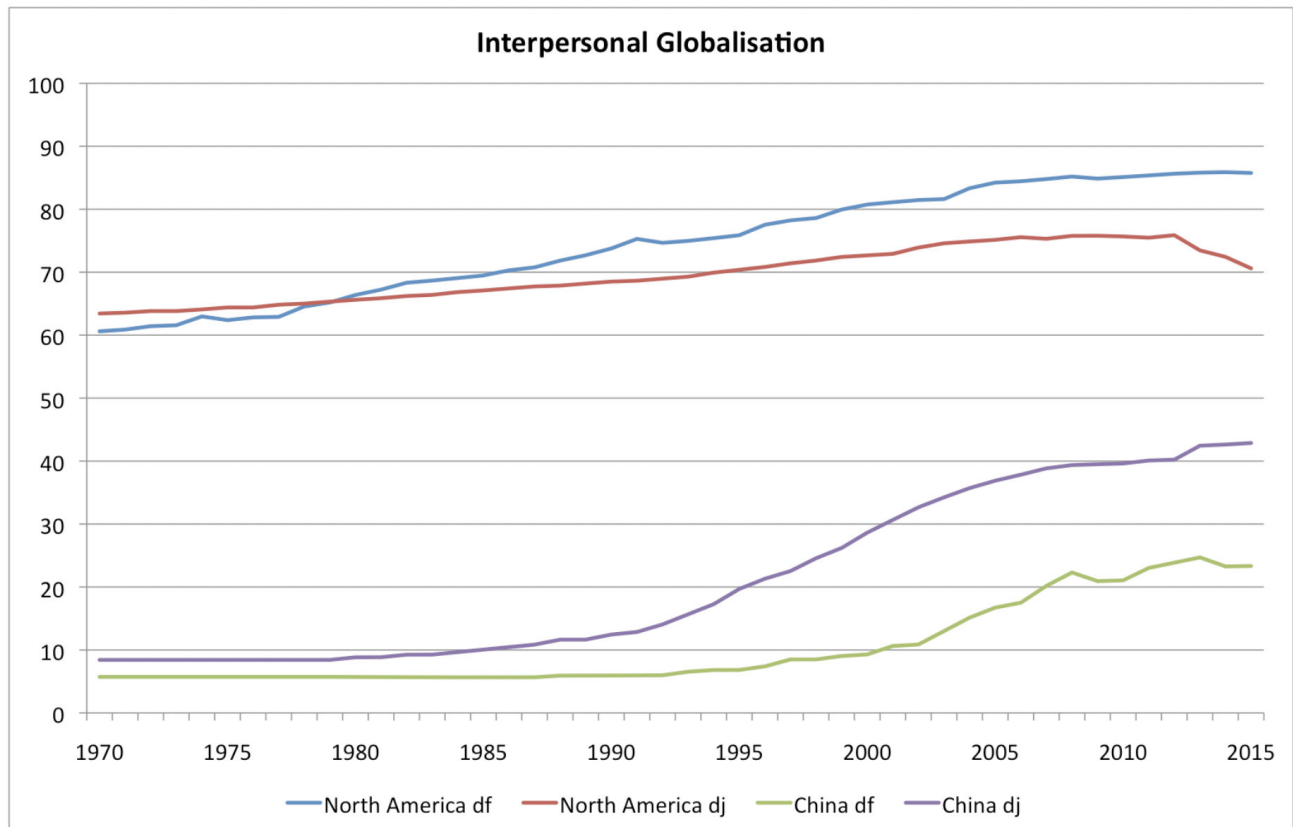

Chart 4: Interpersonal Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli,, Haelg and Sturm (2018).
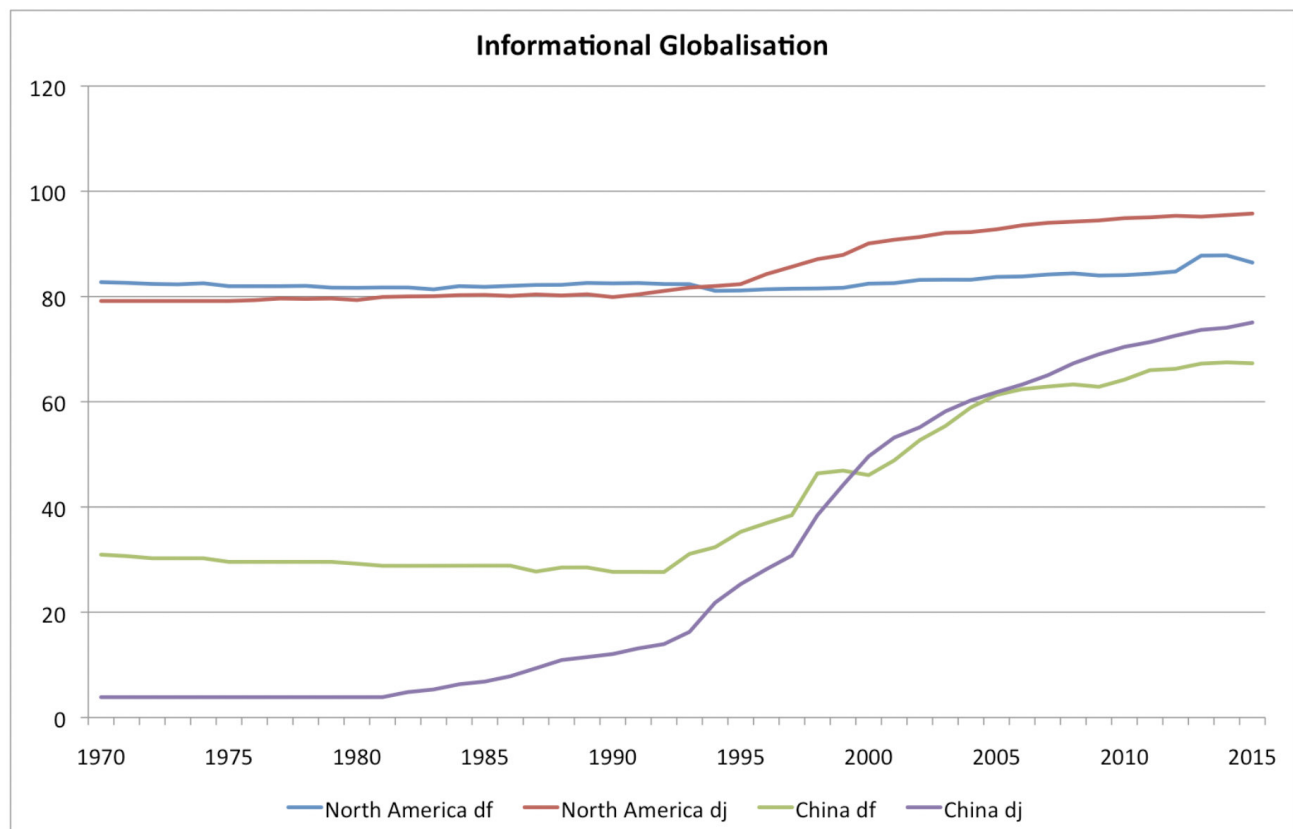

Chart 5: Informational Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

Research on China's innovative and technological capacities provides further evidence for the sharp increase of Chinese informational globalisation by putting the variables in the composite *de facto* index into perspective. Building on Beckley's arguments (2012), the international students variable can be traced back to this country's massive brain-drain (p. 66), while high technology exports reflect large quantities of predominantly foreign products assembled in China (p. 68). Furthermore, the flow of people and ideas also occurs in the opposite direction. One example for the informational globalisation of scientific traditions can be found in the literature on China's International Political Economy (IPE) scholarship. Yong and Pauly (2013) argue that many Chinese authors have picked up Anglo-American ideological traditions, like neo-imperialism, liberal institutionalism (see also Chen, 2016), and recently, constructivism.

