

China's International Identity Trilemma: Developing Country, Regional Power or Great Power?

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Geliş Tarihi (Received): 21.03.2019 – Kabul Tarihi (Accepted): 24.04.2019

Abstract

China has adopted many different identities concurrently, rather than a fixed country identity in its foreign policy. China still uses the identity of being a developing country in its relations with the third world, while playing the role of being a regional power in its periphery. On the other hand, it assumes the principle of international responsibility that is attributed to the Great Powers in the international arena. In this context, there is no certainty whether China is a developing country, a regional power or a global power. China's simultaneous possession of multiple identities in foreign policy is the result of the adoption of one or more of the global identities discussed by the International Relations Academy. The focus of the International identity debate is the principle of “never take lead”, (juebu dangtou), which is one of the cornerstones of keeping low profile strategy. In this study, I will discuss the international identity debate in the Chinese Academy in three categories: developing country, regional power and great power. The main argument of the study is that the identity discussions at the Academy are effective in shaping Xi Jinping's “strive for achievement” strategy. These discussions are also very useful to observe which political geography China would like to create an impact on.

Keywords: Never Take Lead, International Identity Debates, Chinese IR Academy, Keeping Low Profile, Strive for Achievement

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Çin'in Uluslararası Kimlik Trilemması: Gelişmekte olan Ülke, Bölgesel Güç ya da Büyük Güç?

Öz

Çin dış politikasında sabit bir ülke kimliğinden ziyade aynı anda farklı birçok kimlik benimsemektedir. Çin Üçüncü Dünya ile ilişkilerinde hala gelişmekte olan ülke kimliğini kullanırken, periferisinde bölgesel güç rolünü oynamaktadır. Uluslararası alanda ise büyük güçlere atfedilen uluslararası sorumluluk prensibini üstlenmektedir. Bu bağlamda Çin'in gelişmekte olan ülke mi, bölgesel güç mü ya da küresel anlamda büyük güç mü olduğu konusunda kesinlik yoktur. Çin'in dış politikada birden çok kimliğe aynı anda bürünmesi, uluslararası ilişkiler akademisi tarafından tartışılan küresel kimliklerin bir ya da birkaçının benimsenmesi sonucudur. Uluslararası kimlik tartışmalarının odak noktası ise düşük profil stratejisinin temel taşlarından biri olan “juebu dangtou” yani asla “lider olma/liderlik yapma” prensibidir. Bu çalışma da, Çin akademisindeki uluslararası kimlik tartışmalarını, gelişmekte olan ülke, bölgesel güç ve büyük güç kimliği olarak üç kategoride ele alacağım. Çalışmanın temel önermesi, Xi Jinping'in “başarı için mücadele” stratejisinin şekillenmesinde akademideki kimlik tartışmalarının etkili olduğudur. Ayrıca bu tartışmalar Çin'in hangi siyasi coğrafya üzerinden etki alanı yaratmak isteyeceğini gözlemlemek için de oldukça yararlıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Asla Liderlik Yapma, Uluslararası Kimlik Tartışmaları, Çin Akademisi, Düşük Profil Stratejisi, Başarı için Mücadele

