

**LOGICS OF CHINA-CHILE RELATIONS:
A Post-Marxist Approach to Re-Politicizing China's
Presence in Latin America**

Claudio Coloma

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Department of Government

University of Essex

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ABSTRACT

When it comes to explaining China's presence in Latin America, there are significant gaps in the International Studies literature. Existing research focuses on trade, investment and infrastructure, suggesting that pragmatic considerations and material interests determine these relationships. However, no single study exists that adequately accounts for their political and ideological dimensions. This thesis fills this void by taking as its starting point an unprecedented set of experiences that have transformed China-Chile relations during the last decades. It proposes new terms to account for international relations, building on post-Marxist discourse theory: the notion of an *international practice* is developed to account for the significance of Chile-China relationships at different historical conjunctures. In this account, observed political convergences and divergences embody *logics of international relations*, and the concept of the 'empty signifier' helps to locate different moments of ideological objectivation.

Based on the ontology of *the instability of objects*, this study develops a research strategy that reframes the way international relations theory understands ideas and material factors, developing three key claims. First, two socialist countries can arrive at antagonistic understandings of socialism and yet articulate ideological convergences around other elements. Second, a communist country can conceal its political divergence from an anti-communist regime by redefining its ideological horizon. Thirdly, the signature of China's first free trade agreement can be understood as the articulation of political demands and the ideological concealment of antagonisms rather than a result of technocratic decisions informed by economic complementarities. The findings suggest that the significance of China's presence in Latin America depends on how each country articulates the other as an

element of its foreign policy and vice-versa. The thesis thus aims to shift our perspective away from dominant interpretations that reduce China to the image of a rising power encroaching on the backyard of the United States.

Declaration

I hereby confirm that this thesis is a result of my original work. All references, citations and quotes which are not result of my original work have been duly acknowledged. None of the materials in this thesis has previously been submitted for any other degrees in this or any other university.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALCA	Free Trade Agreement Area of the Americas
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CR	Critical Realism
CHILPEC	Chilean Pacific Cooperation Committee
CODELCO	National Copper Corporation of Chile
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EEZ	Especial Economic Zone
EU	European Union
FISA	Santiago International Fair
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
G20	Group of 20 Developing Nations created at the 5th Ministerial WTO conference
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IR	International Relations
IRT	International Relations Theory
ISA	International Studies Association
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MES	Market Economy Status
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement

ODEPLAN	Chile's Office of National Planning
PBEC	Pacific Basin Economic Council
PDT	Post-Marxist Discourse Theory
PECC	Pacific Economic Cooperation Council
PRC	People's Republic of China
SC	Security Council
SOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command
U6	SC's Uncommitted Six (Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan)
UN	United Nations
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UP	Unidad Popular
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

1. The rise of China and Latin America

In the first decades of the 21st century, China has become one of the most crucial issues for international relations alongside other problems such as climate change, migration, and global inequality (Shambaugh 2016; Yueh 2013; Katzenstein 2012; Eichengreen, Wyplosz, and Park 2008). The rise of China has been central to the entire discipline because it is a critical actor reshaping the world economy, a power moving ever closer to the centre of global affairs and a phenomenon whose impressive economic, political, and military growth is in many respects both impressive and puzzling. For many, the rise of China, consciously or unconsciously, fills the gap left by the fall of the Soviet Union. By appealing to China, scholars and journalists enjoy hunting the spectre that threatens the post-Cold War world. However, this is a spectre with a particular feature: it is an Asian rising power that would seek to return to its glorious past and reinstate a Sinocentric world order (Jacques 2012).

Along with this issue emerged the debate, chiefly among US scholars, about whether China's rise will be peaceful or not (Mearsheimer 2006, 2014; Ikenberry 2008; Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth 2011). This debate was framed by assumptions that, despite being logically constructed, were highly contestable. One assumption, or rather desire, was to place China into the race for the unequal distribution of scarce material goods in order to reinforce the security dilemma, the balance of power theory and, consequently, the positivist principle of cause attached to the explanation of conflict. As David Shambaugh

(2016, xv) claims, “China’s evolution will continue to have consequences – for better and for worse – for the whole world.”

Another assumption was the association of China’s rise with the signifier of threat; a 2.0 version of the “yellow peril” that Western/Europeans articulated after Japan triumphed over Russia in the 1904-05 war. This yellow peril, which the Meiji reforms had transformed into a powerful and modern country since 1868, put white supremacy at risk (e.g. Stoddard 1920). Nowadays, China is a non-democratic country threatening the Western-liberal order. Indeed, a much-debated question is whether China’s rise will confirm or challenge democracy’s virtuous attributes to trigger economic development and world peace (Shambaugh 2016; Yueh 2013).

When I attended the International Studies Association’s (ISA) Asia Pacific Conference in 2019, I confirmed that these assumptions dwell in the minds of most internationalists, including those from East Asian countries. Paradoxically, the yellow peril spectre was present even among non-Western/European scholars. Steve Smith (1996, 13) explains this kind of phenomenon when he asserts that “once established as common sense, theories become incredibly powerful since they delineate not simply what can be known but also what it is sensible to talk about or suggest.”

In Latin America, a growing body of literature recognises the importance of China in trade, investment and infrastructure projects (e.g. Hearn and León-Manríquez 2011; Domínguez 2006; X. Li and Christensen 2012; Rosales and Kuwayama 2012; B. Wu 2018). However, the bulk of this literature neither draws attention to politics and ideological elements nor questions the mainstream mindset. Most scholars bury their heads in the sand by claiming that Latin American countries’ relations with China are pragmatic. From this perspective, if we are to find something political in China’s relationships with

Latin America, this can be found with reference to the “populist” left-wing regimes (Venezuela) in conjunction with the ‘yellow peril’ logic (Domínguez 2006; Pérez Le-Fort 2006).

Still, China is of interest because it is a new and unknown international phenomenon in this region (Armony 2011; Soto 1998). Traditionally, in dealing with world powers many have subscribed to the belief that Western/European countries share similar cultural features with American peoples’ colonial past. Although culture does not explain anything when trying to assess the complex diversity of Latin American countries and their relationships with Western/European countries, it is possible to say that the belief in the common cultural link, especially among Latin American (“white”) elites, created the fantasy of having been living in an objective and predictable world. Western/European powers, not other ones, have been thought of as a critical factor in countries’ foreign policies and an essential element for Latin Americans to characterise how international relations work.