Second, somewhat representing the other side of the coin, the variables that are most likely to explain the prevailing difference in social globalisation between both regions can be found in the low share of *activities* that would reflect interpersonal globalisation. So, while the *technical possibilities* for cross-border communication (telephone subscriptions) and travel (visa requirements, international airports) in China have been improving for some years, that potential appears to be barely realised. Additionally, another variable within the index could also be involved in skewing the curve: the number of foreign-born residents as a percentage of total population (Gygli, Haelg & Sturm, 2018: p. 14).
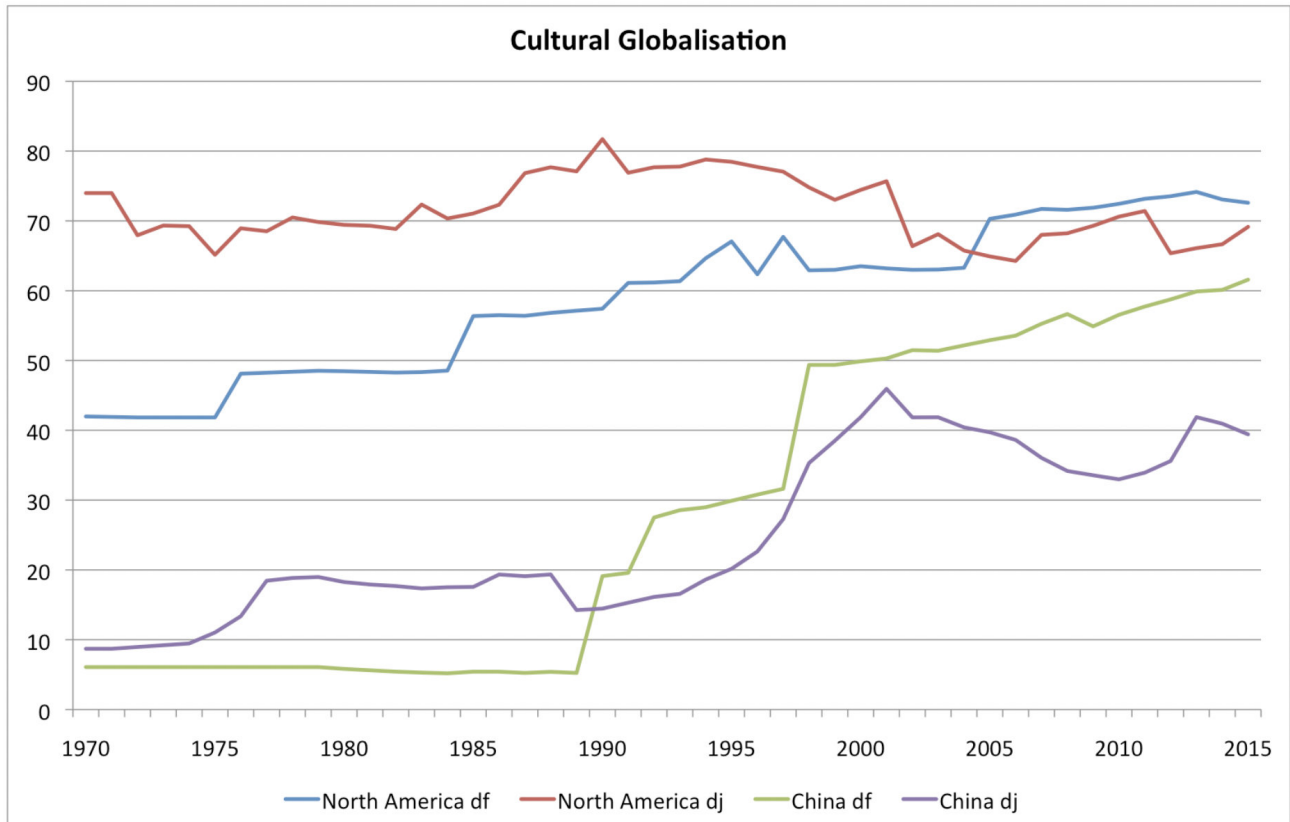

Chart 6: Cultural Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

So, although China globalized significantly in the nationhood dimension, this is largely due to its low level of departure. The fact that both regions share long s-shaped curves in most of their subcomponents suggests a general trend of decreased potentials to further globalize socially. Nevertheless, on technological terms, China can be expected to witness further integration.

