

CHINA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THINKING: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Event Report
5 September 2018

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Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

S. RAJARATNAM
SCHOOL OF
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**NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
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SINGAPORE

Event Report

CHINA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THINKING: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

**Report of a workshop organised by:
China Programme,
Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore**

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Editor:

Benjamin Ho

This report summarises the proceedings of the seminar as interpreted by the assigned rapporteur(s) and editor(s) appointed by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Participants neither reviewed nor approved this report.

This workshop adheres to a variation of the Chatham House Rule. Accordingly, beyond the paper presenters cited, no other attributions have been included in this workshop report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Is there a unique Chinese approach to international relations, and if so, how does Chinese strategic thought affect contemporary Chinese conceptions of international order and foreign policy? How does China perceive the present international order? What are its strengths and weaknesses? What kind of international order is being envisaged by China's leaders, and what ought to be the characteristics of such an order? These questions among others were the focus of the China Programme's September 2018 workshop, which brought together a diverse group of 12 scholars from China, the US, the UK, Australia, and Singapore.
2. It was shared that China's foreign policy behaviour was shaped by its threat perception and cultural impact on the ideational level, which resulted in a combination of realpolitik and Confucianism. Hence countries which seek to engage with China ought to encourage Beijing to follow the Confucian tradition in pursuing non-violent and peaceful policies, especially towards security and territorial disputes, instead of pressurising China as it could lead to conflict.
3. It was also observed that the fundamental character of international politics was undergoing tremendous change due to globalising forces and hence there was a need to rethink ways in which Eastern and Western civilisation can co-exist peacefully together. Given ideological differences, there is a need for scholars to find common ground and engage with one another and to source for universal values that could bind and bridge the different perspectives of the East and West.
4. Regarding China's political worldview, the deep and pervasive influence of President Xi Jinping on China's international relations cannot be ignored. It was argued that President Xi and the Chinese Communist Party had drawn upon three key ideas in articulating Chinese views on international order: (i) national rejuvenation; (ii) global community; and (iii) Chinese contribution. The combination of all three ideas has subtly influenced Beijing's policymakers, thus resulting in a new Sinocentrism and China-centered world order.
5. Notwithstanding China's ambition to be a great power, it was also observed that China – in its various international undertakings – has more modest objectives, and that it is learning from experience and doing what works. In this respect, it can be said that China's international behaviour is more in line with middle power practices and not those of a super power. Paradoxically, it appears that China has had more success in niche areas such as peace

operations as compared to more traditional undertakings associated with major powers.

6. Within the Asia Pacific region, China has had the desire to play a leadership role given its historical status as a predominant power in East Asia for a long time. Hence, it tried to use economic power to expand its influence in Asia while reassuring its neighbours that it will be a peaceful regional power that can provide other countries with opportunities to prosper. Given the present preponderance of American power in the region, China is anxious that it might be encircled and that its territory might be encroached on. While Beijing frequently expresses its frustration towards American alliance in Asia, it does not provide alternative security arrangements that could realistically replace the existing system.

7. China's rising regional power has raised questions on the future direction of regional order in East Asia, especially as China and the US' conceptions of regional and global order come into conflict. Given this, there is an urgent need to develop alternative understandings of how great powers might come together to find mutually acceptable roles for the other in the building of regional order. The notion of coalition hegemony thus represents one possible approach in which both Beijing and Washington – despite competing visions – can still cooperate in pragmatic and mutually acceptable ways.

Session 1: China's International Relations Theory – What's New?

China and strategic culture

Professor He Kai has been observing the existing heated debates over China's foreign policy behaviour and implications for world politics. Realist scholars perceive an inevitable conflict between China and the US, while liberals are optimistic that China would not want to overthrow the current international order which it has benefitted from. Constructivist scholars have also put forth the importance of ideational factors in their discussion of what China wants and would do.

According to Prof He, these arguments tend to overemphasise the importance of structure and do not sufficiently take into account the importance of agency in China's strategic behaviour. By adopting a strategic culture model, he suggested that two factors shape Chinese foreign policy: (i) strategic perceptions of threat from realism and (ii) Chinese cultural traditions from its Confucian culture. Under a high level of threat, the realpolitik strand of Chinese culture will intensify the urgency of the threat, leading to offensive action. Whereas under a low level of threat, the Confucian aspect of Chinese culture will emphasise morality and encourage a defensive and non-use-of-force policy.

