

The Identity Factor in Chinese Relations with Europe

China and the Barbarian Civilization

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Chapter 1

Introducing the China-Europe Identity Issue

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1 Introducing the China-Europe Identity Issue

Addressing the Identity Issue in China-Europe Relations

The identity of the modern Chinese state was forged in the context of European emissaries, gunboats, and books. The effects of this still shape China's policies towards the European continent. China-Europe relations have been through a number of vagaries over the last decades. In the span of few years, the relationship has gone from speculations about a new Europe-China great power axis to political boycotts and punitive economic measures. This book argues that Chinese perceptions of their own identity, and Europe's role in the wider network of meaning sustaining this identity, is not only deeply intertwined throughout modern history, but is also an important and understudied factor in current day political relations between China and Europe. The analysis of texts and political acts relevant to China-Europe relations over the last century and a half, demonstrates how Europe emerged as a nodal point for the various Chinese attempts at re-establishing ontological security for a reformed Chinese polity, since the political and ideological convulsions following the Opium Wars. The repercussions of this resonates also through current affairs.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was in late 2021 feeling the effects of the ongoing 'trade war' with the United States, on top of a range of domestic issues following the Covid-19 pandemic. European public opinion on China had fallen rapidly, whilst Beijing was seeking to shore up an ever more difficult international situation.¹ It was in this challenging economic and geopolitical environment that China chose to instigate yet another trade conflict, with its single most important trade partner; the European Union (EU). The reason was that the new Taiwanese representative office in Lithuania was opened under the name of Taiwan, not Taipei.² Such, for onlookers seemingly esoteric, symbolic issues tied to Chinese identity have on numerous occasions shaped relations between China and Europe in ways that go against the grain of what would be expected of an economically rational actor. Similarly, when former Chinese Premier Li Keqiang's insistence on being invited to see the Queen becomes a key foreign policy flashpoint following 18 months of Chinese diplomatic boycott of the United Kingdom in the early 2010s, it points

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to other factors at play in the relationship between two of the world's most important powers, besides merely economic or geopolitical rationality.

The case of China-Europe relations thus joins a growing body of literature analysing how identity concerns have led countries to embrace a particular set of foreign policies, even when other available and viable political choices would have entailed larger economic or diplomatic benefits. As even the late nestor of *realpolitik*, Henry Kissinger, formulated the crux of future China-US relations: "This is the key problem of our time. (...) whether each side can believe that they have achieved enough to be compatible with their convictions and with their histories."³ This book argues that the importance of analysing the identity these convictions are predicated upon, and the history on which it is based, is no less of an issue for China's relations with Europe; a continent with which it has an even longer and more fraught history than with the United States. The Chinese empire had for over 2000 years considered itself the civilized centre of the world. As contact was being made with Europe, the continent and its nations were considered the extreme periphery of the barbarian lands surrounding the Middle Kingdom. When these European barbarians suddenly subsumed China into a new state system, however, it was now these barbarians who claimed to uphold a standard of civilization the Chinese failed to meet.

The violent colonial-era inclusion of China into the Western world order by the 'barbarian' Europeans during the colonial era, demarcated a breaking point where China's image of itself, China's image of the world, and for that matter the world's image of China, were all ruptured. It radically upended the conceptual dyad of Civilization versus Barbarism that constituted a long-standing fundament of Chinese politics,⁴ and preceded a century-long set of political struggles over how to redefine the Chinese polity. Consecutive Chinese governments have since sought through different strategies to re-obtain a stable, ontologically secure, identity for a renewed China. As succinctly put by leading Chinese IR-scholar Qin Yaqing, "As a big country with a five-thousand-year civilization, China desires and expects to gain a proper status in the international system and a proper identity in international society [...] and the struggle for an identity is the fundamental driving force of China's rise."⁵ As pointed out by Yong Deng, the end of the Cold War brought forth yet another fundamental status crisis for China.⁶ This has led to a greater Chinese drive for status recognition internationally, and for the CCP to be regarded domestically, as the stewards of an ancient civilization rejuvenated to the great power status of old. To quote Callahan, "the heart of Chinese foreign policy is thus not a security dilemma, but an identity dilemma."⁷ As this book argues, this identity dilemma matters – also for China's policies towards Europe.