While low levels of *de jure* cultural globalisation reflect the Chinese government's attempt to reduce possibilities for its citizens to get in touch with values and customs from abroad, de facto levels seem to indicate the possibility to do so effectively – at least in the commercial realm. In the social dimension, China seems to be in a hybrid position between the modern and the postmodern ideal type. While on an interpersonal level the Chinese society is still broadly isolated from foreign influences, activities of cultural exchange are reaching moderate to high levels of globalisation. Particularly the prospects for development in informational globalisation suggest some further steps in the direction of a postmodern society in the near future.

4.4 ECONOMY: ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION

The third dimension to observe state transformation towards a postmodern state is the economy. In the light of globalisation, this means "'[d]eep integration' is [the] major part of economic activity embedded in cross-border networks. The 'national' economy is much less self-sustained than it used to be" (Sørensen, 2004: p. 162). We are therefore not focussing on economic power or growth here – at least not in the sense of a proxy for capabilities. These measures are primarily of interest to deflate the figures, so they can be compared as shares of GDP. Our focal points of interest are rather the degrees of interdependence in trade and financial flows between states.

For the former, the KOF component "Economic Globalisation" summarises trade *activities* in both goods and services plus trade partner diversification, complemented with regulations, taxes and tariffs on the *policy* side. For the latter, it considers the levels of foreign direct and equity portfolio investments, as well as international debts, reserves and income payments (*de facto*), while investment restrictions and two indices for capital account openness are added for its *de jure* dimension (see Annex).

To begin with, North America witnessed rising overall levels of economic globalisation until the economic crisis in 2008 / 2009. Since then, its level remains around 25 index points above China. In the case of China, slowdown in all figures manifested itself already some years before the crisis, at a point where the gap between *de facto* figures had decreased by more than 300% within 20 years. In North America, the downward trend dates back to changes in the *legislative* environment during the Bush presidency (see Chart 7).[6]

A closer look on the economic subcomponents helps to understand these developments more profoundly (see Charts 8, 9). Two observations stand out. First, the figures from both regions seem to be closely related to each other. On the one hand,