Using China's South China Sea (SCS) disputes as a case study, Prof He discussed Beijing's strategy during three periods (i.e. 1990-2010, 2010-2015, and 2015-2018). Between 1990 and 2010, the SCS was not seen as a high-level threat or diplomatic priority in its foreign policy agenda. Hence China practiced moral self-constraint and was prepared to cooperate with its neighbours bilaterally and multilaterally. However when the US started to modify its policy towards the SCS issue from 2010 onwards as part of the "pivot to Asia" strategy, it changed the threat perception of Chinese policy makers as they were concerned about strategic pressure from the US. Between 2015 and 2018, the SCS disputes between China and other claimant states started to gradually calm down after Beijing officially announced the end of its 18-month island building projects. In addition, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' policy choice of not siding with the US in freedom of navigation activities also reduced the level of threat Chinese leaders perceived.

Moving forward, Prof He suggested that countries engaging with China ought to encourage Beijing to follow the Confucian tradition of pursuing non-violent

and peaceful policies, especially towards security and territorial disputes. Countries should also find unique ways to live with China by understanding how Chinese strategic culture work.

Global “civilisational politics” with the core pillars of “civilisational values”

Professor Su Hao presented on the need to go beyond state-centric approaches to international security, and to instead view political issues from a more macroscopic and civilisational perspective. He observed that there is a need to be both “historically correct” and “politically correct”; failure to achieve both would lead to misunderstanding and conflict within and among countries. He argued that at present, both Eastern and Western civilisation are fraught with deficiencies. While the West tend to use values such as freedom and democracy to rule the world, the East has trouble identifying with their own core civilisational values and thus frequently adopts ideas from the West, accentuating its own problems within. Prof Su argued on the need to combine both Eastern and Western values, as only with their integration can a true universal value and “unity in diversity” be achieved.

Processual Constructivism and the Study of Evolution of South China Sea Dispute

Mr Lin Kaicheng proposed understanding the SCS disputes from a processual constructivist approach as existing studies tend to focus only on geography, history, international law, and international relations. He suggested that there is a need to understand how actors make behavioural choices under the influence of these processes. By drawing upon insights from processual constructivism, how practices and processes affect the way interests are being understood and pursued can then be evaluated.

According to Mr Lin, how countries approach the SCS disputes would influence the development and direction of these disputes. He added that the diffusion of international maritime norms and the feedback of the coastal countries around the SCS constituted the cause of the dispute, while the interactive practice of parties concerned constituted the impetus for the development of the dispute. Given that processual constructivism is rooted in Chinese traditional ideas, such a theoretical approach could provide clues as to how Beijing would approach the SCS in the coming years.

Discussion

Associate Professor Alan Chong observed that most analysis of China's international relations tend to focus on the international system and might have inadvertently missed out on micro-level variables. He added that existing studies of Chinese international relations mostly utilise international relations (IR) frameworks derived from Western tradition and questioned whether there were any indigenous Chinese traditions that IR scholars could draw from. Furthermore, there is a need to also consider Chinese socialist ideas (derived from Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping) and the extent to which these ideas influenced Chinese international relations. The question as to what the Chinese government considers a threat was posed, and whether Chinese policy makers can correctly assess whether a threat is high or low. On Prof Su's paper, Assoc Prof Chong also raised the issue of whether the reference to "global politics" would surpass the notion of "world politics", and whether there was a world culture or philosophy behind the notion of "civilisational politics". He also questioned whether the search for solutions to the SCS disputes constituted "halfway houses" or "incomplete solutions", and whether these disputes could truly be resolved.

Prof Su shared that civilisational values – by definition – are incommensurable with each other and that China ought to look within its own historical past for these values instead of taking reference from the West. He added that under Xi, the emphasis has been to look to Chinese civilisation rather than Marxism (which came from the West) as a guide for China's political thinking. At the same time, one participant shared that Chinese civilisation history was not entirely benign and free from conflict, and it is important that Chinese scholars identify which history they are looking at, and the correct lessons to appropriate. Prof Su commented that historical approaches are less relevant to resolving contemporary problems like the SCS disputes as these disputes only arose much later as a result of Western interference and emphasis on territorial sovereignty.