In order to investigate the role of identity issues in China's Europe policies, it is therefore necessary to base analyses of current era policies on the historical background that has shaped contemporary Chinese identity issues. As such, this book combines a historical section with a contemporary investigation, analysing over a century's worth of key political documents from

the 1840s Opium Wars to the present day. The historical analysis focuses on the role of Europe in the Chinese efforts to re-establish a stable political identity at four key junctures over the 150 years following the Opium Wars. This provides the necessary deep conceptual understanding of the roots of the identity issues in current-day Chinese Europe policies. The contemporary section focuses on the present era, centring on three cases of political crisis in the China-Europe relationship over the last two decades. This in order to ascertain whether Chinese identity issues, theorized as ontological security seeking, played a role in shaping its relations with Europe in these defining moments of the China-Europe relationship.

Scholarship on the motivations of China's foreign policies has proliferated of late, given Beijing's new significance in shaping global politics.⁸ However, whilst the role of the identity factor in Chinese foreign policies towards other major international actors, such as the United States, Russia, and Japan, has long been a field of scholarly enquiry,⁹ this is a perspective that has been largely overlooked in China-Europe relations. This omission is all the more puzzling, as European powers were key actors in the re-negotiations of Chinese social and political identity after the fall of the Qing dynasty, and China's violent introduction to modernity during the colonial era. As China continues to grow more consequential for both Europe and the global order in general, this book's guiding rationale has been to address this key gap in the analysis of relations between two of the world's foremost power centres. In addressing this issue, this book answers a dual research puzzle; how does Europe matter for Chinese identity, and how does identity matter for China's current-day policies towards Europe?

The fact that literature on China-Europe relations largely omits the identity factor, whilst literature on identity in international relations has failed to engage with the case of China and Europe, has both empirical and theoretical consequences. In empirical terms, the absence of identity dynamics hampers analyses of the volatile relationship between two of the world's main power poles. Scholarly approaches have traditionally regarded Sino-European relations from a primarily economic perspective, a perspective which struggles to explain a range of discrepancies in the relationship. As the following chapters demonstrate, the contemporary China-Europe relationship has seen considerable volatility over a short period of time, from being touted as a potential new great power axis, to being riven by instances of political boycotts and diplomatic freeze. The greatest challenges in China-Europe relations have arguably arisen when political decisions in Europe challenged fundamental tenets of China's identity narrative. Seemingly contrary actions like Dalai Lama-related boycotts towards important trade partners, whilst simultaneously seeking these same countries' acquiescence in creating a more multipolar world order, can be more saliently understood through analysing them as based on a broad Chinese understanding of 'identity security'. To discount identity concerns from an analysis of China – Europe relations arguably entails overlooking one of the most salient variables of the political dynamic.

In theoretical terms, another puzzle motivating this book is how implementing the case of China's relations with Europe into the identity literature can contribute to developing ontological security theory, in addition to contributing to the understanding of Chinese foreign policy motivations. A consequence of this case's absence from the current body of works, is the continued overrepresentation of established Western nation-states in the ontological security literature. This bias weakens our conceptual apparatus for analysing non-Western states, at precisely the moment in time when these countries' global influence is more important than ever. Furthermore, this skewed case selection results in a tendency to overlook how national identity-building is shaped by the historical legacies of forced entry into modernity during the age of colonialism. Particularly in the case of China, this is a key point.

This book argues that Europe has been a major constitutive factor in the political and ideological contests of Chinese ontological security seeking. Particularly in the early decades of the last century, the European influence was integral to the Chinese efforts at re-establishing a stable national identity. The European influx at the end of the Qing era, forced a fundamental ontological security crisis upon an ailing dynasty. As Qin has summarized the conundrum this entailed for the attempts at re-founding the Chinese polity: "In the 140 years from 1840 to 1980, China had always faced the problem of its relationship with the international system, but never had an appropriate solution to it. (...) The Qing Dynasty failed to solve it; neither did the later Chinese governments."¹⁰ At the outset of the 21st century, the European influence was less keenly relevant for Chinese identity and ontological security. Europe was in most cases a secondary set of relationships compared to the dominant role that the United States held in Chinese official and popular discourse.¹¹ However, Europe was still of enough relevance to Beijing's political identity to shape Chinese policies towards the European continent in a number of important ways. In terms of the second constituent part of this book's research puzzle, the conclusion is that Chinese motivations based on matters of identity and ontological security have had a substantial impact in some of the key moments defining current China-Europe relations. In sum, this investigation contends that one of the more salient factors in the China-Europe relationship through decades of political power-shifts and diplomatic vagaries, is one that has received some of the least attention; namely the issue of identity.