The paradox between the anxiety of explaining China’s presence in Latin America and the lack of theoretical inquiry is evident in the case of Chile. A considerable amount of literature has been published on China-Chile relations, particularly since these two countries signed the free trade agreement (FTA) in 2005. Much of this literature suggests that China’s demand for natural resources is the chief cause of its engagement with Chile. To some extent, this explanation strikes a realist pose - à la Morgenthau - when scholars repeat like a mantra that the relationship is pragmatic as if the use of this signifier were the expression of a formal approach that explains this relationship’s outcomes. However, although there is a consensus about the pragmatic character of Chile-China relations, very

little is currently known about what pragmatism is and how and when the relationship became pragmatic.

The generalisability of much published research about Chile-China relations is problematic because it is based on reductionist assumptions, which, I interpret, respond to an unreflective belief in the Humean principle of cause. From this viewpoint, material factors and ideas work under regularity laws generating international outcomes. I will contend with this view because it assumes causality as a taken-for-granted feature of international reality. As Jim George (1994, 51) explains in “Discourses of Global Politics,” Hume “developed a systematic philosophical position predicated on the distinction between an objectively existing sphere of reality ‘out there’ and a thinking subject who (passively) receives sense impressions and construct ‘theoretical’ images of the facts.”

For instance, an approach that has dominated Chile-China studies for many years concerns economics and its technology to characterise China-Chile relations as pragmatic. Scholars de-politicise international relations, generating dormant accounts concerning the volumes and amounts of commercial exchange and investment. In this respect, I agree with Keohane and Goldstein (1993, 4) when they observe that for many economists and political scientists, “captivated by their modes of thinking, ideas are unimportant” because they believe that agents correctly anticipate the results of their actions by rationalising the dynamics of the real world.

To date, however, there is still uncertainty whether positivist causality and de-politicised pragmatism define or not the broad, plural and undecidable elements that constitute China-Chile relations. Far too little attention has also been paid to research strategies that account for the articulation of Chile’s and China’s foreign policies and their relationship’s political and ideological elements.

In “Explaining and Understanding International Relations,” Hollis and Smith (1991) distinguish simplifications from assumptions. For instance, to inquire whether the rise of China will be peaceful or not and affirm that Chile-China relations are pragmatic are simplifications because empirical data show an unsurmountable range of elements, agents, languages and practices, not to mention historical and cultural contexts, that make the Chinese international phenomenon a much more complex problem. On the other hand, assumptions derive from more profound questions about the nature of things that constitute international relations. It is an ontological assumption that material factors determine international outcomes; for instance, that China’s demand for Chile’s copper would have caused the FTA. In the rational approach (following Keohane’s terminology), the scarcity of goods and its unequal distribution determine international competition, the need to increase military power, the security dilemma and, in the end, conflict.

However, since Richard Ashely published his paper “The Poverty of Neorealism” in 1984, many post-positivist scholars have criticised IR simplifications and ontological assumptions, including poststructuralists such as David Campbell, Jenny Edkins and Dirk Nabers and non-Western scholars such as Amitav Acharya and Naeem Inayatullah. Thus, although this dissertation aims to debunk the simplifications upon which Chile-China literature has been built, its chief goals are to deconstruct the positivist ontologies of matter, form and cause upon which scholarly texts have performed these simplifications. In doing so, this dissertation seeks to lay down a suitable ontology for the elements and contextual circumstances that constitute Chile-China relations. Overall, as Chantal Mouffe (2103) affirms, things can always be otherwise.

2. Argument and dissertation's structure

This dissertation seeks to understand the constitution, legitimation and transformation of Chile-China relationships from the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1970 to the FTA signature in 2005. It argues that Chile and China have experienced three critical moments in the history of their bilateral relationships, which I identify as 1970, 1978 and 2005 periods. Second, each period represents a historical conjuncture in which Chile and China articulate a unique and autonomous symbolic order that I call the international practice. Third, each international practice has units of analysis, or logics of international relations, that characterise political convergences, political divergences and ideological articulations.

Some of the questions raised by this intervention are: How to overcome the objectivist belief in the causal efficacy of natural resources and ideas that inform Chile-China studies? Is it possible to find out the relationship's foundational moment in which it became pragmatic? How can we account for the relationship's political and ideological elements?

I apply post-Marxist discourse theory (PDT) and import its ontological assumptions to international analysis. First, the term international practice will be used in this thesis to refer to the articulation of elements from two or more foreign policies. International practice is featured by four conditions: radical contingency, pluriverse, agents and antagonism. Second, political logics of difference and equivalence are redefined as international logics of divergence and convergence. Following Saussure (2012), the former will refer to a dynamic conception of the syntagmatic pole of language and the latter to the associative pole of language.

Laclau and Mouffe's (1990) article "Post-Marxism without apologies" was crucial in contemplating the literature's gaps and making intelligible my object of study. This text

proposes *the instability of objects* as a philosophical answer that overcomes the materialism/idealism conundrum. The *matter* is the irreducibility of the object or thing to the concept, while the *form* is essentialism or the ultimate conceptual rationalisation of the object, Laclau and Mouffe say. To be clear, they do not question the existence of a world outside human consciousness; however, they stress that the unstable being of objects is different from their mere existence. Hence, I argue that international relations must not be reduced to fixed ontological definitions concerning material elements and ideas and the essentialist logic of conflict and cooperation depicted by the positivist interpretation of IRT mainstream. On the contrary, this dissertation will show that the meaning of objects, ideas and actions depend on how Chilean and Chinese agents articulate them politically and give them particular meanings in different historical circumstances. The analyst's role is to identify those elements and characterise the logics of such political articulations.

Whilst the post-Marxist intervention given here constitutes a fresh approach to IR, the typical IR reader will be nonetheless acquainted with many debates that shall be considered in the different stages of my problematisation (realism, liberalism, constructivism, neo-Gramscian IRT and the Copenhagen school). Smith (2013, 4) asserts that the formulation of an international approach depends on what the analyst wants to explain "and this, in turn, will depend on your values and beliefs about what international relations is all about." From this viewpoint, I firstly conceive these approaches as plausible alternatives to the simplifications and assumptions that characterise Chile-China studies. Secondly, these discussions are necessary steps that progressively enhance my theoretical choice of PDT. In this regard, this study makes a major contribution by formulating a novel post-Marxist approach to international relations.

The dissertation is composed of four parts. Part I is concerned with the problematisation of my object of study. Chapter 1 examines Chile-China relations literature drawing attention to its central claims, theoretical elements and research strategies. Chapter 2 analyses this literature's objectivist-material assumptions regarding IR rational approaches and constructivism. It assesses whether one of these two sides of the materialism/idealism dilemma in IR fills the explanatory gaps of Chile-China studies. Chapter 3 introduces PDT and the ontological category of the instability of objects as the solution to overcome the materialism/idealism dichotomy and justify why it is a suitable approach in accounting for Chile-China relations.