Introduction

Deng Xiaoping introduced a series of principles called "24 Characters" at the beginning of 90's, which form the basis of the keeping low profile strategy. These are "*lengjing guan cha*" (observe calmly), "*wenzhu zhenjiao*" (secure our position), "*chenzhuo yingfu*" (cope with affairs calmly), "*tao guang yang hui*" (hide our capacities and bide our time) "*shanyu shouzhuo*" (be good at maintaining a low profile) and "*juebu dangtou*" (never take lead) (Deng, 1994a, pp. 321-353). The timing of Deng Xiaoping's attribution to the keeping low profile to define the orientation of China's foreign policy corresponds to the period in which China struggled intensively with the pressure from the outside due to the Tiananmen events in 1989. However, this strategy has been debated at the Chinese international relations academy since the early 2000s. Academic discussions include ideas from three different perspectives. The first perspective supports the continuation of the keeping low profile strategy. The second perspective proposes that keeping low profile strategy is not in line with China's role in the current international system. The last perspective argues that there should be a medium path between the two by referring to different forms of creativity. The focus of the international identity debate is the principle of "juebu dangtou", one of the cornerstones of keeping low profile strategy, that is, never take the lead. Deng Xiaoping, in his speech in 1990, said that some developing countries want China to be the third world leader. But he emphasized that they cannot do this and the principle of never take the lead is a fundamental state policy in China. Deng Xiaoping stated that China does not have enough power to become the leader and playing such a role has nothing to gain China. China will always be with third world countries, but it will never enter into a quest to establish hegemony over them or to become their leader (Deng, 1994b, p. 351). In this article, I discussed the international identity debate at the Chinese Academy in three topics: the developing country, the regional power and the great power identities. According to supporters of keeping low profile strategy, China is a developing country and in principle, economic power does not generate political power directly. Therefore, China should adhere to the principle of never take lead in its foreign policy. Supporters of regional power identity emphasize that China must first be a leader in its region to become a great power. They take regional leadership from the perspectives of military power, common identity and governance. Those who argue that China should embrace its great power in the international arena, are directly attributing "great power identity" to China. The main argument

of the study is that the identity debate at the academy is effective in shaping the strategy of Xi Jinping's strive for achievement. In addition, these discussions are very useful in observing which political geography China would like to create an impact on.

1. Conflicting International Identity of China

It is nearly impossible to talk about a fixed social identity in Chinese foreign policy. It is essential to analyze the ideas of the struggling identity, to understand the contradictory and multidimensional behavior of China on the world stage (Shambaugh, 2011, pp. 7-8). According to Men Honghua, national identity represents the role the state plays in the international system. For this reason, China has different identities, which correspond to the various roles it has undertaken in the international arena. According to Men, new type of socialist power is China's institutional international identity. China is not a socialist force in traditional sense. China's success of combining tradition with world trends is its institutionally distinctive feature. Its socio-economic characteristic is that it is a developing country. While its cultural character is a great country with a rich civilization, its political character is a responsible great power. Finally, its strategic characteristic is that it is a major Asia-Pacific power with global influence (Men, 2014, pp. 194-203). Men has tried to explain that China does not have a fixed identity through the roles that it plays from different parts of the world. This explanation reveals conflicting identifications. In other words, China still uses the identity of the developing country in its relations with the third world and plays the role of regional power in its periphery. On the other hand, it assumes the principle of international responsibility that is attributed to the great powers in the international arena. In this context, there is no certainty whether China is a developing country, a regional power or a global power. Similar to Men, Pu Xiaoyu mentions that there are five different international identity narratives in Chinese international relations academy. First, China is a socialist country with Chinese characters. Second narrative is that China has a developing country identity. Third narrative is its identity of rising power or emerging power. Fourth narrative, although it is less accepted, is that China is already a great power. The final narrative is that China is a regional power in East Asia (Pu, 2017, pp. 139-140). Men and Pu's international identity definitions show the different roles China plays in the international system, rather than a fixed identity. Gerald Chan claims that role and identity are not concepts that can be used interchangeably. While the identity is the core of the entity, the role is the position that one occupies when performing a particular task. Therefore, the identity is permanent and the role is temporary (Chan, 2014, pp. 262). Wu Xinbo explains China's international identity through dual-identity dilemma. China, which remains between the