Why Identity and Europe?

This book is motivated by the extent to which the literature on China-Europe relations has neglected identity as an issue shaping Chinese policies towards the European continent. Conversely, the literature on identity in Chinese foreign policy has paid too scant attention to the case of China-Europe relations. Furthermore, the theoretical scholarship on identity issues in international

relations still has not fully engaged with the particular case of Chinese identity formation after its forced inclusion into the international system. This work thus contributes to the academic debate at this intersection of the empirical literature on China-Europe relations, and the scholarship on Chinese identity processes through ontological security theory building. With regards to the empirical contribution, the field of China-Europe studies is still strangely underexplored. This stands in sharp contrast to, e.g., the relationship between the United States and China, or China and Japan, that have engendered a large and growing body of works, contributing to both empirical analyses and theoretical debates.¹² The literature regarding relations between two of the world's three largest economic actors, Europe/the EU and China, is on the other hand relatively meagre, and overwhelmingly one of edited volumes,¹³ articles, and policy papers.¹⁴ These tend to be, as incentivized by their format, limited in terms of their theoretical depth and empirical scope, although providing keen insights within their area of focus.¹⁵ There are also a small number of excellent books, but these tend to be focused on economic aspects of the relationship.¹⁶ Thus, in addition to the scarcity in this field, the extant scholarship is concentrated along a rather slim range of approaches, with its main strength in research on the importance of economic imperatives.¹⁷

A key argument of this book is thus that such a focus has overlooked the degree to which economic imperatives in China-Europe relations are entangled with Chinese identity concerns.

Although a range of eminent scholarship has analysed the political and economic influences of Europe during particular moments of ancient Chinese history,¹⁸ and a number of texts have engaged with the identity struggles of the Chinese state throughout the modern period,¹⁹ there exists to the best of my knowledge no substantial work undertaking a history of ideas on the Chinese concept of Europe. Regarding contemporary Chinese policies towards Europe, and the role of identity as a factor in these, relevant literature is also rather lacking.²⁰ Christiansen et al. provide a recent welcome contribution, referring to ontological security as one important factor in understanding Chinese foreign policy motivations, however, as the book's wide scope renders natural, this factor is allotted only a few pages.²¹ Edited books such as Zhongqi Pan's excellent take at the role of conceptual differences in China-EU relations broach the identity issue in a constructive manner,²² whilst a few chapters on Chinese security policies briefly explore the basis on which Chinese and European threat perceptions differ.²³ This important aspect of Sino-European relations is also touched upon by Callahan, who emphasizes how China's relations with the EU are important, in that "it helps the PRC to construct a view of China as a non-hegemonic superpower."²⁴ In Casarini's monograph on Europe-China relations, a pathbreaking read still almost alone of its kind, the wide scope of including the role of United States and East-Asia as actors in the Europe-China relationship leaves less room for theory-building, but the author points towards potential research projects being undertaken on the specifics of China's identity in its relations with Europe.²⁵

Turning to the European side of the dyad analysed in this book, there is a certain literature on the role of various aspects of identity in shaping European China policies. In particular this literature is focused on the EU, as a case of this still evolving political community taking on new roles as a geopolitical power.²⁶ This feature of the scholarship reflects the extent to which the EU is a rapidly changing entity with identity issues of itself.²⁷ As such, covering the various European identity processes over the last centuries is too wide of a field for this book to cover. However, in line with this treatise's explicit focus on the Chinese identity processes with regards to Europe, where substantial developments in Europe's political or ontological composition are reflected in the expressed Chinese attitudes to the continent, this will be a natural part of the analysis.

Within the scholarship on Chinese foreign policies in general, a rapidly growing literature has investigated the role of identity, nationalism, and the historical grievances of the "Century of Humiliation."²⁸ A considerable body of literature addressing the effects of the rising Chinese nationalist movements from the early 1990s onwards has drawn attention to identity and emotions in Chinese statecraft.²⁹ However, Yong Deng's prescient book on Chinese status-seeking, is as an example quite typical in that it only allocates a couple of pages to a mention of China-Europe, highlighting the extent to which there is a double gap in the literature, where the sparse selection of EU-China books does not engage with identity, and identity literature on China barely engages with China's relations with Europe.³⁰