Session 2: China's Political Worldview and Vision of International Order

Xi Jinping doctrine and Chinese visions of international order

Dr Zhang Feng focused his presentation on the influence of Xi's thinking as they represent the most authoritative Chinese views on international affairs today. He argued that Xi had utilised the notion of the "mission of the Chinese Communist Party" as a general framework when thinking about international order in the modern world. Supporting this framework were three other concepts deeply rooted in the modern Chinese experience: (i) national rejuvenation, (ii) global community, and (iii) Chinese contribution. According to Dr Feng, all three possess historical and contemporary policy resonance thus lending themselves well in aiding Xi's foreign policy pursuits.

On the notion of national rejuvenation, Dr Feng commented that the goals of Chinese wealth and power primarily spoke to China's needs, not the world's. In this respect, Xi's historicism was predicated on the belief that the search for wealth and power, and the political goals of independence and sovereignty, has been a fundamental national mission for Chinese elites since the decline of the Qing dynasty. In addition, since national rejuvenation was predicated on a humiliation-inspired quest for power, it exercised a powerful hold on Chinese conceptions of international order.

Dr Feng also argued that the concept of global community of a shared future was a critical idea in Xi's theory of foreign policy. Unlike his predecessor Hu Jintao who sought to raise awareness of this concept, Xi elevated the notion of global community to a policy doctrine. As such, Xi brought in more traditional Chinese concepts to the deployment of China's foreign policy. This can be seen more clearly in the Belt and Road Initiative in which principles of discussion, collaboration, and sharing were frequently mentioned.

Last but not least, Dr Feng observed that Xi had also sought to promote Chinese contribution to issues of global governance. While Xi has not yet asserted China's centrality in world affairs, this quest for status nonetheless contains traces of historical Sinocentrism which is a hallmark of traditional China's foreign relations, not unlike the thinking of Mao Zedong. Given these, one cannot rule out the possibility of the emergence of a new Sinocentrism and China-centered global order in years to come.

Major power relations? China's middle power behavioural practices with Great Power outcomes

Dr Catherine Jones argued that Chinese preferences with regards to international order were largely derived from China's existing practices which thus informed its vision building and practices. Seen this way, China's vision of global order was produced from learning from experience and "doing what works" instead of a clearly defined vision.

Dr Jones commented that China at present still lacks one notable attribute of being a great power: that it does not have a clearly defined project and purpose. Hence it continues to only partially fulfil notions of a great power. She noted that Beijing evinces practices of middle powers while simultaneously claiming big power status.

Jones observed that to this end China has been using international institutions to enhance its own agency and has also been demonstrating a greater contribution to public goods. Nevertheless Beijing's actions are still mostly seen to be learning lessons by observing, considering, practicing, and evaluating, rather than being ideologically driven.

Relating to China's work in the field of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), Jones suggested that China had used its presence to revert PKO to more traditional roles of peacekeeping instead of peace enforcement and robust operations. There was also an emphasis on the developmental aspects of PKO instead of coercive work. China was also amenable to providing its own niche expertise in PKO and putting forward its own ideas about global governance.

Discussion

Associate Professor Bhubhinder Singh questioned the extent of acceptance regarding Xi's vision of international order by domains of the Chinese system, and whether his vision was the only guide to policymaking in China. He added that other variables such as internal power struggle, clashing interests, and leadership personalities could affect the vision of international order. As such, there is a need to be sensitive of the context Xi operates within and how Xi's vision reflected the actual situation within Chinese domestic politics. Assoc Prof Singh also wondered what the features of a Chinese regional/ international order would be, and how such an order would look like in practice. In addition, how should states respond when dealing with China, and how to manage its rise and behaviour.