identities of great power and developing country, wishes to be heard more by the international community and recognized as a great power not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also in other parts of the world. But as a developing country, its material power is not enough for the image of great power (Wu, 2001, pp. 293-294). Li Shaojun states that identity is an important factor in determining the foreign policy of a state and China's interests in international affairs are related to how they are positioned (Li, 2014, p. 52). In contrast to Men and Wu, Li claims that dual identity dilemmas or multiple identities are related to how China sees itself, and this confusion is only identified by a position or identity in the international community. China's involvement in international political interactions and its growing national power mean that the international community is getting used to make great power or superpower attributions to China. According to Li, even if China emphasizes that it is still developing, it will no longer be able to act as a developing country in its international interactions (Li, 2014, p. 56). An important example of China's dual identity dilemma in the international arena is the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. China has become the largest emitter of carbon gas emissions in the world, passing the United States in 2006. Therefore, there was a serious pressure on China to reduce carbon emissions at the conference. Negotiator, Li Gao, stated that manufacturers in the consumer countries should take responsibility for carbon emissions and as a later participating country in the industrialization process, China will not take as much responsibility as the developed countries, which induce more than two centuries of carbon entering the atmosphere (Watts, 2009). The Copenhagen conference is a platform in which the distinction between developed and developing countries is opened for serious discussion, especially through China. While China still emphasizes that it is still a developing country, it can no longer claim that there are only national responsibilities or historical responsibilities of developed countries in the international climate change negotiations (Leggett, Logan & Mackey, 2008). In accordance with the determination of Li, China has not been able to put across that it is a developing country in the Copenhagen Conference and has been regarded as a great power. For example, the basic proposal of those who argue that the Copenhagen conference is progressing slowly because of the lack of a new order bargaining among the Great Powers is that China should take its place as a great power in the face of the United States (Terhalle & Depledge, 2013).

Apart from the conceptual framework of the academic discussion, it is also important that these discussions are conducted by which schools of thought and how they should be categorized. David Shambaugh emphasizes that China's simultaneous adoption of multiple

identities in foreign policy is the result of the adoption of one or more of the global identities discussed by the international relations academy. Shambaugh, who analyses the schools of thought over the identities they offer internationally for China, deals with seven different schools ranging from isolating tendencies to global governance (Shambaugh, 2011, p. 10). There is the nativist school at the far left of this global identity spectrum. According to Shambaugh, populists from the nativist school are composed of xenophobic nationalists and Marxists. This school is a group that distrusts the outside world and international institutions. They demand total national independence and think that China should not be active in the international arena. This group, which considers globalization as the internationalization of capital, believes that the international system is in favor of unjust and rich imperialist countries (Shambaugh, 2011, pp. 10-11). After the nativists resembling the “new left” movement in internal policy discussions, the second group, close to the left spectrum, are realists. The fundamental unit of realists' analysis is the nation state and the state sovereignty is above all else. Shambaugh describes the realists as the dominant group in the Chinese international relations academy. According to Yan Xuetong, one of the most important names of this group, the “peaceful rise” is a dangerous theory because it creates a perception that China will not use force to protect its national sovereignty and interests against its possible enemies (Shambaugh, 2013, pp. 13-45). In the right-shifting part of the global identity spectrum, there are Great Powers, Asia First, the Global South, selective multilateralism and globalism schools, respectively. Under the leadership of academicians such as Wang Jisi, Jin Canrong, the Great Powers school emphasizes that China should focus on relations with other major powers, especially US, Russia and the EU, rather than developing countries. Asia First Group considers the stability and security of the Asian countries in the periphery of China as the main objective of Chinese diplomacy. Qin Yaqing, who claims the construction of Eastern Asian society, is considered to be the leading name in this field. While the Global South school highlights South-South solidarity, the selective multi-party school advocates China's gradual and selective inclusion into international issues. The school of globalism, on the other hand, relies more on international institutions than selective multilateralism. It is the equivalent of liberal institutionalism in the West. Apart from Shambaugh's detailed classification, Chen Zhimin and Roger Irvine split the Chinese international relations academy into nationalists and internationalists. Chen claims that Chinese foreign policy has long been ruled by nationalism. But with China's integration into the international system, China's nationalism has been blended with internationalism and brought to a more positive form (Chen, 2005, pp. 35-53). Similar to Chen, Irvine describes China's international behavior through nationalism and internationalism