In contrast, Chinese identity issues as a factor in Beijing's relationship with actors such as the United States and Japan has been repeatedly and saliently addressed.³¹ Exemplifying this literature, Buzan and Goh's investigation on Sino-Japanese relations spans over 600 years in order to provide the background for the issues of colliding identities and historical memories that are still shaping their relationship.³² Also in the case of Sino-US relations, identity concerns have been identified as an important driver in shaping Chinese reactions to key moments of contention between the parties. As Ford summarizes it in his treatise on identity in China-US relations: "The flip side of the remarkable civilizational arrogance of considering itself the center of the world for so long is that China has displayed an equally prodigious insecurity about its status and standing in its encounters with the modern world outside. This neurosis can, of course, sometimes prompt overreactions."³³ Shih and Luo specifically utilize ontological security theory to argue how identity security, not military concerns of physical security, is the crucible of Taiwan's key role in China-US great power competition.³⁴ Taiwan may be an unsinkable aircraft carrier, but whether it is under control of a US-aligned government counting itself as part of China, or a US-aligned government claiming independence, makes such a large difference for the identity narrative of the PRC that it is the latter which is regarded as a *casus belli*.

These salient approaches have, nevertheless, been conspicuously absent from China-Europe studies.³⁵ Conspicuous because the abovementioned

scholarship concludes that China is the type of actor for which one would expect identity issues to matter. In taking up the mantle of assessing the role of identity in China's Europe policies, this book approaches the issue through the theoretical prism of ontological security. In their landmark investigation into general Chinese identity seeking, Dittmer and Kim ask for more theoretically stringent approaches for future research on the issue.³⁶ As will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, the argument imbued in this book is that ontological security answers this call, through its anti-foundational conceptualization of political entities, and its openness for assessing differing political systems within its framework. This leads to the main theoretical contribution of this book, reflecting that whilst the extant literature on the role of identity in Chinese foreign policies has predominantly been addressed through identity theories that differ from the framework of ontological security approaches,³⁷ so has the literature on ontological security traditionally been distinguished through an overemphasis on nation-states in the Western hemisphere.³⁸ By addressing this double gap in the literature, this project's focus on the case of China seeks to enrich the scope and applicability of ontological security by testing this theoretical approach on a complex and consequential key actor that historically has had its identity challenged by the European Westphalian paradigm, rather than reified by it. As much as the analysis of Chinese foreign policies towards Europe can be enriched by applying the theoretical optic of ontological security, so can ontological security theory itself be enriched by the inclusion of an in-depth analysis of the Chinese case.

Identifying the Identity Issue

Given the long and complex history of interaction between China and the European continent, any survey seeking to discern the role of identity issues in the relationship is necessarily partial in nature. In order to provide the most comprehensive analysis, this book approaches the issue through a two-pronged investigation that combines a historical diachronic analysis with an in-depth contemporary enquiry.³⁹ As such, after the theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 has detailed the ontological security approach utilized in analysing Chinese identity processes, the first main section of the book traces the development of Europe as a concept in key Chinese political and diplomatic texts over the last centuries. It analyses how the idea of Europe has been constructed and utilized by key Chinese political entrepreneurs seeking to restate the foundational narrative of China in response to the ontological security challenges brought forth by European colonialist influences, and the onset of modernity.⁴⁰ As these crises still reverberate today, such an effort is needed to investigate the roots of the Chinese discourses of Europe, and how these have developed together with the foundational narratives of the Chinese polity itself. The first section of this book therefore focuses on a set of historical junctures that carry particular significance in the Chinese efforts to achieve

ontological security after the Opium Wars marked the traumatic beginning of China's modern era.⁴¹ Such societal trauma, causes a radical break in the routinized identity structures on which ontological security is based, and thus opens the field for potential contestation of these.⁴² This realization entails that cases of ontological crises, and the ontological security-seeking political behaviours that tends to follow, should be amongst the key subjects of study for scholars of ontological security.⁴³ A main task of this book's research project is thus to investigate which role Europe played in the various Chinese foundational identity narratives that shaped the political arena of China in the years after the Opium Wars.