In Part II, I design my research strategy in a twofold step. Chapter 4 examines what has been written in international relations from a post-Marxist perspective and assesses the advantages and disadvantages of PDT to account for international relations. Chapter 5 starts describing Glynos and Howarth's (2007) logics approach. Then, it defines the categories of international practice and logics of international relations and explains the data analysis strategy.

Part III is composed of three chapters that present my empirical analysis and findings. Chapter 6 investigates the role of socialist ideology and explains the political logics of Chile-China diplomatic ties. Chapter 7 examines the material-objectivist notion of pragmatism advocated by Chile-China literature and describes the political and ideological elements that constitute the rapprochement between communist China and Pinochet's anti-communist Chile. Chapter 8 examines the causal role of economic complementarities and focuses on the political logics of the Sino-Chilean FTA signature.

Part IV focuses on discussing the findings (Chapter 9) and the general conclusions (Chapter 10). Together, these chapters analyse, with historical perspective, the articulation

of the plural range of international logics described in the empirical section and discusses the dissertation's main contributions and limitations. I also return to my discussions with IRT to stress that one significant contribution of this study is to propose a new international relations ontology suitable in accounting for China-China relations' political and ideological elements by importing post-Marxist categories. Another implication is that it advances towards formalising a post-Marxist approach to international practices, which brings the political to the fore in studies concerning China's presence in Latin America.

PART I

PROBLEMATIZATION OF THE OBJECT OF STUDY

CHAPTER 1

China's Latin American Pioneer: The problem of material factors and pragmatism to explain Chile-China relations

Introduction

Investigating Chile-China cooperation is a continuing concern within Chilean foreign policy and China-Latin America relations studies. A growing body of literature has tried to answer how and why Chile and China have engaged in pioneering and promising bilateral commitments to liberalise trade restrictions and promote multilateralism in world affairs. Some Chinese scholars even suggest that relations with Chile represent the model China was looking forward to replicating with the rest of Latin American countries (Niu 2018; Xin 2018).

A key aspect of Chile-China relations is the FTA signed in 2005 because this is China's first bilateral agreement of this sort. Much of the current literature suggests that this achievement was the result of a de-ideologised pragmatic relationship focused on China's demand for Chile's natural resources (Artaza, 2007; Dingemans, 2014; Ross, 2007; Rodríguez, 2011; Errázuriz, 2006; Labarca, 2013, 2012, 2015; Zhang, 2006; Cui & Zhang, 2018; Yu, 2006). However, a significant problem with this explanation is that scholars deal with the undecidability of determining the foundational moment of pragmatism and the belief in natural resources causality to generate international outcomes.

By reviewing a vast range of literature published from 1986 onwards, this chapter examines the use of the concept of pragmatism and its articulation with explanations based upon the causality of natural resources. It aims to look for the answers that scholars have formulated regarding why Chile became the pioneer for China's relations with Latin America. One of its contributions is to show that pragmatism, rather than a formally constituted academic approach, emerged as a kind of self-reported interpretation formulated by scholars who wrote the first texts about Chile-China relations. Then, this interpretation became a sedimented and unreflective element quoted by other authors in further publications.

The first section will examine the idea of Chile as China's pioneer and its articulation with the causal principle of material factors. It will then go on to analysing the discourse of pragmatism in a three-fold manner. First, it shows that no study has defined what pragmatism is and how it relates to the relationship's constitution and transformation. Second, it shows contradictions and inconsistencies when texts point to a particular foundational moment of bilateral pragmatism. Third, it demonstrates that pragmatism has its origins in some authors' self-understandings who sought to come to terms with context-specific challenges. The last section is concerned with some hesitant incursions into ideas and observes that these works criticise dominant explanations drawing on material factors; nevertheless, they do not question the relationship's pragmatic character.

1. Defining Chile as the pioneer of China's relations with Latin America

A good number of academic texts report that China calls Chile *the country of the firsts* (Heine 2006; J. Li 2011; Schmidt 2011b; Sun 2011; Shouguo Yang 2011; C.X. Labarca 2012b; Ampuero 2016; Errázuriz 2006). Although this characterisation means that Chile has been China's Latin American pioneer several times,¹ it signals four milestones:

- Chile was the first South American state to recognise the Popular Republic of China (PRC), the One China Policy, and, thus, the first one to establish diplomatic relations in 1970.
- Chile was the first Latin American country to support China's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1999.
- Chile was the first country in Latin America to recognise China's market economy status (MES) in 2004, according to the PRC's Protocol of Accession to the WTO.
- Chile became the first individual country to sign an FTA with China in 2005.

Some texts affirm that these achievements represent not only “the foundations in which the Sino-Chilean partnership can be rooted,” providing “the perception of having a partnership with a privileged status” (Labarca 2012, 152-153) but also the relationship's

¹ Historical reports published by the Library of Chile's National Congress describe that Chile has been China's pioneer several times. For example, in 1952, the first Chinese Institute of Culture in Latin America was established. Jiang Shixue (2001) recalls that Chile and China signed an agreement to trade copper and saltpetre. Although the treaty never came into force due to the US blockade, it was the first trade agreement signed between China and a Latin American country. In 1985, Chile and China agreed to create the first Latin American-Chinese joint venture: Beijing Santiago-Cooper Tube Company Limited. The project did not last more than seven years. In 2008, Chilean President Michelle Bachelet was the first Latin American head of state in addressing a speech at the Boao Forum.

economic orientation carried out since the nineties (Schmidt 2011b; Rehner and Montt 2013).

Among Chinese scholars, the idea of Chile as China's pioneer is contextualised in what China expects from its relations with the rest of Latin American countries. For instance, Niu Haibin depicts the meaning of Chile for China on the stage of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) as follows:

Chile is a major China's commercial partner in Latin America, and it is also a pioneer in the development of relationships with China in several areas, such as free trade and strategic association. For this reason, it is expected that China and its strategic partner in Latin America work as the force that boosts the development of the China-CELAC Forum (Niu 2018, 229).

Nevertheless, some authors observe that the discourse of "the four firsts" does not reflect the political status that China conferred to Chile during the 1990s and 2000s (Bernal-Meza 2012; Dingemans 2014; Montalva and Navia 2007; C.X. Labarca 2012b). For instance, if we consider the way Domínguez et al. (2006, 23) describe the Chinese criteria to grade ties with other countries, Chile was just a cooperative partner (second-class partner) until 2014, while Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Venezuela were strategic partners (first-class partners). According to Labarca (2012, 166-167), this situation would reflect the pragmatic character of a relationship that does not rely on ideological commitments but economic complementarities.