(Irvine, 2017, p. 15). The nationalist group in Irvine's distinction corresponds to the natives and realists in Shambaugh's classification. The internationalists, on the other hand, remain closer to the right of the political spectrum, such as great power and selective multilateralism. However, Irvine's reductionist approach ignores the fact that the realists in the nationalist camp and the selective multilateralism have common points of taking more international responsibility. In addition, the missing point in Irvine and Shambaugh is that internationalism is dealt with in a platform close to liberalism. Chen's emphasis on socialist internationalism is important in this respect. Chen's definition of the Mao period as nationalism under socialist internationalism (Chen, 2005, pp. 41-42) reminds us that in Chinese political discourse, internationalism does not merely mean liberal institutionalization. For this reason, for example, the Nativist School, as William Callahan (2015) has emphasized, has an aspect that is completely separated from liberalism, which is the ideal of internationalism during the Mao era. Shambaugh's likeness of nativism to the new left movement in domestic policy discussions raises the question of where other schools stand in this context. In other words, can the internal politics and foreign policy academy be defined around the same groupings? According to Zhang, the two important intellectual movements in domestic politics since the late 1990s are the new left and the new Confucianism. Although both movements set out by anti-Western sentiment, the new left defends socialism, but Confucianism claim the resurrection of Confucian Cult (Zhang, 2016). Bell, on the other hand, emphasizes that the official discourse in China was influenced by the "left Confucianism", which blended socialism and Confucianism in the revival of tradition (Bell, 2010, pp. 91-99). Although both movements have independent or conflicting sides in domestic politics, it is not possible to divide the international relations academy into two camps in this direction. Zhao Tingyang, which Callahan describes as a member of the new left movement, stresses that China should be the world power not only militarily or economically but also in the field of knowledge production (Callahan, 2015, p. 993). Tianxia (All Under Heaven) conceptualization, which Zhao derived from traditional Chinese political thought as a new global governance philosophy, is part of this knowledge production (Zhao, 2006, 29-41). In other words, although Zhao is a member of the new left movement, he derived his theoretical framework from the Confucian political philosophy. In foreign policy, the arguments used by the new Confucians and the new left movement may sometimes intertwine with each other. Therefore, instead of two basic groups in foreign policy analysis, I will consider the inclusive and exclusive aspects of multiple ideas as in Shambaugh's study.

2. International Identity Debates in Chinese Academy

In this section, I will discuss the international identity analysis of different think tanks and academicians under three topics by adding a regional identity to the categorization of the identity dilemma between the great power and the developing country.

2.1. Identity of Developing Country

Wang Jisi (Peking University) is one of the most prominent figures that defends China's international identity as a developing country. Wang states that China's real power is not enough to be a leading power in the international economic-political order. This is why China is the most powerful developing country, although there is a big difference between the United States in economic development, science, technology, education, culture and soft power. Wang states that China cannot play a leading role in the region, arguing that leadership is possible not only with economic but also with political identity. China is a member of almost all economic organizations in East Asia, and is a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. But China, which does not form a political or military alliance with neighboring countries, also has sea and land border problems with its neighbors such as Japan, India and Vietnam. In addition, the alliance systems in the region were established between the United States and other states of the region, in part against China. Therefore, China's geographical identity as East Asian or the economic power of the region does not create a political power to take direct leadership (Wang, 2011a, pp. 7-9). Wang points out that East Asia is a vital region for China, but also refers to the advantages of marching towards the West. According to him, new development projects covering Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Central Asia and all Caspian Sea countries and extending to the West should be implemented. Wang, who recommends that China's geo-strategic vision should focus on Eurasia, underscores the importance of relations with its western neighbors (Wang, 2011b, pp. 78). Arguing that the keeping low profile strategy should be maintained especially in relations with the United States, Wang stresses that the super power approaches that put the United States as the main threat to China are the dimensions that would pose serious security threats (Wang, 2011b, pp. 72-73).

Niu Xinchun (CICIR), who sees China at the top of the hierarchy of developing countries, thinks that China has a long way to become a developed country. According to Niu, the international influence is not the same as the power and China has no ability to compete

economically, politically and militarily. The fact that China does not have any allies in the system or has no overseas base is leading to the weakness of military power in the international field (Niu, 2015, pp. 51-54).