The historical section thus looks at how the Chinese polity was forced to engage in introspection and reformulation of even its foundational narrative.⁴⁴ A key point is then the analysis of how Chinese politicians have taken on the task of making new coherent Chinese histories of who they are, and Europe's place in this. The inclusion of Europe as a focal point is important both because Europe played a particular role (from the Chinese viewpoint), and arguably also salient because this still is a factor in China's policies towards Europe. Chapter 3 provides a historical background on the emergence of the concept of Europe in the annals of the Chinese Empire pre-1840. In general, throughout this study, the object of analysis will be the polities of the European continent as debated in the Chinese sources, with the notable exception of Russia – which long political, ideological and institutional 'special relationship' with Beijing merits a separate study. (For more details on the source material, see Appendix.) Throughout the century following the Opium Wars, Chinese political entrepreneurs sought to re-establish a foundational narrative for a new kind of Chinese polity. This process would come to the fore at four eras of modern Chinese history, which form the focal points of this book's historical section. Chapter 4 covers the first phase of the Self-Strengthening Movement, taking place ca. 1861–1872, as Chinese reformists sought to integrate European technology and knowledge in order to defend against the imperialist powers. In its second part, the chapter covers the Early Republic Era (ca. 1910–1915), when a new Chinese nation-state identity was articulated, in particular through the writings of Sun Yat-sen.

Closing the historical section, Chapter 5 analyses the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) political narratives, and how they related to Europe, through two historical focal points. Firstly, the early days of the CCP's New China (ca. 1945–1955), when the CCP, with Mao at the helm, built and articulated the current party-state after their victory in the civil war in 1949. Secondly, the time of Deng Xiaoping's reforms (ca. 1975–1990), when the Chinese society underwent another monumental transformation, in a period bookended by Maoism at one side and the end of the Cold War at the other. These historical focal points are selected on the basis of being moments of ontological and political crisis, where the importance of articulating a stable identity became pivotal, as key political entrepreneurs sought to formulate new foundational narratives for a Chinese polity. In

such cases the struggle over formulation and reformulation, continuity and change, in national identity discourses becomes particularly consequential, precisely by being in flux.⁴⁵ The analyses are based on a discourse analysis of policy documents, political books and pamphlets, political manifests, and speeches. As certain political entrepreneurs gained traction, their key works became textual monuments that shaped the national debate for years to come. Analysing these works is thus key to discern the dominant Chinese discourses and narratives, categorize the representations of Europe, and analyse how these relate to the developing foundational narratives for the various iterations of a renewed Chinese polity.⁴⁶ These foundational narratives are identified and classified based on the extent and modality to which Europe and the European countries are regarded as an Other, as related to the particular Self of the relevant Chinese political project. As such, a core component of this book's theoretical approach is utilizing Hansen's methodology.⁴⁷

Proceeding from this broad historical investigation of Europe's role in Chinese identity formation, the contemporary section utilizes the narrower timeframe to undertake a more detailed analysis of how the relevant Chinese foundational narrative co-constituted a set of discourses on China's relations with Europe, that shaped the Chinese policy responses in three cases of key conflictual events over the last two decades. The first case, following in Chapter 6, traces the end of the 'honeymoon phase' in China-EU relations, starting with the relationship agreement in 2003, and investigate the failed negotiations to bring the EU embargo on arms sales to China to an end, as well as the political consequences in the aftermath. The second case, in Chapter 7, addresses the fallout between China and its European partners following a number of incidents in 2007 and 2008, notably the Dalai Lama's visits to France and Germany, that ended with a diplomatic crisis and the cancellation of the 2008 China-EU Summit. Chapter 8 investigates, finally, the Chinese political boycotts towards the United Kingdom and Norway in the years 2010–2016, whilst tracing the discursive changes resulting from the change in the Chinese leadership and Xi Jinping's rise to power. These contemporary cases are selected with the aim of assessing the case for respectively the existence, and the political relevance, of identity issues in China-Europe relations.⁴⁸ In order to ensure this research's claim to political relevance, the cases selected are key political events in China-Europe relations these last 20 years. As such, they are also 'hard cases' in the sense that if the identity factor is present in the discourses and practices of these key political cases, it should indeed hold as an argument for its overall relevance as a factor in China-Europe relations.⁴⁹

The contemporary section draws on a large array of Chinese documents relevant to the PRC's Europe policies, and key documents of relevance to Chinese political identity more broadly. This section also introduces a supplementary level of analysis, through a quantitative content analysis of over 30,000 documents from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pertaining