2. The discourse of causality of material factors

There is a large volume of published studies describing Chile-China relationships as pragmatic (Dingemans 2014; Ross 2007a; Bernal-Meza 2012; BCN 2015; Pérez Le-Fort 2006; Montalva and Navia 2007; C.X. Labarca 2012b; S. Jiang 2001; Y. Yu 2006; Errázuriz 2006; Matta 1991; Ampuero 2016; Rodríguez 2011). The main argument is that economic complementarities enhance bilateral trade and constitute a pragmatic relationship. A Chilean scholar formulates this view boldly:

It is possible to see the predominance of pragmatism over any other values: A market of 1.300 million people and a competitive country that offers manufactured goods. In this sense, the Chilean policy has been coherent because it has primarily proposed mutual goals in which the first concern is quantitative (Ross 2007a, 123).

Chinese scholars such as Cui Shoujun and Zhang Zheng explain that pragmatism is an element of China's economic diplomacy towards Latin America, which focuses on trade, investment, infrastructure development and production capacity:

While trade, investment and finance cooperation between China and Latin America have kept getting on, infrastructure and cooperation upon productive capacity have become the new engine to drive the pragmatic development of relationships between China and Latin America (Cui and Zhang 2018, 267).

Following these arguments, it is not surprising that scholars draw considerable attention to the question of why China's signed its first bilateral FTA with what Heine (2006, 143) calls "a medium-size Latin American country like Chile." The most common answer is that the FTA was the outcome of economic complementarities determined by

China's necessity of natural resources (Heine 2006; C.X. Labarca 2012b; Zhang 2006; Errázuriz 2006). For example, in his paper "The Understanding of the Free Trade Agreement between China and Chile," Zhang Xinsheng (2006) argues that:

[China] has enormous necessities of natural resources, as well as agricultural and fishing products. In contrast, despite Chile is a small economy, it has a high international competitive level and, most importantly, it has a lot of copper and other raw materials and food which are highly demanded by China; which in turn demonstrates the economic-commercial complementarity between them (Zhang 2006, 115).

In turn, this argument leads to the assumption that economic complementarities trigger de-politicised practices (Dingemans 2014; Pérez Le-Fort 2006; Errázuriz 2006; Rodríguez 2011; Ross 2007b). For example, Yu Yunxia introduces his paper "Comments on the Free Trade Agreement between China and Chile" by highlighting that "this pragmatic agreement will make better use of the two nations' complementarity, and dynamic effect from trade creation will be greater than the static effect of trade diversion" (Y. Yu 2006, 1).

However, when digging more in depth in the literature, looking for definitions and explanations articulated around the signifier pragmatism, it is possible to realise that scholars have dealt with a problematic term. I will explain this point in the following section.

3. Pragmatism as an objectivist-material approach to Chile-China relations

‘Pragmatism’ is a problematic term for at least three reasons: First, scholars neither have defined pragmatism nor assessed this notion concerning bilateral outcomes. Second, scholars formulate, as well as reproduce, incoherent and contradictory explanations using this word. Third, as scholars have persisted in using pragmatism to characterise Chile-China relations, the term has been disaffected from its origin as a self-reported interpretation articulated in the relationship’s earliest texts.

3.1. Pragmatism as a non-defined concept

Although pragmatism is broadly accepted as the relationship’s primary constitutive element, scholars have not consistently defined this term. This problem is exposed in at least three situations.

First, while some affirm that the relationship has been pragmatic since the very beginning in 1970 (Montalva and Navia 2007; C.X. Labarca 2012b; Ross 2007b; Matta 1991), others claim that the relationship was born as a result of ideological identities (Errázuriz, 2006; Schmidt 2011). For example, Matta (1991, 347) concludes that since the outset of the diplomatic ties, flexibility and pragmatism have been “the permanent characteristics observed in the relationship” In contrast, Schmidt (2011, Kindle loc. 3065) affirms that the relationship during Allende’s government (1970-1973) was “deeply ideological.”

Second, contrary to Matta, who advocates for the permanent pragmatic character of the relationship, Jiang Shixue (2001, 12) distinguishes “periods of political and economic

proximity and identification” from the contingent conditions by which pragmatic decisions “overcome different obstacles.”

Third, the concept is overstated in one text at the expenses of becoming undecidable. For instance, Rodríguez (2011) claims that between 1973 and 1978, the relationship experiences a condition of “absolute pragmatism.” China behaved pragmatically in 1973 when it did not break diplomatic ties after the overthrow of the Chilean socialist government of president Salvador Allende. In such a case, China’s pragmatism predominated over socialist solidarity (Rodríguez, 2011, Kindle loc. 4732). Then, Chile was also pragmatic in the late seventies. The Chilean anti-communist dictatorship went to Asia looking for new partners where it met communist China (Rodríguez, 2011, Kindle loc. 4732).

However, when Rodríguez accounts for the relationship after implementing parallel economic reforms in the late seventies, she claims that the relationship experienced a period of “more pragmatism and, therefore, more harmony” (Rodríguez, 2011, Kindle loc. 4803-4835). Hence, there is an evident problem when trying to make sense of more pragmatism than absolute pragmatism.

Rodríguez’s dubious articulation of pragmatism with the so-called parallel economic reforms is my point of departure to show how problematic is the use of this term in the context of economic liberalisations. In the next section, I will describe more in detail how different texts relate to pragmatism with parallel economic reforms.

3.2. Contradictions in the discourse of pragmatism regarding economic liberalisations

Although several studies have suggested that parallel economic reforms determine a pragmatic relationship, very little is known about the frontier between pragmatism and ideology. Moreover, contrary to what some key Chinese and Western texts suggest, some Chilean scholars claim that the Chinese elite became more pragmatic and less ideological because of the Chinese economic reforms.

Some authors affirm that economic liberalisations straightforwardly generate pragmatism (Errázuriz 2006; Rodríguez 2011). Ross (2007b) develops this position in greater depth. He argues that despite having had substantial ideological differences, both countries experienced more or less “equivalent and simultaneous” political and economic processes, which led them to engage as economic partners pragmatically (Ross 2007b, 82).

It is worth noting that Ross claims so even though he studies Chile’s foreign policy only instead of Chile’s and China’s altogether. For instance, he describes how Chilean technocrats consolidated their power by creating the General Direction of International Economic Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1978. Then, by 1983, he suggests that “In the field of decision-making, the triumph of the pragmatic technocracy over traditional views was total” in Chilean foreign policy (Ross 2007b, 61-62).

To a great extent, Ross formulates his argument by contesting Heraldo Muñoz’s (1986) book *Chilean Military Government’s Foreign Affairs*. Muñoz argues that the Military Junta had experienced an uncomfortable coexistence of two diplomatic styles. On the one hand, the Pretorian-ideological style was carried out by militaries who conducted Chile’s foreign policy; on the other, the civil-pragmatic style was headed by technocrat

civilians working for the military regime (Muñoz 1986, 47). In contrast, Ross counterargues that there was no uncomfortable coexistence but a “cohabitation” of styles that straightforwardly means absolute pragmatism (Ross 2007b, 51-59). However, Ross offers no explanation for the distinction between pragmatism and ideological principles in the articulation of Chile’s and China’s foreign policies.