Jin Canrong (University of Renmin) represents China's rise in Asia-Pacific region as a status example for developing countries. He described China as the founder of a just order in which developing countries will have the right to say more about regional and international issues, rather than a developed country or as a great power in the region. But this Beijing-based order will continue to coexist with the US, which has long been the dominant power in the region (Jin, 2017). Thinking that ideas such as the fall of American power are wrong, Jin states that the United States' leading position is unshakable and that its comprehensive national power cannot be surpassed by any country in the near future (Jin, 2001, p. 311). Those who claim developing country identity in the international identity discussion argue that the keeping low profile strategy should not be completely abandoned. Men Honghua and Li Shaojun also believe that China is still a developing country. Men does not see China as a fully developed country. Li, on the other hand, states that China's basic national conditions are close to development logic rather than power struggle, and that their behavior in the international arena is based on defense. China's own great power mentality or the image of super power shaped by the international public opinion is completely opposed to the country's development strategy. China's national income per capita is a simple reality, which means that China's international identity will remain the developing country in the long run. Those who claim developing country identity in the international identity discussion argue that the keeping low profile strategy should not be completely abandoned. These academics, who adhere to the principle of never take lead in the region or in the international system, are referred to in Shambaugh's classification in schools of global south and great powers.

2.2. Identity of Regional Power

Supporters of regional power identity believe that China's path to becoming a great power in the international arena is through regional leadership. According to this, the role that China will play in the region will also be a factor determining its international strategy. The framework of China's security, economic and political cooperation in East Asia is seen as an important step in becoming a regional power. The role of those who defend the identity of regional power in these collaborations is analyzed from the perspectives of power, institutions and identity. Academics who adopt the perspective of power argue that China should become

a regional military power. Tang Shiping (Fudan University) states that China must be a regional military force to ensure both its own security interests and to maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region (Tang, 2001, p. 35). Chu Shulong (Tsinghua University), on the other hand, emphasizes that China should not pursue the goal of becoming a military superpower. In the same way, China should not seek for the world hegemony and should not enter the arms race with any country for it. But as one of the greatest powers in the world and as a country with the largest population of Asia, it must have the strongest army in Asia to defend itself (Chu & Hong, 2013, p. 21). While the power perspective advocates China's being a regional military force, they portray it as a defensive power rather than offensive. In this respect, they are parallel to the defenders of the developing country's identity, who want China's foreign policy to proceed in line with national defense and economic development. But an important difference between them is that regional power identity supporters argue that national defense is no longer limited only to the country boundaries, and claim that if there is no stability and security in East Asia, there will be no stability in China. Therefore, China should not follow a purely inward-oriented national defense policy.

Another group of academics who take China's regional leadership on the basis of institutions draw attention to the political influence. According to Zhang Yunling (CASS), Asia is a region that encompasses China's economic, security and political interests. Therefore, China's regional strategy should be an integrated strategy covering all areas. Zhang mentioned that China has a limited political influence on the international level and believes that Asia region is the first area to be used to increase this influence. Political influence can only be achieved when the states of the region respect not only China's power but also its ideas. China should therefore strive to create a responsible (regional) power image by actively taking part in regional issues (Zhang & Tang, 2005, pp. 51-53). The aim of China's efforts to increase regional governance in the entire Asia-Pacific region through various forums is not only economic cooperation but also political and regional security (Zhang, 2011). According to Zhang, the institutional building process in East Asia should be based on inclusion, not an intrinsic identification (Zhang, 2012, p. 364).

Qin Yaqing (Chinese Foreign Relations University) deals with multilateral regional cooperation in East Asia from the perspective of identity. Qin, who deals with the idea of the international community with the "process approach" derived from Chinese philosophy, is opposed to the "entity" approach that emphasizes the social structure of the independent self in the west by homogenizing. According to Qin, rules, regimes and institutions are not to manage or restrict individuals' behavior in society, but to promote harmony among other members of

society (Qin, 2010, p. 138). Qin's understanding of society is based on the process of relational thinking in Chinese philosophy and Zhongyong (complementary dialectic). Relationality in society is based on the context of the relationship between individuals rather than independent individuals. Therefore, the identity and behavior of the individual is determined by the context of relationship and relationality (Qin, 2011, pp. 53-54). What determines what and who the actor is in the approach of "being" is identity. When two actors in different identities meet, the identity change according to the confrontational dialectics is a homogenization that is provided by one of them to destroy another. In other words, the nature of the actor having an identity of A is not inclusive of the actor having an identity of B. Therefore, a common, homogeneous identity is provided by turning to B, A. Qin argues that the basic institutions of today's international society-sovereignty, market economy, democracy, human rights - are formed by the elimination of different identities, states that such a homogenization cannot be achieved in the global sense. This approach, which makes the idea of the global community impossible, has led different societies to establish regional international communities according to their geographical proximity (Qin, 2010, pp. 143-146). But in the process approach, identities are not fixed. Identity is defined by relationality and can even be re-defined depending on the social practices of this relationship. Therefore, identity is not the formation as the society itself, but the process of formation.