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to the PRC's relations to the various European countries covered in the case studies, as well as to the EU as a whole.⁵⁰ The contemporary chapters follow a fourfold structure reflecting the analytical approach utilized. The first part provides general context on the broader foreign policy rhetoric emanating from Beijing, and key Chinese political developments of the relevant period. The second part identifies and traces the Chinese foundational narrative forming the base of Chinese ontological security, and how Europe is constituted within this. Thirdly, the chapters go in-depth on the Chinese main discourses on Europe derived from the foundational narrative, identifying and analysing them as expressed in the texts and official speeches of these two decades. The fourth part then investigates the concrete political situation through, firstly, providing a specific background of the political flashpoint, and then goes on to analyse the political repercussions of these discourses. Accompanying figures illustrate how these narrative, discursive, and political developments interrelate. In sum, the contemporary section contends that in all of these political flashpoints, identity questions were a considerable factor shaping Chinese policies, and that Beijing was ready to undertake actions to preserve their ontological security, that goes beyond what can be explained by employing only economic or rational-political logic to analyses of the relationship.

Notes

- 1 Nadeem 2022; Hass 2023; Adachi, Brown, and Zenglein 2022.
- 2 Janeliūnas and Boruta 2022; Bohman 2021; O'Connor 2020; Eurostat 2024.
- 3 Kissinger 2018.
- 4 Callahan 2020, 49; Lien-sheng 1968, 20.
- 5 Qin 2010, 263.
- 6 Deng 2008.
- 7 Callahan 2009, 192.
- 8 Amongst the number of works on this, that will be related to later in this book, see e.g. Deng and Wang 2004; Li 2008; Rozman 2012.
- 9 See Li 2008; Rozman 2012; J. Yang 2010; Rozman 2013; Larson and Shevchenko 2010; Callahan 2005; Sinkkonen 2014; Callahan 2004.
- 10 Qin 2007, 334.
- 11 For sources on China's views of America, see Wu 2010; C. A. Ford 2015; Shambaugh 2013; Shen, Dingli 2008; Pomfret 2016; Men and Shen 2014; for literature on Japan's role in contemporary Chinese identity-building, see Gustafsson 2014; Suzuki 2007; Hagström and Gustafsson 2015; Yennie Lindgren and Lindgren 2017.
- 12 For a selection of important works on China-US relations, utilizing empirical studies for broader theoretical insights, see e.g. Allison 2017; Z. Wang 2012; Friedberg 2011; Kissinger 2012; Lampton 2001; White 2013; for a similar introduction to the field of China-Japan studies, see e.g. Holslag 2015; Gries et al. 2009; Dent 2010; Smith 2009; Christensen 1999; whereas on the topic of Sino-Russian relations, a good intro can be found in e.g. Bekkevold and Lo 2018; Bellacqua 2010; Eder 2013; Callahan 2023; Wishnick 2017; Bekkevold 2022; Kaczmarek 2015.
- 13 For a number of good examples of this genre, see Fei and Kerr 2008; Brown 2014; Shambaugh, Sandschneider, and Hong 2007a; Ross, Tunsjø, and Tuosheng 2011;