Assoc Prof Singh also discussed the need to elucidate what makes a middle power, and whether China's international behaviour indeed fits such a description. He added that the notion of China as a middle power has to be contextualised based on issues. For instance, East Asian states do not perceive Chinese behaviour as that of a middle power. Beijing's actions on the ground such as territorial expansion, possessing aircraft carriers and nuclear weapons, as well as having a voice in the United Nations Security Council are not behaviours normally associated with middle powers. He added that there is a need to flesh out what is unique about Chinese behaviour (if this was so) and how best to understand Chinese approach to international relations, given that much of the diplomatic work in China is closed to the outside world. Assoc Prof Singh also shared that ideology continues to matter in China's foreign policy particularly given Xi's emphasis on socialism in his 19th party congress speech.

Session 3: China's Strategic Thinking on Sino-US Relations in the Asia Pacific

One mountain, two tigers: China, the US, and status dilemma in the Asia Pacific

Assistant Professor Pu Xiaoyu shared on China's strategic calculations in the Asia Pacific region. He noted that Beijing's desire to play a leadership role is rooted in its historical status in East Asia. It used its economic power to expand its influence in Asia including reassuring its neighbours that it will be a peaceful regional power and will provide other countries with more opportunities. In addition, China has been ambivalent about East Asia's current security order. While it increasingly expresses frustrations towards the strengthening of American alliance in Asia, it does not provide an alternative security structure that could realistically replace the current system.

Asst Prof Pu commented that while China has demonstrated both desire and capabilities to play a leadership role in regional economic order, it faces constraints in the security dimension. Given the US' dominant role in East Asia following World War II, China is not seeking to overthrow the existing global security order. In this respect, Chinese foreign policy under Xi reflects more continuity than change. He added that while China's rise is real, it faces significant limitations in its ability to project power as it is surrounded by several major powers or strong middle powers that are not likely to accept uncontested Chinese dominance. Asst Prof Pu opined that if China wants to increase its influence in Asia, it should increase its resources and also seek cooperation and recognition from other countries.

He highlighted that Sino-American tensions are not caused by a security dilemma, but a status dilemma whereby both countries constantly worry that the other side would seek domination and regional hegemony in the Asia Pacific region. While China acknowledges the enduring presence of the US in the region, its long-term goal was to seek a somewhat equal relationship with the US and for the US to respect its core interests. Hence, Beijing became increasingly frustrated with their involvement in maritime disputes as the US is not a neutral country. When China flexes its military might to demonstrate its great power status and the US overreacts, this only strengthens nationalist voices in both countries and affects the Sino-American relationship. Given Beijing's determination to increase its influence in the region, there is an urgent need for both the US and China to engage in serious discussions on

the appropriate role of both countries in the region.

According to Asst Prof Pu, many Chinese scholars perceive more continuity than change in the US regional strategy towards Asia given the emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region. Hence, China was not enthusiastic towards the revival of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with Japan, India, and Australia. In addition, the Trump administration continues to emphasise on the link between security and economic issues in the Asia Pacific. As a case in point: the trade dispute with China was dramatically escalated following the Trump-Kim Summit in Singapore. Finally, Chinese scholars also perceive an intensification of strategic competition between the US and China in the coming years, though this may be mitigated if both sides were to avoid any ideological struggle.

China's rise and US hegemony: renegotiating great power management in East Asia

Dr Beverley Loke shared that East Asia is currently undergoing a grand geopolitical adjustment process and postulated an alternative conception of China and US' great power role in regional order-building. Given the US' pivotal role in Asia's regional order, its alliances in Asia remain an enduring feature and necessary component of contemporary Asian security. These alliances are central to the construction of a network security architecture, underpinned by the strengthening of partnerships and alliances, and greater spoke-to-spoke alignments alongside broader multilateral arrangements.

China's rising regional power however, has brought up multiple questions regarding the future direction of regional order in East Asia. Dr Loke shared that Beijing is now far more vocal about presenting an alternative model of order-building, as reflected in key speeches made by the Xi leadership. In addition, China also sought to present itself as distinct from the US model which was based on liberal democratic values, and instead emphasised an inclusive and just order premised on political pluralism, global partnerships, and a win-win mentality. Dr Loke also observed that China's goal is to return to a position of centrality and the pursuit of regional leadership alongside more exclusive arrangements that exclude the US.