Qin considers East Asia regional culture more appropriate for communitarian and regional governance than other societies because it is influenced by Confucian culture and believes that the factor that separates East Asia from other international communities is the relational identification of identity (Qin, 2011, p. 62). He describes peace and stability in East Asia with the "process driven constructivism" approach. There are the intersubjective change and the gradual socialization of the power at the core of this approach. The process socializes power, cultivates norms and rules, and encourages the formation of common identities. Qin presents stability and peace as a harmonious example in East Asia despite the problems between the states of the region and argues that, contrary to identity dialect in the west, the heterogeneous structure in this region can be maintained by collective identity. If Asia can meet under a common umbrella where different identities are not excluded, regional governance could also lead to an alternative world governance to the international community understanding of the West (Wei & Qin, 2008).

This group believes that China should give priority to East Asia rather than the great powers and developing countries. This group emphasizes that China should assume leadership in the region and does not depend on the principle of never take lead. However, Qin Yaqing stresses that China's international strategy is not a dichotomist distinction, such as abandoning the keeping low profile strategy or adopting striving for achievement. The Chinese foreign policy with the Zhongyong dialectic implies that it holds both the change and the continuity. Therefore, China's international strategy is not to be preferred from one another, but a third way or medium that is fed by the common points of both (Qin, 2014, pp. 301-310).

2.3. Identity of Great Power

Ye Zicheng (Beijing University) is one of the first scholars to discuss China's principle of never take the lead in the great power identity discussions. Ye argues that China's comprehensive national power is enough to be a world power like the United States. He measures comprehensive national power with a country's survival capacity, development capacity, and international influence. What determines survival and the sufficiency of development capacity is military and economic power (Ye, 2010, pp. 17-23). Ye stresses that China should adopt the great power diplomacy if it wants to be a great power. China is the world's largest developing country economically and has a huge market potential. In addition, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it is in a position to have a significant political impact on international issues. Ye asks why China should hesitate to adopt the strategy of the great country if middle power countries like France and Britain can play a major role in international affairs. He answers the question of what is being the world power and what countries are considered as world powers from the perspective of civilization: "China has been the world power before, and what distinguishes China's history from other great civilizations is that it has a constant and uninterrupted character...China must learn from the history of its strong civilization and take lessons" (Ye, 2010, pp. 30-37). Thinking China's economic miracle can be considered as the beginning of this path, Ye believes that China has all the preconditions to become the world power (Ye, 2010, p. 46). Ye stated that keeping low profile is a strategy put forward by Deng Xiaoping based on the requirements of a specific time frame. However, since there is not such a specific situation at the moment, it is unthinkable that China is directing its foreign policy for a long time (Kawashima, 2011, pp. 22-23).

Shi Yinhong (University of Renmin), one of the other important figures supporting the great power identity, addresses the associations of the strategy for peaceful development on the identity. According to him, peaceful development directly has two meanings. First, China wants to be a great power. Two, seeks to avoid a wide-ranging or cold war-like conflict among the great powers in achieving this goal. China should be one of the world's leading powers, rather than being a great power (Shi, 2014, p. 38). Based on Arnold Toynbee's "challenge and response" theory, Shi believes that creative forms should be applied to adapt to the changing world. According to Toynbee, there must be a stimulus to successfully respond to new challenges and initiate creative adaptation (Toynbee, 1960). For China, this impulse is to adopt innovation-based strategies in the changing world, to focus on peace and development. Based on Shi's great power proposition, there is a creative world leadership form that can be adapted to the theme of peace and development rather than the classic power struggle between the rising powers and the hegemon (Shi, 2014, p. 40). In addition, Shi stresses that the keeping low profile strategy is not a doctrine, but a temporary strategy, and it cannot be applied for another 100 years (Xu & Du 2015, p. 258).