On the other hand, Montalva and Navia (2007) distinguish a pragmatic relationship before the reforms from a relationship centred on free markets since the reforms. They affirm that, after the coup against Allende, “pragmatism prevailed in a cooled relationship,” then:

China initiated its economic reforms in 1978. Chile was also undertaking reforms aimed at opening markets and promoting free trade [...] Chile and China’s embrace of free-market policies made it easier for the two governments to find common ground despite the seemingly insurmountable differences between a communist government and an anti-communist one (Montalva and Navia 2007, 4).

According to these authors, pragmatism was a diplomatic moment that precedes the common ground generated by parallel economic reforms in 1978. In turn, the common ground generated by the economic reforms would not be a black box, empty of ideological meaning, but a discourse articulated around the free market principle. This common ground would represent, at least, an easier way to carry out bilateral ties by the embracement of the same economic principle. If this argument were plausible, ideological elements would have been articulated by communist China and Pinochet’s anti-communist Chile. However, it is still unknown how to resolve relations between this common ground and the so-called insurmountable political differences.

There is a consensus among Chilean scholars that China's foreign policy became pragmatic when China transitioned from Mao's rule to the rule of economic reforms (e.g. Rodríguez 2011; Dingemans 2014, 69-70; Bernal-Meza 2012). For example, Bernal-Meza (2012, 66) affirms that China's foreign policy was losing its ideological burden and that since the 2000s, "the engine for external action has been the promotion of China's national interests and not ideological issues." Nevertheless, little is known about the relationship between Chinese reforms and leaders' de-ideologisation. It is not clear either what elements make China's foreign policy more pragmatic and less ideological after Mao's era.

This view contrasts with some scholars who have studied China-Latin American relations pointing out that "most foreign observers do not understand Chinese Marxism and as a result tend to ignore or dismiss it as a primary factor in China's foreign relations" (Harris 2015, 31).

Moreover, many Chinese scholars have shown that ideologies under the reform era have become one of the most controversial issues in communist China since 1949. For example, Wang Hui (1998) explains that, rather than experiencing a phenomenon of de-ideologisation, different ideologies were interplaying such as Maoism, the socialism of reforms, humanist socialism and the ideologies of what he calls the New Enlightenment Movement. In this context, he stresses that ideologies had a significant influence on the Chinese state, including Chinese foreign policy. Besides, Xu Youyu describes the debate between liberals and what he defines as the New Left² in issues such as the state-market

² Xu (2003, 6-7) understands the New Left as those thinkers who obtain theoretical insights from "contemporary New Leftists, such as Immanuel Wallerstein, Samir Amin and Edward Said". Second, New Leftists oppose capitalism and the market economy but not "oppose despotism and dictatorship". Finally, they still maintain a positive image of Mao's heritage in a broad range of areas.

relation, China's involvement in the global markets, and the notion of modernity (Y. Xu 2003).

Together, these studies show that pragmatism is a vague concept and, consequently, it is not possible to know how and when the relationship became pragmatic. Moreover, causal factors leading to Chile-China outcomes remain speculative because it is not yet clear how these studies solve the pragmatism/ideology dilemma. In this scenario, it is necessary to trace more in detail the use of the word pragmatism in academic texts.

3.3. Pragmatism as a taken-for-granted idea

The sedimentation of pragmatism is the result of a long process of quotations. The first texts about the Sino-Chilean diplomatic relations were written by Chilean scholars and diplomats in the eighties and nineties (e.g. Muñoz, 1986; Matta, 1991; Soto, 1998). In the outset of the 2000s, there is one of the first texts written by a Chinese scholar (Jiang, 2001). All these texts primarily aim to describe the history of diplomatic ties. Then, studies use these early texts to mention historical facts and cite interpretations (e.g. Ampuero, 2016; Errázuriz, 2006; Pérez Le-Fort, 2006). In this interplay, it is possible to observe that new texts obscure the distinction between historical facts and self-reported interpretations formulated under particular historical circumstances.

A paradigmatic case is Javier Matta's paper published in 1991. Matta uses official sources such as diplomatic documents and official speeches and secondary sources from authors who had studied Chile's foreign policy during the seventies and eighties. One of Matta's claims is that president Allende appealed to pragmatic political reasons, besides ideological and economic ones, to establish diplomatic relations with China in 1970. He

cites Allende's First Address to the National Congress of Chile (May 1971), in which Mr Allende would have stated such reasons (Matta 1991, 350). This antecedent represents Matta's primary source to conclude that Chile and China have carried out a permanent pragmatic relationship since its very beginning (Matta 1991, 366).

However, neither Allende's address to the National Congress (Allende 1971a) nor the Chilean Government's report submitted by the Presidency of Chile to the National Congress (Allende 1971b) makes any reference to pragmatism. Furthermore, pointing out the pragmatic style of Allende's foreign policy does not necessarily mean that the relationship and China's foreign policy were pragmatic, as Matta suggests.

Therefore, what we have in Matta's paper is his interpretation of the relationship's history up to 1991. However, since then, this interpretation became a taken-for-granted idea in other texts which cite Matta's paper (e.g. Ampuero 2016, 45; Rodríguez 2011, Kindle Loc. 4662; BCN 2015, 28; Ross 2007b, 82-86). For example, Rodríguez concludes that:

as Javier Matta points out (1991, 347), the diplomatic ties between Chile and the PRC were crossed by pragmatism and flexibility. In other words, there existed domestic interests that, beyond different ideological orientations, led them to keep the ties established since 1970 (Rodríguez 2011, Kindle loc. 4662).

Another example starts with a text that concludes that different diplomatic styles coexisted in Chile's foreign policy since the seventies, one of them being the pragmatic style. Then, a second text cites the former to affirm that the Sino-Chilean relationship is pragmatic. Finally, a third text cites the second one to characterise China's foreign policy as pragmatic.

First, Muñoz's (1986) book argues that in Chile's foreign policy during Pinochet's rule (1973-1990) there existed an ideological-Pretorian military style which struggled with a pragmatic-civil style triggered by neoliberal technocrats (Muñoz 1986, 44-47):

the civil-pragmatic style which arose under [Minister of Foreign Affairs] Cubillos's administration was notably different from the traditional civil-pragmatic style of Chilean diplomacy. While the latter relied on [Chile's] democratic values and the respect of law, the former was based on privileging the economic dimension of Chile's foreign policy. What is more, Cubillos's designation did not mean the total replacement of the Pretorian style by a new fashion of civil-pragmatic style [but] an uncomfortable coexistence of two contradictory perspectives (Muñoz 1986, 47).