China's low figures in *de jure* terms are in both subcomponents heavily affected by changing globalisation levels of North American *legislation*. On the other hand, except for trade *activities,* changes in one particular subcomponent of economic globalisation are always paralleled by similar developments in the other region.
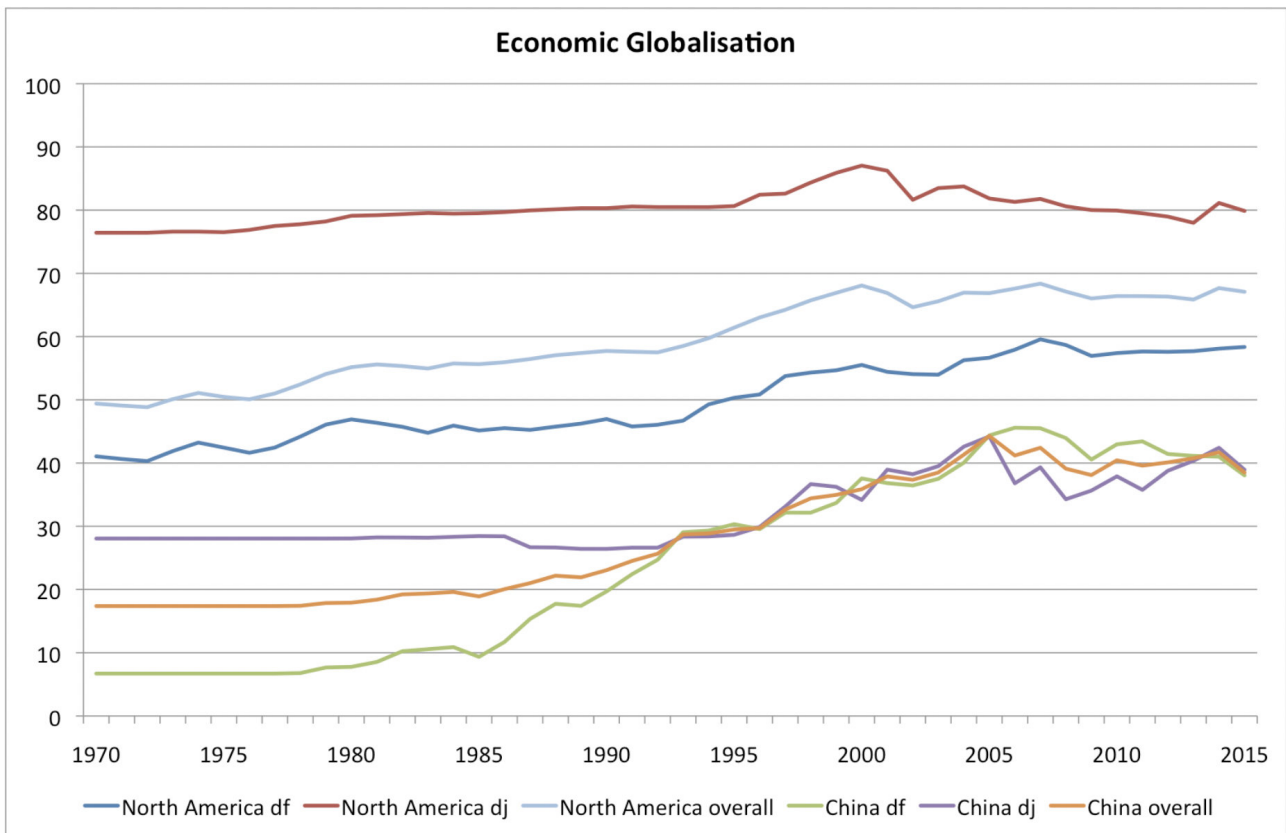

Chart 7: Economic Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

The literature provides us with supporting evidence and a tentative explanation. Stokes' economic analysis (2014) shows that China's growth has always been largely embedded in the US dollar's monetary regime. Consequently, changes in US legislation on trade or finance can be expected to result in fluctuations in the China's flow of goods, investments and regulations. Another explanation for the parallel movements is provided by a historical materialist account of the BRICs challenge. Stephen (2014) explains how rising powers like China are integrated into the historical structure of global capitalism. He concludes that the "[i]ntegration into the transnational structures of production and exchange of neoliberal globalisation is a fundamental determinant of the orientations of rising powers towards global governance" (p. 930).

Second, the reason why China is still significantly below North American levels of economic globalisation seem to be its *regulative* barriers to trade, particularly investment, and the fact that its trade *activities,* which were able to surpass its Western counterpart for a period of more than 10 years, have been plummeting dramatically since 2005. The comparative literature provides us with nuanced explanations for this. Nölke et al.'s varieties of capitalism approach to "state-permeated economies" (2015)