Given this, Dr Loke argued for the need to rethink the concept of hegemony in East Asia. The notion of "coalition hegemony" was proposed so as to obtain greater universal appeal. In this respect, Dr Loke suggested to envisage China and the US as joint regional order-building managers which will then preclude the need for countries in the region to choose. Notwithstanding the fact that

China and the US may have competing visions of regional order, cooperation is still possible from a pragmatic point of view.

Offensive for defensive: China's new foreign policy, Sino-US relations and the Asia Pacific

Professor Wu Zhengyu commented that since 2012, China's foreign policy has entered a new era which is primarily aimed at improving China's overall image, reputation, and status, especially at seeking substantive equality with the US. Compared to its predecessors, China's incumbent leadership has also radically shifted its basic approach to Sino-US relations from conditional accommodation to a mixture of coercion and accommodation. In this respect, China would insist that the US concede China the primary status in the Asia Pacific which it believes it deserves.

The core of China's new foreign policy at the global level comprises three elements: (i) seeking a "new type of great power relationship with the US", (ii) strengthening political and strategic coordination with Russia, and (iii) improving economic and political connection with the EU. According to Prof Wu, the proclamation of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Beijing's assertive diplomacy along its maritime periphery (especially the South China Sea) were designed to make regional states, especially US allies and partners, understand who was playing the leading role in the Asia Pacific region.

In China's foreign policy to smaller states, Prof Wu shared that China had utilised the "carrot-and-stick" approach. Nevertheless, China may have overestimated the political influence that could be achieved by economic benefits. Also, China underestimated the significance of peripheral states for the success of China's regional diplomacy. He added that it was almost impossible for China to promote cooperation in the BRI while simultaneously pursuing an assertive posture in the South China Sea.

On the possible areas of future cooperation, Prof Wu noted on the need to sign a multilateral and legally binding code of conduct with other claimants over the South China Sea disputes. Also, China needs to consider how to bridge the gap between its regional assertiveness and its rule-based cooperation with other players on the global stage. In addition, it has to work with the US over freedom of navigation activities in the near seas. These steps, if taken accordingly, could mitigate – even reverse – the constant escalation of Sino-US competition along China's maritime periphery.

US-China trade: China is building bridges while the US puts up walls

Dr Yuka Kobayashi observed that the unfolding trade dispute between the US and China is due to a scramble for influence by both countries to set the rules, regulations, and standards for trade and investment. The crux of the US-China trade dispute lies in the declining power of the US, a reaction to the fact that China has been catching up and closing the gap with the US, materially and ideationally, over the past decade. This trade conflict is being played out in various arenas (i.e. bilateral, regional, and multilateral) as both sides battle for global influence.

According to Dr Kobayashi, China's late entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO) meant that it was neither strong in trade in services, or in the high tech sector. But things have changed significantly, with China moving on from its 10-year transitional period under the WTO to become a fully-fledged member in 2011. The Chinese economy has moved up the economic chain to become an economy more balanced in trade in goods and trade in services. China has also become a major investor rather than a recipient of investment, thus demonstrating its reach into markets outside its borders.

Furthermore, as its economy developed, so too has China's behaviour as a member of the WTO. It became more proactive and vocal in the interpretation and enforcement of trade rules and regulations. From being a quiet member in WTO negotiations, China is now articulate, confident, and active in negotiations and dispute settlement, showing their maturity as an important economic/ trade member of the global community. The rise of China in economic/ trade terms meant their impact in the direction of global trade and economics is now more tangible.

According to Dr Kobayashi, the Chinese approach to regulation and preference for looser intellectual property rules has support in developing countries, which in turn gives China more power to assert itself in the making of global trade rules. Many developing countries admire China's economic rise and Chinese policies such as South-South cooperation, the "China Dream", and "Asia Dream", meaning that the BRI has paved the way for China's ideational rise. Recent Chinese debates have considered the possibility of a legal framework for the BRI, signalling Beijing's resolve to become a leader in the codification of international law, rules, and regulations related to trade. Given the problems in the US, in which the Trump administration builds walls of protectionism, the Chinese government seems more focused on building

bridges with the rest of the world through existing institutions like the WTO and also by creating its own organisations in the form of mega-trade agreements and the BRI to further its economic interests.