Yan Xuetong (Tsinghua University), the leader of those who defend the great power is directly attributing great power to China, while describing China's position in power status. But according to Yan, "power status" has two different meanings: power inequality and power ranking. States, such as the United States and the USSR, which have a small inequality of power between them, may be ranked first and second in terms of power status. But the two states with a great power inequality can only be ranked first and second if there is no other state in the status of power between them. The power ranking between China and the United States corresponds to the second. The current inequality of power between the US and China is different from the inequality between the US and the USSR in the Cold War era. While the first is the difference of power inequality between the superpower and the great power, the second is the difference of ranking between the two super powers in the same class. In his 2006 article, Yan states that China's power status could take the place of semi superpower in the world rankings (Yan, 2006, p.30-31). Moreover, in his study inspired by ancient Chinese philosophers, he contends that leadership capacity, not material capacity, is decisive in reducing the power gap between the United States and China. Yan's theory of moral realism deals with the forms of political leadership of rising and falling great powers. According to moral realism, there are three types of leadership at the international level. These are tyranny, hegemony and humanitarian authority (Yan, 2016, p. 15). The leadership of a state in the international arena

also sets international norms. According to Yan, who deals with leadership types in three headings as tyranny, hegemony and humanitarian authority, the international norms based on these types, respectively are power norms, double-standard norms and moral norms (Yan, 2011, p. 90). Changing leadership style does not mean that the international norms will change directly, but the relations of the leadership state with other states will play an important role in evolving international norms. If the leading state is tyrant, it encourages other states to adopt the principles of power and pushes their allies to pursue an aggressive policy against their enemies. Adopting the principles of power, the tyrant punishes states that conform to moral norms. In the humanitarian authority leadership type, the leader tries to increase moral norms at the expense of power norms. If humanitarian authority makes moral acts, it convinces other states that moral acts are beneficial to their welfare and wealth. Hegemony, on the other hand, is the middle way between humanitarian authority and tyranny. Hegemon leader implements double-standards, acts moral to its allies, acts within the framework of its power policy against its enemies. The hegemon state applies the norms of morality only in its relations with its allies. Because it must establish a strategic trust with its allies for the continuation of hegemony. And it establishes a relationship based on the principle of power with its enemies and forces the other side to behave in the same way (Yan, 2011, p. 245). Describing the Cold War period as hegemonic leadership with the USA and the USSR, Yan states that the dominant international norm is double-standard. Although after the Cold War, the United States continues to be the only superpower, its hegemon's leadership and double-standard norm remain unchanged. An example of a double-standard universal norm is that Western states are tolerant of Israel's possession of nuclear weapons, while opposing to Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs (Yan, 2011, p. 256). In his analysis of pre-Qin leadership typologies and norms, Yan argues that China's future leadership type should be humanitarian authority. In Yan's theory of moral realism, political morality is one of the main characteristics of rising powers. Political morality corresponds to responsible, humanistic management at national level, and strategic credibility at international level. High strategic credibility in the international arena can help rising states to change the current international configuration. Since strategic reliability will also increase political power, it can reduce the power disparity between hegemon and rising power. In addition, rising countries with high strategic credibility can contribute to the reorganization of international norms or the creation of new norms. What Yan wants to emphasize in the type of leadership of strategic credibility and humanitarian authority is that the United States has lost its moral leadership even if it is not material in the international system (Yan, 2016, pp. 21-23). Yan applies to the form of humanitarian authority as an alternative way for China to confront

the United States as an equal power as the USSR and to close the gap between it. He describes China as a rising power, against the principle of never take the lead. He, beyond that, is pursuing ideas on how China should follow a leadership typology if it becomes a superpower. In essence, moral realism is the theoretical basis for what kind of great power China should become. It is Yan who made the first academic analysis of strive for achievement strategy- except for the academics who repeat the official discourse-. In fact, he considers that the morality principle of strive for achievement strategy the basis of interests as a reflection of strategic credibility aimed at increasing political power, namely the theory of moral realism (Yan, 2014, p. 164). Academics actively involved in great power identity discussions correspond to the group of realists in Shambaugh's analysis.