emphasises domestic reasons such as the state-led and selective allowance of market mechanisms, the dominance of national and family capital, and the possibility to rely on a large domestic market. Building on the domestic market argument, Beckley (2012) argues that China will face severe economic problems stemming from its fading demographic dividend and a shrinking internal market, manifesting itself already in lower imports, vice versa the US (pp. 60-62). Another explanation – possibly complementary in nature – is provided by Hameiri and Jones (2015) and Layne (2018). The authors depict that the Chinese economy's transnationalisation (e.g. in the Greater Mekong Subregion) and its economic integration (OBOR, AIIB) occur to a large extent in Asia. North America's relative geographical isolation on the other hand makes comparable regional integration more difficult. These structural differences are consequently deepened by the KOF's methodology, which explicitly discriminates against regional flows of trade and investments, favouring longer distances and hence global patterns (Gygli, Haelg & Sturm, 2018: p. 13).
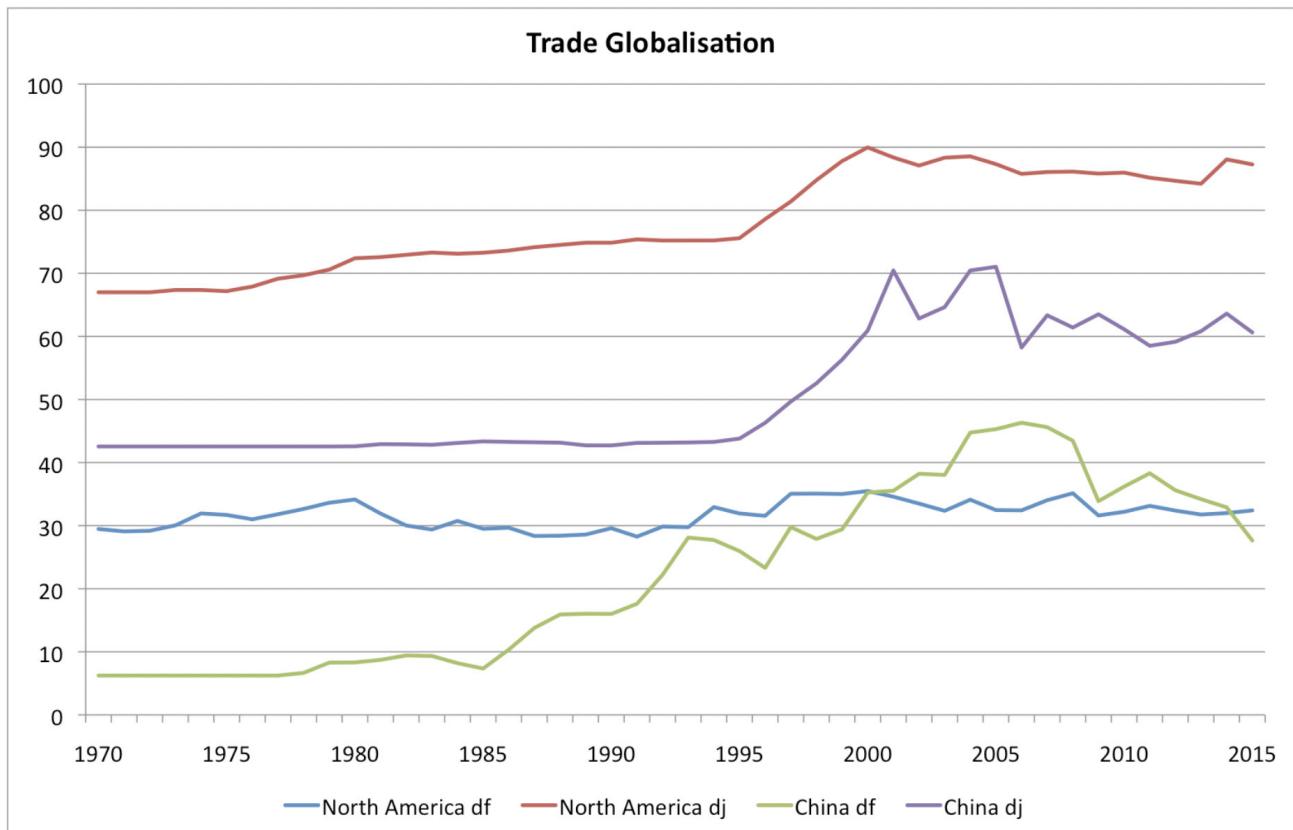