Discussion

One participant asked whether China, in light of perceived decline in influence, would have to recalibrate its policies concerning the Asia Pacific region. It was also observed that China has a “two-dimension foreign policy” as evinced by its aggressive claims on the South China Sea while presenting a friendly posture in the Belt and Road Initiative. In response, Prof Wu shared that Chinese policy makers may have underestimated the willpower among Chinese neighbours; furthermore, many Chinese decision makers interpret the South China Sea issue from the lens of structural realism and thus perceive American involvement in the SCS issue as interference. Asst Prof Pu added that China’s assertive behaviour had arisen before Xi’s leadership, and thus reflected continuity from the past. He added that the two faces of Chinese regional diplomacy are intentional and that China has chosen to display both assertive and benign fronts in its foreign policy. There was also an intense debate within China on whether it should maintain stability or pursue its rights, and that a delicate balance had to be struck. Dr Loke shared that while China sought to obtain recognition from the US as a global power, it was at the same time cautious about not being overburdened by global responsibilities, and thus wanted to portray itself as a responsible power on its own terms, rather than on terms dictated by the US. The strategic vacuum during the Trump administration has also emboldened Beijing to step up more effectively in its global engagements.

Biographies

Alan CHONG is an Associate Professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore. He has published widely on the notion of soft power and the role of ideas in constructing the international relations of Singapore and Asia. His publications have appeared in *The Pacific Review*; *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*; *Asian Survey*; *East Asia: an International Quarterly*; *Politics, Religion and Ideology*; *the Review of International Studies*; *the Cambridge Review of International Affairs and Armed Forces and Society*. He is also the author of *Foreign Policy in Global Information Space: Actualizing Soft Power* (Palgrave, 2007). He is currently working on several projects exploring the notion of “Asian international theory”. His interest in soft power has also led to inquiry into the sociological and philosophical foundations of international communication. In the latter area, he is currently working on a manuscript titled “The International Politics of Communication: Representing Community in a Globalizing World”. In tandem, he has pursued a fledgling interest in researching cyber security issues.

He has frequently been interviewed in the Asian media and consulted in think-tank networks in the region.

HE Kai is Professor of International Relations at Griffith Asia Institute and Centre for Governance and Public Policy, Griffith University, Australia. He is currently an Australian Research Council Future Fellow (2017-2020). He was a postdoctoral fellow in the Princeton-Harvard China and the World Program (2009-2010). He is the author of *Institutional Balancing in the Asia Pacific: Economic Interdependence and China’s Rise* (Routledge, 2009), *Prospect Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis in the Asia Pacific: Rational Leaders and Risky Behavior* (co-authored with Huiyun Feng, Routledge, 2013), and *China’s Crisis Behavior: Political Survival and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, 2016). He is a co-editor (with Huiyun Feng) of *US-China Competition and the South China Sea Disputes* (Routledge, 2018). His peer-refereed articles have appeared in the *European Journal of International Relations*, *European Political Science Review*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Review of International Studies*, *Security Studies*, *International Studies Review*, *International Politics, Cooperation and Conflict*, *Contemporary Politics*, *Asian Survey*, *The Pacific Review*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *Asian Security*, *Asian Perspective*, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, *Australian Journal of International Relations*, *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, *Issues and Studies*, *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, and *East Asia*.

Benjamin HO is an Associate Research Fellow at the China Programme, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, since July 2011, and concurrently a PhD candidate at the Department of International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK. His research focus includes the study of China's international relations, with an emphasis on Chinese exceptionalism thinking. Other research interests include security multilateralism in the Asia Pacific region with a focus on regional institutions and fora, national security (intelligence), as well as the sociology of religion. His research articles have been published in the *China Quarterly*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *East Asia: An International Quarterly*, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, and the *Yale Journal of International Affairs*. Since joining RSIS, Benjamin has been involved in a number of think-tank events and conferences including the Track II Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions, the Pacific Young Leaders programme, and CSCAP meetings.