In his book, Ross stresses that "Even though I am not interested in discussing Muñoz's ideas largely, I am aware that in the present circumstances, it is impossible to address the issue [Chile's foreign policy] without starting by analysing his categories" (Ross 2007b, 52). In this context, he claims that there was no conflictual coexistence but a cohabitation of styles that he calls the Pretorian-pragmatic style. According to Ross, this style means the consummation of Chile's pragmatism and the element that leads him to affirm that the relationship with China is pragmatic, even though he does not account for China's foreign policy (Ross 2007b, 83-84).

Finally, Dingemans's (2014) paper about Chile's strategy towards East Asia cites Ross's study characterising Japan's and China's pragmatism towards Chile. The interesting point to highlight here is how the idea of China's pragmatism is articulated with works that study Chile's foreign policy: "Interestingly enough, ideological pragmatism had dominated Chinese [23] and Japanese foreign policies as well [24]" (Dingemans, 2014, 70). In the

quotations, it is possible to observe two references pointed as “[23]” and “[24]”. While [24] refers to Ross’s (2007) book *Chile and Japan, 1973–1989*, [23] points to Joaquín Fermandois’s (2011) paper “Pragmatism, ideology and tradition in Chilean foreign policy since 1990.”

In all the studies reviewed here, pragmatism is recognised as a crucial element that characterises a relationship focused on material factors such as economic complementarities. However, up to now, far too little attention has been drawn to define this supposed relationship’s objective condition and how this condition relates to non-material elements. In the following section, I draw attention to approaches that account for ideas as factors in Chile-China relations.

4. Approaches to Chile-China relations centred on ideas as factors

Non-material or ideas are an essential aspect of Chile-China relations. Two considerations frame this issue. As far as the first one is concerned, some texts use the expression of *parallel economic reforms* and claim that this constructs a sort of Sino-Chilean intersubjectivity. The second one consists of works that develop “soft variables” approaches to explain Chile-China relations (e.g. María Montt 2014; Rehner and Montt 2012; C. Labarca and Montt 2019). One of the most remarkable studies in this regard is Labarca’s cultural trust approach (C. Labarca 2012a).

4.1. Parallel economic reforms

Many texts appeal to this notion to stress that Chile and China share similar trajectories of development in their efforts to become modern countries and that this situation would generate the social conditions to construct a bilateral intersubjectivity.

In China's (2016) "Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean," the notion of parallel developing conditions is an expression that introduces China's foreign policy towards Latin America as a whole (see also H. Wu 2011). Applying this view to Chile, Jiang (2006, 31) suggests that parallel experiences improve mutual understanding. In this context, the FTA represents a model to foster cooperation with the rest of Latin America, which was tested successfully with Peru and Costa Rica. Xin Xiaodai (2018, 257) affirms that to face the challenge of increasing the link-up between these developing regions, it is vital that China accomplishes more FTAs with more countries from Latin America.

Regarding Chilean authors, some texts affirm that parallel economic reforms were critical to enhance the relationship (Montalva and Navia 2007; Schmidt 2011a; Rodríguez 2011). As I showed above, Montalva and Navia (2007) use the *common ground* expression represented by the shared belief in free trade. Rodríguez asserts that the relationship experienced the period of "the greatest coincidence and complementarity with the economic reforms." She suggests that between 1990 and 2005, these countries have "common liberal premises" of globalisation and no other ideological options to engage economically (Rodríguez, 2011, Kindle loc. 4925-4990).

Unfortunately, how parallel processes of development constitute a Chilean-Chinese intersubjectivity and enhance diplomatic ties are not fully understood. Scholars formulate this claim within studies that chiefly advocate for objectivist pragmatism and material

causality, leaving the intersubjectivity question unclear. As Rehner and Montt (2013, 8) correctly observe: “to talk about relations with China today still means to talk about copper.”

4.2. Trust as a ‘soft variable’

Labarca’s approach to trust is one of the first academic efforts that have developed an approach centred on ideas to Chile-China relations and the most comprehensive study written so far about this issue.

She starts questioning traditional approaches that claim that “the road for mutual cooperation seemed to be paved” upon elements such as economic complementarities and parallel economic liberalisations. Besides, the relationship’s narrow focus on trade leads Labarca to criticise the “weakness of traditional ‘hard variables’” and re-orientate her investigation towards “soft variables” that she defines as “the mental and cultural dimensions of social reality” (Labarca 2012, 1-4).³

Labarca argues that Chile’s and China’s states “played a critical role in fostering trust in two complementary ways.” First, in China, the source of trust is the notion of a ‘harmonious world’ used by Hu Jintao’s government. This concept would have been applied to relations with Latin American countries, through the emphasis on the economic sphere, to contain the United States’ concerns regarding China’s increasing presence in the region (Labarca 2012, 113-114). Second, in Chile, the trust would be an element of Chile’s

³ It is worth noting that Labarca studies native Chinese and Chilean words related to the signifier of trust. The Chinese notions are 'guanxi' or "the art of personal relations" and 'xinyong' or "business trust" (p. 71). The Chilean word is 'pituto', which can be defined as the capacity or ability to influence social networks to accomplish social goals (p. 77). In their respective social contexts, these concepts are related to trust and social capital. Hence, according to Labarca, these are the "pivotal concepts" (p. 70) between, on the one hand, Chinese and Chilean cultures and, on the other, the building of trust.

robust institutional system and the international reputation of being a reliable and stable economy (Labarca 2012, 127).

However, what seemed to be the foundations of a novel constructivist approach to Chile-China relations, is suddenly replaced by the rational approach's theoretical tenets. Labarca assumes that trust has a "calculative nature" (Labarca 2012, 133) and, as a consequence, pragmatism and power asymmetry are fundamental elements that define the relationship. While she finds the sources of pragmatism in standard literature of Chile-China relations, she relies upon political science and economics in the case of power asymmetry. She suggests that power asymmetry is manifested in Chile's acquiescence to the One China Policy; otherwise, its economic interests would be seriously damaged regarding its high dependence on China (Labarca 2012, 145-146).

Labarca concludes that mutual trust is built upon pragmatic foreign policies that underpin economic relations through the complementarity of national interests and the generation of a common instrumental narrative. In turn, because both national interests and the common narrative are the result of rational and instrumental goals, the relationship cannot prosper beyond trade (Labarca 2012, 166-169). Therefore, she resolves that the task of trust-building has to be moved "from the field of international relations to the domain of businessmen and corporations" (Labarca 2012, 114).