Chart 8: Trade Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

We have seen that China's integration into the world economy seems to have come to a halt at intermediate levels. Part of this may be attributed to its emphasis on proximate regions, with larger and more distant markets playing an important but not pivotal role. Furthermore, it may also be hindered by its close interdependence with the US economy. Since the early 2000s, North America has only globalized regarding on financial figures in its *legal* environment, while all other indicators show retrocession. Even though there is evidence for stronger effects on China due to the prevailing dollar hegemony, a bi-directional interdependence of these major economic regions is very

likely. To sum up, China again shows signs for a hybrid position in between the two ideal types. For trade, its regulative openness to foreign goods correlates with high and globally integrated trade volumes, clear indicators for a postmodern state. Restrictions to investments and on foreign capital on the other hand explain why China overall only scores moderate on economic globalisation.
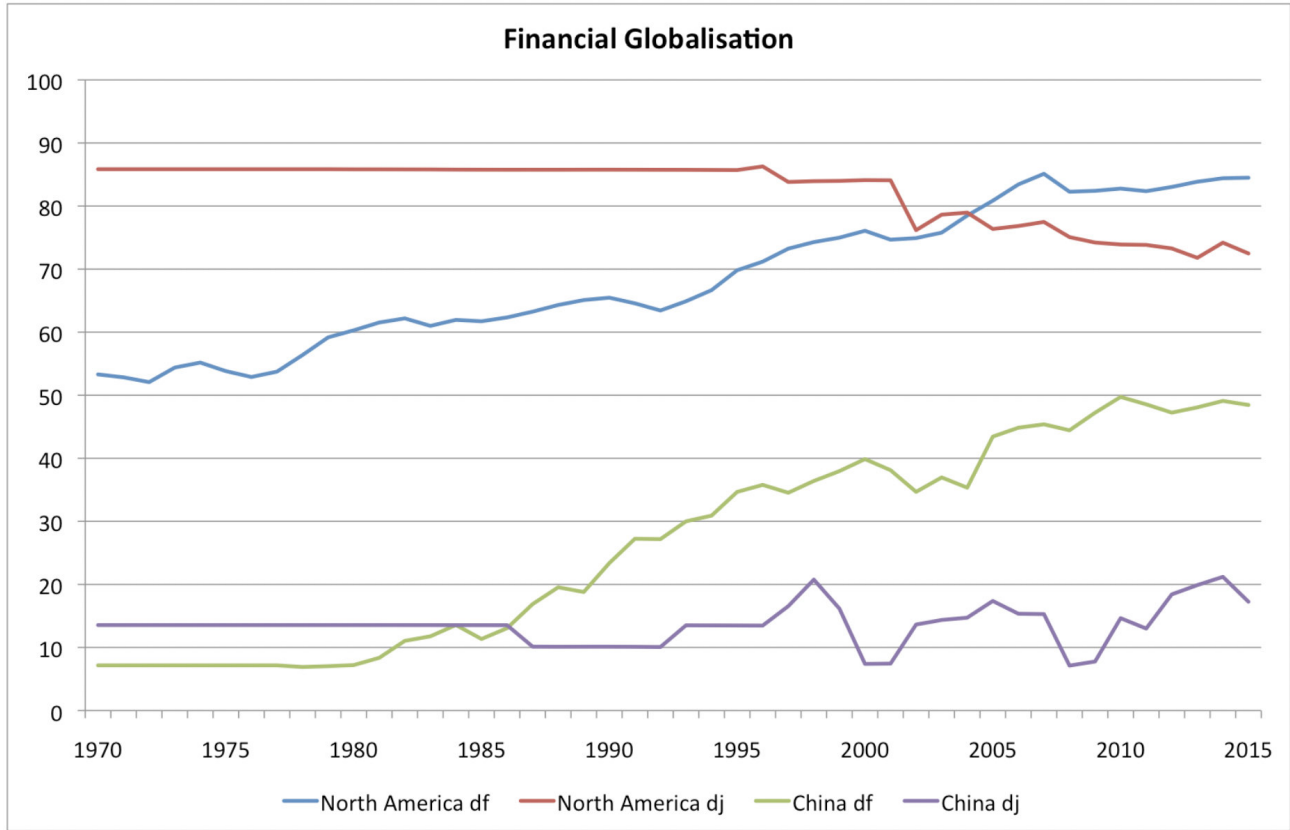

Chart 9: Financial Globalisation, own composition according to Gygli, Haelg & Sturm (2018).