Catherine JONES is a lecturer in International Relations at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, UK. Previously, she was a research fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick, where she was director of the MA in International Politics and East Asia (2014-2017). She has also been a visiting scholar at the Weatherhead East Asia Institute, the Balsillie School of International Affairs, RSIS, in Singapore, and has been visitor to the Asia Pacific Responsibility to Protect Centre at the University of Queensland.

Her research focuses on the engagement of East Asian states with regional and global institutions. Previously, her work explored China's engagement with international institutions and its challenge to liberal global norms of sovereignty and development. She has also been the Principle Investigator on a Korea Foundation project, exploring China and North Korea's relationship in Non-Traditional security sectors. Her current research is focused on exploring the normative power of Asia and if practical contributions to global governance produce enhanced normative power.

Catherine's work has been published as book chapters in numerous edited volumes, as well as in articles in *The Pacific Review*, *Pacific Focus*, and *International Politics*. Her first monograph is forthcoming with Palgrave.

LIN Kaicheng is a doctoral candidate from the School of International Studies, Jinan University. He is an adjunct research fellow at the School of ASEAN Studies, Guangxi University for Nationalities.

In the last three years, he has been concentrating on the studies of international relations theory, especially the theory of processual constructivism. He also tried to work out a theoretical model of processual constructivism based on some fundamental research of maritime issues in Southeast Asia.

Joseph Chinyong LIOW is Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and concurrently, Dean of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, where he is also Professor of Comparative and International Politics. He held the inaugural Lee Kuan Yew Chair in Southeast Asia Studies at the Brookings Institution, Washington DC, where he was also a Senior Fellow in the Foreign Policy Program.

Joseph's research interests encompass Muslim politics and social movements in Southeast Asia and the geopolitics and geoeconomics of the Asia Pacific region.

Joseph is the author, co-author, or editor of 14 books. His most recent single-authored books are *Ambivalent Engagement: The United States and Regional Security in Southeast Asia after the Cold War* (Brookings 2017), *Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2016) and *Dictionary of the Modern Politics of Southeast Asia*, fourth edition (Routledge, 2014). A regular columnist for the *Straits Times*, his commentaries on international affairs have also appeared in the *New York Times*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *National Interest*, *Nikkei Asian Review*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. He has testified to the United States Congress, and been invited to deliver a special closed door briefing to the ASEAN Defence Minister's Meeting. In addition to scholarship and policy analysis, Joseph has also consulted for a wide range of MNCs including Shell, BHP Billiton, Chevron, Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Total, and Statoil. He sits on the board of several peer-reviewed academic and policy journals and the expert panel of the Social Science Research Council (Singapore), and is Singapore's representative on the advisory board of the ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation formed under the auspices of the ASEAN Charter.

Joseph holds a PhD in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science, an MSc in Strategic Studies from the Nanyang Technological University, and a BA (Hons) in Political Science from the University of Madison-Wisconsin.

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She has advised various governments, think-tanks, and international organisations on these subjects.

Beverley LOKE is Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Exeter. Her research has a strong focus on China, the international relations of the Asia Pacific, international order and global governance, with a particular interest in conceptualisations of great power responsibility by China and the United States. She has published on these areas in the *European Journal of International Relations*, *The Pacific Review*, *Asian Security*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, and *Diplomacy & Statecraft*.

Beverley holds a PhD in International Relations from the Australian National University. She was previously a Marie Curie Postdoctoral Research Fellow in International Relations at the University of Oxford, where she was attached to the Power and Region in a Multipolar Order programme -- a global network of institutions investigating the emergence of regional powers and its impact on international politics.

PU Xiaoyu is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Nevada, Reno. Previously he was a postdoctoral fellow in the Princeton-Harvard China and the World Program and a Stanton fellow at Fundação Getulio Vargas (GV, Brazil).

He received his BA and MA from Nankai University and his Ph.D. from Ohio State University.

His research has appeared in *International Security*, *International Affairs*, *China Quarterly*, and *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*. He serves as an editor for *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* and is an editorial board member of *Foreign Affairs Review* (Beijing). He is the author of *Rebranding China: Contested Status Signalling in the Changing Global Order* (The Studies in Asian Security Series, Stanford University Press, 2019).