4.2.1. Some limitations of the 'soft variables' approach

One of Labarca's study's most remarkable contributions is having formulated a new element to explain the Chile-China relation. This element is trust, and its feature is being a cultural one. However, although she defines that trust is not a traditional hard variable but a

novel soft-cultural variable, she claims that it has a calculative nature determined by national interests. This formulation entails some problems that deserve to be discussed.

There is a paradox in Labarca's argument because she articulates a soft-cultural variable like trust with its supposedly hard-calculative nature. This paradox makes her argument contestable as long as it is not possible to be absolutely certain that a cultural variable has nature, a transcendental being, and that such nature is constituted by pragmatism and power asymmetry. This viewpoint contradicts the constructivist approach, which is one of the theoretical foundations of Labarca's work. Following Martha Finnemore, the calculative nature of trust does not coincide with the constructivist principle that rejects the possibility that cultural practices, norms of behaviour and social values "can be derived from calculations of interests" (Finnemore 1996, 15).

Second, instead of defining pragmatism, Labarca uses this concept as a reified fact in the same way the rest of the literature has previously done. In other words, the relationship would be pragmatic because previous texts have stressed so, independently whether such texts have or not defined, explained and assessed pragmatism in the relationship ("Domínguez, 2006, pp 35-37; Montalva & Navia, 2007," cited by Labarca 2012, 140).

Third, Labarca's argument of power asymmetry is contradictory with her soft variable approach. She relates political asymmetry to Chile's acquiescence to the One China Policy. This relation entails the theoretical assumption that China is willing to constrain Chile by any means of power, including economic ones. From this point of view, rather than representing an approach centred on ideas that criticises hard variables, the use of power asymmetry appears quite close to North American neo-realism that theorises the so-called 'China's rise' (Mearsheimer 2014; Waltz 2011; Mearsheimer 2006). Hence, Labarca

reproduces somehow the same material-objectivist views that characterise Chile-China literature that she initially criticises.

Conclusions

Most of the Sino-Chilean literature characterises the FTA as a pragmatic international outcome whose constitution derives from material factors' causality. In this chapter, I showed that this explanation is unsatisfactory.

Firstly, the chapter tried to identify the moment that signals the beginning of Chile-China's pragmatism. However, this problem remains unsolved because some claim pragmatism was born together with Chile-China's diplomatic ties in 1970, while others claim that, when started, Chile-China's relations were deeply ideological. Most texts advocate for the teleological character of pragmatism. In this context, some claim that pragmatism originated in 1970, while others claim that it was in the late seventies' parallel economic reforms. A small number of studies do not agree with the teleological view and claim that pragmatic practices overcome circumstantial obstacles.

Many texts characterise the relationship as pragmatic by accounting for Chile's foreign policy instead of accounting for Chile's and China's foreign policies. A small number of texts have studied China's foreign policy towards Chile (or Latin America), and no single study has addressed the issue of pragmatism in China's foreign policy towards Chile.

Secondly, a common argument is that China's appetite for Chile's copper would determine the existence of a de-ideologised relationship that pursues economic agreements pragmatically. Following this assumption, if the material world would thoroughly

determine a bilateral FTA, China would have already signed FTAs with the rest of its Latin American suppliers. However, China has just signed FTAs with Peru and Costa Rica alongside Chile. Moreover, reports of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) observe that trade relations with the rest of Latin American suppliers during the 2000s increased as never before, regardless of the existence of FTAs (e.g. Rosales and Kuwayama 2012; ECLAC 2015).

Thus, the most prominent finding to emerge from this literature review is that no single study has thus far resolved the pragmatism/ideology dilemma in Chile-China relations. Consequently, these texts do not address the political character of the relationship. Following Derrida's hauntology, one could suggest that because the spectre of ideology is haunting scholarly texts, many have tried to conceal its presence unsuccessfully by appealing to the materiality of natural resources and claiming that these determine a foundational moment of pragmatism.

In the next chapter, I will draw attention to the categories of materialism and idealism in International Relations Theory (IRT) to see how these ontological categories provide answers to explain the role of natural resources and ideas in the constitution of international outcomes and whether this ontology is suitable to account for Chile-China relations.

CHAPTER 2

Material factors and ideas in IRT: Do Chile-China relations fit mainstream ontology?

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I showed that the literature of the Sino-Chilean relationship reveals the inconsistency of those discourses articulated around the positivist belief in the causality of material factors and the taken-for-granted idea of pragmatism. Put differently, bringing material factors to the front could help us to show that China is Chile's first consumer of raw materials, such as copper, in the same way that it could be possible to show that China is the first consumer of other natural resources around the world; however, material factors and pragmatism do not help us to explain why Chile was the first individual country in the world to sign a Free Trade Agreement with the PRC.

I also showed that the literature suggests that certain ideal factors, such as shared liberal premises, have played a causal role in the generation of ground-breaking commitments. However, these claims have not been thoroughly justified so far. In fact, this sensibility has been attached to material-centred discourses insofar as they reaffirm the pragmatic and calculative nature of the relationship.

In what follows, I will analyse the categories of materialism and idealism in the field of IRT. Regarding the inconsistencies of the material-centred academic discourse and the incipient non-material sensibility toward the relationship between Chile and China, my purpose is to interrogate whether the categories of materialism and idealism theorised by

some of the leading IRT scholars can solve such inconsistencies and gaps. In doing so, I will focus on the realist tradition (classical realism and neorealism), liberal institutionalism,⁴ and the constructivist tradition known as middle ground constructivism, which draws upon the ontological premises of Roy Bhaskar's critical realism.⁵

I argue that these categories do not solve these problems nor fill the gaps because these theories assume ontological premises that reduce the discursive field of international relations to essentialist accounts carried out by positivist-empirical and normative approaches. In other words, I show that these categories are formulated within an ontology that foregrounds the peace-war dilemma as well as concepts such as power, competence and anarchy. This ontology does not provide satisfactory answers regarding a trans-Pacific and non-competitive relationship such as the Chilean-Chinese one. In this inquiry, I will also disclose the irreducible and essentialist notion of causality, which these approaches employ to formulate explanations by applying the scientific-positivist mode of reasoning. In this sense, I will explain that the essentialist conception of causality carried out by

⁴ By focusing on liberal institutionalism, I am not suggesting - explicitly or implicitly - that this theory represents the entire liberal tradition in IR. In contrast, I aim to reveal the ontological premises of one of the most influential liberal approaches within the IR liberal tradition, which, in the end, do not differ from the ontology we observe in other liberal approaches. For instance, Moravcsik explains liberalism is a family of methods that start from specific hypotheses. He differentiates liberal institutionalism from ideational liberalism, commercial liberalism and republican liberalism. Besides, he also mentions the democratic peace theory. However, as he stresses, all these traditions - including his attempt to formulate a liberal theory based upon states' preferences - rely on causal mechanisms and, more importantly regarding my purpose, assing this characteristic to ideas (See Moravcsik 1997).