- Austermann, Wang, and Vangeli 2014; Wiessala, Wilson, and Taneja 2009; Zhou 2016; Pan 2012; Biba 2024.
- 14 Cameron 2013; Casarini 2013; Reiterer 2014a; Pawlak 2012.
 - 15 In addition to the works treated in more detail in this and the subsequent chapters, the following contributions also make for interesting reads on China-EU relations, even though falling outside the focus of this thesis Geeraerts 2013; Noesselt 2012; Chaban and Holland 2008; Wiessala, Wilson, and Taneja 2009; Vogt 2012; Hong 2012; CASS European Research Institute 2008; Huo 2005; Barysch, Grant, and Leonard 2005; Chen 2015; Möller 2002; Men 2011; Y. Zhang 2014; Men and Pardo 2014; Wu 2010; Wiessala, Wilson, and Taneja 2009; Austermann, Wang, and Vangeli 2014; Sandschneider 2002; Edmonds 2002.
 - 16 Farnell and Crookes 2016; Meijer 2022.
 - 17 See e.g. Bräuner 2014; Christiansen, Kirchner, and Murray 2013; Parello-Plesner 2013; Fox and Godement 2009; Shambaugh, Sandschneider, and Hong 2007a; Wong 2013, 162–63; Men and Balducci 2010; E. J. Kirchner, Christiansen, and Dorussen 2016, 1–3; Geeraerts and Huang 2016, 189–90.
 - 18 Amongst the scholarship addressing the role of Europe in pre-1840 China, particular note is deserved for e.g. Lafleur 1998; Mungello 2013; Brook 2009; Q. Zhang 2015; Wills Jr 2010; Hevia 1995; the aftermath of the Opium Wars has given rise to a far broader literature on the impact of Europe on early modern China. Of particular relevance for this thesis are Svarverud 2007; Y. Zhang 1991; Suzuki 2009; Polachek 1992; Lutz 2012; Y. C. Wang 1966; Mitter 2004; Hsu 1960; Hao and Wang 1978; S. Kirchner 2013; Guha 2014; Fung 2010; Xu 2005; Hughes forthcoming; Luo 2008; Zhao 2004; the establishment of the PRC and the onset of the Cold War meant that most scholarly focus of this era has been directed towards China's relations with the superpowers or the Global South, of the few works engaging with Europe's role are Albers 2016; Moncada 2010; Patten 2012; Westad 2017; Mark 2017.
 - 19 Dittmer and Kim 1993a; Hunt 1993; Doctoroff 2016; Callahan 2006; H. Wang 2012; Huang and Shih 2014; Suzuki 2014; Callahan 2012; Z. Wang 2012; Meissner 2006; Rozman 2013; Rozman 2011; Deng 2008; Shih and Huang 2015; Curtis 2016; Wong 2013; M. Wang 2014.
 - 20 Shambaugh, Sandschneider, and Hong 2007b; for a good overview of the state of the scholarship on identity in China-EU relations, see Wong 2013.
 - 21 Christiansen, Kirchner, and Wissenbach 2019, 55.
 - 22 Pan 2012.
 - 23 E. J. Kirchner, Christiansen, and Dorussen 2016, 12; Duke and Wong 2016, 24.
 - 24 Callahan 2008, 131.
 - 25 Casarini 2009.
 - 26 Reiterer 2014b; Langendonk and Drieskens 2023; Kavalski 2019; Geeraerts 2011; Fanoulis and Song 2022.
 - 27 Brown 2017, 147–48; Kinnvall, Manners, and Mitzen 2018.
 - 28 See e.g. Zhao 2004; Gries 2004; Deng 2008; Z. Wang 2008; Zhao 2013; Hughes 2006; Chen 2005; Carlson 2009; Tønnesson 2016; Hughes 2011; Callahan 2006; Callahan 2009; Chen 2005; Beukel 2011; Sinkkonen 2013; Carlson et al. 2016; Zheng 1999.
 - 29 Yahuda 1999, 651–53.
 - 30 Deng 2008.
 - 31 See e.g. Li 2008; Z. Wang 2012; Rozman 2012; J. Yang 2010; Nathan and Scobell 2012; Rozman 2013; Qiu 2006; Larson and Shevchenko 2010; Callahan 2005; Sinkkonen 2014; Callahan 2004; Heritage and Lee 2020; Boon 2022.
 - 32 Buzan and Goh 2020, 295.
 - 33 C. Ford 2010, 278.

- 34 Shih and Luo 2023.
 35 Wong 2013, 174.
 36 Dittmer and Kim 1993b.
 37 Wong 2013; Rozman 2013; Rozman 2012; Li 2008.
 38 Kay 2012; Kay 2012; Steele 2005; Steele 2008; Mitzen 2006.
 39 Saussure 2011.
 40 Foucault 1984, 76–99.
 41 Fung 2010.
 42 Innes and Steele 2013, 17–18; there are of course a number of avenues for ontological security self-help, dependent on the particular discursive contexts. These may range from the avoidance strategies in the case of Israel and ontological dissonance complexities, as argued by Lupovici 2012; to the state sticking to old routines in spite of negative consequences, as covered by Mitzen 2006, or straight out denial of the events challenging the old foundational narratives, as described by Zarakol 2010.
 43 For an overview of the literature, as well as an in-depth theoretical treatise on the concept of ontological security crises, see Ejdsu 2018; Krickel-Choi 2022; as well as the relevant sections in Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010; Browning and Joenniemi 2017; Subotić 2016; Zarakol 2010; Kinnvall 2018; Doty 1996; based on the same postulates, there is currently a growing literature focusing on the key role of creating new identity narratives in peace processes. See Rumelili 2015; Khoury 2018; Rumelili and Todd 2018; Khoury 2016.
 44 Krebs 2015.
 45 Doty 1996, 13.
 46 Hansen 2006.
 47 Hansen 2006, 46–47.
 48 George and Bennett 2005.
 49 Subotić 2016, 616.
 50 Sverdrup-Thygeson and Walker forthcoming (Draft).

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