5. CONCLUSION

In sum, it is evident that the proposed model is applicable to the case of China. The country is most globalised in its political dimension, where it even surpasses North America. This is especially surprising since much of the presented literature specifically emphasizes the role of Chinese economic relations as a cause for its shift towards globalisation (e.g. Hameiri & Jones, 2016; Wang, 2016). In this category, however, China is rather weakly integrated, only being held up by its strong engagement in trade activities. The high value in political globalisation is also surprising, because it contradicts Goldstein's argument (2003), highlighting the closed and self-centred nature of the polity. In the social dimension, in spite of a fast increase in the past, China has only an intermediate position, mostly due to low interpersonal levels. This suggests that the potential for globalisation in this category is not yet exhausted – especially within the community of sentiment.

Based on the conducted analysis in this paper, China should be considered a state in transformation, which is why the research question is answered differently for any

considered category. It was shown that the country is globally too integrated along all three dimensions of statehood for a modern, Westphalian regime. It can be expected that this interim position is the starting point to push for further transformation through the political leadership of a constitutionally embedded rule under Xi Jinping. It appears that many scholars have simplistically misinterpreted the strong role of government as notions of Westphalia. This has significant implications for a theory of state transformation under globalisation in general, which will have to be assessed by individual case-to-case studies. It has also implications for IR discussions about hegemony transitions, considering that the type of actor challenging the current liberal world order is actually more embedded in this system than widely expected. Globalisation appears to be in the clear interest of both the political elite and the country's economic development itself, considering that – relative to 1990 – no other country's per capita income has been induced more by this development than China (Weiss, Sachs & Weinelt, 2018: pp. 20-21).

NOTES

1. See articles in The Economist (https://www.economist.com/china/2017/10/24/xi-jinpings-thinking-is-ranked-alongside-maos); The Guardian (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/24/xi-jinping-mao-thought-on-socialism-china-constitution); TIME (http://time.com/4994618/xi-jinping-china-19th-congress-ccp-mao-zedong-constitution/); The New York Times (https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/24/world/asia/china-xi-jinping-communist-party.html); and BBC (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-41730948).

2. "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state" (1945).

3. See Dreher, (2006) for the original contribution introducing the index.

4. https://www.kof.ethz.ch/en/forecasts-and-indicators/indicators/kof-globalisation-index.html

5. The press release can be found at: https://www.kof.ethz.ch/en/news-and-events/media/press-releases/2018/01/kof-globalisation-index-globalisation-down-worldwide-in-2015.html

6. Bush for example raised tariffs on steel imports provoking a trade war with the EU (for a discussion see Ho, 2003).

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frederik König is a master's student who is interested in global power dynamics. He holds a B. A. In Sociology, Politics and Economics from Zeppelin University and currently studies International Relations and Transnational Governance at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Moreover, he is a student assistant at the Network Institute Amsterdam, where he conducts research in the field of research policy. In his master's thesis he investigates the social structure of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Naudascher is a master's student of Political Science at Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, where he currently assesses the developmental risks and opportunities related to China's One Belt One Road initiative in East Africa as part of his master thesis. His focus on the nexus between development policy and sustainability was formed during his undergraduate studies in Sociology, Politics & Economics at Zeppelin University. Now, specializing on International Relations & Transnational Governance, this dedication has become more nuanced, as it adds an external, geopolitical dimension to the internal, socio-political one. He has worked for a regional parliament in Germany, the German Chamber of Commerce in Costa Rica and the EU Energy Initiative in Brussels.

08

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