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SU Hao is a distinguished professor in the Department of Diplomacy and founding director of Center for Strategic and Peace Studies at the China Foreign Affairs University. He was chairman of Diplomacy Department, director of China's Foreign Relations Section, general secretary of East Asian Studies Center, and director of Center for Asia Pacific Studies within this university. He is also affiliated with other institutions in China, such as president of Beijing Geopolitical Strategy and Development Association, member of Chinese Committee for Council of Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific and Pacific Economic Cooperation Council; board member of China Association of Arms Control and Disarmament, Pacific Society of China, China Association of Asian-African Development Exchange, and China Association of China-ASEAN.

He received his BA in history and MA in international history from Beijing Normal University and PhD in international relations from China Foreign Affairs University. He took his advanced study at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London from 1993-1995; and was a Fulbright scholar at Institute of War and Peace Studies of Columbia University, and at the Institute of East Asia, University of California, Berkeley from 2001-2002; and a guest professor in Department of Peace and Conflict Studies of Uppsala University in Sweden in 2004, Faculty of Society and Design of Bond University in Australia in 2014, Department of Politics of LUISS University in Italy in 2015 and Aoyama Gakuin University in Japan in 2017. His specialties are diplomatic history of China, China's foreign and security policy, strategic studies,

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ZHANG Feng (PhD, LSE) is Fellow (Senior Lecturer) at the Department of International Relations at the Australian National University's Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs. His research focuses on Chinese foreign and security policy, Asia Pacific security relations (especially the South China Sea), and international relations theory. He is the author of *Chinese Hegemony: Grand Strategy and International Institutions in East Asian History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015). His articles have appeared in leading journals including *Asia Policy*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *European Journal of International Relations*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Review of International Studies*, and *Survival*.

Seminar Programme

0815 hrs

Registration

0850 hrs

Welcome Remarks

Professor Joseph Liow

Dean, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

0900 hrs

**Session 1: China's International Relations Theory:
What's New?**

Speakers

Prof Kai He

China and Strategic Culture—A Dynamic Model to Explain China's Behaviour

Prof Su Hao

Global "Civilization Politics" with the Core Pillars of "Civilization Values"

Mr Lin Kai Cheng

The Study of the Evolution of SCS Dispute under the Perspective of Processual Constructivism

Chair: Dr Beverley Loke

Discussant: Assoc Prof Alan Chong

1045 hrs

Coffee/Tea Break

1100 hrs

**Session 2: China's Political Worldview And Vision Of
International Order**

Speakers

Dr Feng Zhang

The Xi Jinping Doctrine and Chinese Visions of International Order

Dr Catherine Jones

Major Power relations? China's Middle Power behavioural practices with Great Power outcomes

Chair: Asst Prof Pu Xiaoyu

Discussant: Assoc Prof Bhubhinder Singh

1245 hrs

Lunch

1400 hrs

Session 3: China's Strategic Thinking On Sino-US Relations In The Asia Pacific

Speakers

Asst Prof Pu Xiaoyu

One Mountain, Two Tigers: China, the United States, and Status Dilemma in the Asia Pacific

Dr Beverley Loke

China's Rise and US Hegemony: Renegotiating Great Power Management in East Asia

Prof Wu Zhengyu

Offensive for defensive: China's New Foreign Policy, Sino-US Relations and the Asia Pacific

Asst Prof Yuka Kobayashi

US-China trade relations

Chair: Mr Benjamin Ho

Open roundtable discussion

1600 hrs

Tea Break

1630 hrs

Closing Remarks

About the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies

The **Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)** is a key research component of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). It focuses on defence and security research to serve national needs. IDSS faculty and research staff conducts both academic and policy-oriented research on security-related issues and developments affecting Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific. IDSS is divided into three research clusters: (i) The Asia Pacific cluster – comprising the China, South Asia, US, and Regional Security Architecture programmes; (ii) The Malay Archipelago cluster – comprising the Indonesia and Malaysia programmes; and (iii) The Military and Security cluster – comprising the Military Transformations, Maritime Security, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) programmes. Finally, the Military Studies Programme, the wing that provides military education, is also a part of IDSS.

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