Conclusion

Almost all of the multiple identity discussions mentioned here have been made before Xi Jinping revealed its strategy to strive for achievement. Other than peace and development, which is the theme of time and determined by the government, the alternative international strategies that almost every identity has created and can produce have a place in the academic debate. However, there is no direct measurement method of which ideas affect Xi Jinping management. Therefore, examining the concepts of strive for achievement strategy in relation to the periphery countries and the great powers is the basic data that will enable a measurement of the indirect way.

Xi Jinping held a regional diplomatic conference in October 2013, attended by all members of the Politburo Standing Committee (CCICED, 2013). In addition to the Permanent Committee members, various bodies of the Central Committee, members of the State Council, members of the central Leadership Group of Foreign Relations and ambassadors of China who are working in important countries attended the conference held on October 24-25. This conference is the highest-level conference organized on foreign policy since the founding of the PRC in 1949 (Ranade, 2014). In his speech at the conference, Xi strongly advised Chinese diplomats to adopt the principles of strive for achievement “*fen fa you wei*”, being more active “*gengjia jiji*” and taking more initiatives “*gengjia zhudong*” (Sorensen, 2015, p. 66). He describes the basic concepts that will guide the diplomacy of the periphery in four characters: Qin (closeness), cheng (earnestness), hui (benefit) and rong (inclusiveness). In the official discourse of China, the other two important concepts of strive for achievement in regional diplomacy are “morality and interest”. While emphasizing both morality and interest, Xi states that morality will be kept on top of the interests in relations with developing countries. Xi, who formulated the idea of a community of common destiny with the countries of the region, states

that regional development can be achieved through a form of relationship based on moral values rather than interests (Xi, 2013). Another concept introduced by Xi, other than the concepts of peripheral diplomacy, is the new type of great power relations. In his meeting with President Obama in 2013, Xi summarized new relations in three headings: a form of relationship without conflict, based on mutual respect and win-win principle (Li & Xu, 2014). The following are the principles and practices of foreign policy that indirectly suggest that strive for achievement is directed by academics to multiple identities in the international arena: One Belt One Road Initiative, seen as a manifestation of foreign policy, is important to show that China has not only ceased its cooperation over economic gain, but also abandoned its principle of never take the lead. Wang Jisi's marching westward strategy, could be the basis of the idea of One Belt One Road Initiative. Although not exclusively used in East Asia, the "community of common destiny" is close to Qin Yaqing's idea of the international communities with the collective identity. Xi Jinping's emphasis on the fact that China and Africa have the same historical experience and common destiny (Xinhuanet, 2015) as the two communities that have struggled on the same path seems to be close to the idea of the international community where one of the two communities without geographical proximity can coexist without destroying the other. Yan Xuetong's ideas of humanitarian authority and moral realism, as he says, overlap with the principle that strive for achievement will be based on morality in relations with other states. In this context, the moral policy pursued by China can be considered as a new norm that it is trying to create in the international arena. In addition, Xi Jinping's "new type of power relations" offer is a clear indication that Ye Ziceng's approach to great power diplomacy has been adopted by China. As the examples show, international identity discussions at the academy manifest themselves in multiple fields in accordance with China's multiple identity confusion. China with the strategy of strive for achievement, continues to adopt different identities in both the importance it attaches to East Asia and in relations with the United States. But the international identity that stands out with a One Belt One Road Initiative is the identity of regional power. China's geographical orientation to West Asia rather than East Asia shows its connection with the discussions at the Chinese international relations academy in two ways. First, China, which wants to develop a new type of great power relationship with the United States, avoids a conflict that could easily turn into a zero-sum game in East Asia. As Wang Jisi suggested, it is easier to move to West Asia and create a political identity in the region than East Asia. The second is that regional leadership must be achieved in order to have a great power identity. For China, instead of entering the struggle for leadership with US in East Asia, opening up to the world from West Asia is an easier option.

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