⁵ By middle ground constructivism I refer to the constructivist tradition that relies on Roy Bhaskar's philosophy of science. This tradition is mostly represented by Alexander Wendt's social theory of international relations. There are other excellent constructivist works using critical realism such as Kurki, Milja. (2008) *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (analysed in Chapter 3) and Wight, Colin. (2006). *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. In this subsection, I focus on Wendt's international theory at the expense of other constructivist venues that depart from different philosophical sources such as Bourdieu, Wittgenstein and Habermass, such as the works by Nicholas Onuf and Friedrich Kratochwil. I will address this second constructivist tradition when formulating my post-Marxist approach to international practices in Chapter 5.

rational theory and critical realism does not contribute to finding a solution to the instabilities of the Sino-Chilean academic discourse.

This chapter defines the notion of causality of material factors and ideas according to the Sino-Chilean literature. In this part, I also formulate the main questions that arise from the problematisation of these concepts. Secondly, I explain the categories of materialism and idealism according to realist, liberal and constructivist traditions. Finally, I explain why these ontological categories do not fill the explanatory gaps left by the specialised literature to explain the pioneering character of the Chilean-Chinese relationship.

1. Material factors and ideas in China-Chile relations

Recalling the upshots of Chapter 1, we have that material and ideal factors represent basic categories to differentiate natural resources from beliefs and ideas. They are two types of causes articulated to explain international outcomes. In this view, some events are explained with reference to ‘material causes’ or ‘ideational causes’ or some combination thereof.

It is within this explanatory framework that material factors emerge as the primary cause of pioneering agreements. Namely, natural resources foremost explain the good pace of the relationship since Chile and China are a producer and a consumer of copper, respectively. A good number of authors have called this correlation between producer and consumer as economic complementarities. In turn, the causal effect of material factors has been articulated with the idea of a pragmatic relationship.

Therefore, what is generally assumed by the literature is that the pioneering engagement experienced by the Sino-Chilean relationship is pragmatic because of

economic complementarities that are determined by the exchange of natural resources.

Table 1 provides examples of scholarly texts that highlight this kind of argument.

Table 1. Examples of explanations using material factors

Factor	Explanation
• Copper	“Chile’s greatest appeal for East Asia is basically its natural resources (copper). This is most clearly seen in the case of China” (Dingemans 2014, 75).
• Copper	"It is clear which Latin American countries are significant to China: Brazil, because of its vast potential, iron, soy production and other agricultural products [...] Chile and Peru because of copper" (Artaza 2007, 65).
• Copper and raw materials	China “has enormous necessities of natural resources [...] Chile [...] has copper and other raw materials and food which are highly demanded by China” (Zhang 2006, 115).

Besides this discourse centred on material causes, the same corpus suggests, to a lesser extent, some ideal factors which would also have a causal role. However, no study has addressed this non-material enquiry in-depth so far. In effect, although there exist some studies about non-material factors (C. Labarca 2012a), these studies reinforce the very material-centred discourse of pragmatism. Table 2 provides some examples of texts which suggest the presence of non-material factors in the development of the relationship.

Table 2. Examples of explanations using ideas as factors

Factor	Explanation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market identity 	<p>“Chile engaged with both strategies⁶ by narrowing China’s identity to a market opportunity and embracing the FTA as a commercial opportunity, in this way becoming an example of China’s benign influence on the region” (Labarca 2013, 506).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common belief in free markets 	<p>“Both countries adopted similar reforms concurrently. Despite being internationally isolated, Chile and China’s embrace of free-market policies made it easier for the two governments to find common ground” (Montalva and Navia 2006, 4).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parallel economic reforms 	<p>“Above all, the reforms that both countries implemented in the 1970 decade established the bases to the rise of economic and commercial demands.” (Sun 2011, Kindle Loc. 5953-5955)</p>

Regarding these definitions of material and ideal factors, several questions present themselves: What are material and ideal approaches in IRT? To what extent do the claims about the constitution of the Sino-Chilean as a ‘pragmatic’ relation reflect these ontological assumptions? Also, what does theoretical framework better satisfy an understanding of the pioneering engagement between Chile and China?

⁶ The author explains that China has two strategies in its policy towards Latin America. First, China reshaped its identity by highlighting the economic dimension of its rise as “a market opportunity”. Second, China had the purpose to create an institutional framework for its economic relations with Latin American countries (Labarca 2013, 497-505).

2. Material factors and ideas in mainstream IRT

Because of the overwhelming influence of the realist tradition and its positivist-empirical methods of analysis, material factors have been more decisive than ideas⁷ to explain international phenomena. Rather than focusing on ideas, culture or psychological features, the realist paradigm privileges a reductionist notion of the state and national interest, whose natural necessity is the outweighing of its competitors whether this be with regards to natural resources, military power, industrial prowess, population or territory.

Some conceptions about non-material factors were already present among certain scholars immediately after World War II, portrayed as the psychological feature of power (Pear 1950; Kennan, 1947b; Morgenthau 1993). However, more consistent studies about non-material factors and ideas as the causes of international outcomes appear since the eighties, especially among liberal-institutionalists and constructivists.

2.1. Material factors in IRT

The realism paradigm and liberal institutionalism predominantly recognise concerns about material factors as causal mechanisms that create power; from which it prevails a discourse that highlights a utilitarian and individualist conception of international relations.

⁷ I understand idealism as a logic of causality or consequences which conceives socially shared ideas as causes of international outcomes. I do not mean, therefore, the classical IR school broadly recognised by Woodrow Wilson's fourteen points and principled-guided behaviour.

2.1.1. Classical realism and neorealism

In classical realism, a researcher gives meaning to international politics phenomena by defining power and the elements of states' national power. Concerning the concept of power, Morgenthau defines it in a quite non-material way as "man's control over the minds and actions of other men" (Morgenthau 1993, 30). The elements of national power, in turn, are those factors that constitute the magnitude of power a state has in comparison with another state. Morgenthau makes a distinction between stable and unstable elements. Among them, we find the meaning of material factors in stable elements. Thus, material factors are geography, natural resources - in which he includes food and raw materials - industrial capacity, military preparedness - in which he considers technology and leadership or the art of managing warfare - and quantity and quality of armed forces.

Morgenthau also distinguishes material factors within what he calls human factors. Among human factors, he differentiates stable material factors such as population size, its distribution and trends, from unstable non-material factors such as the national character and the national morale (Morgenthau 1993, 124-154).

According to Morgenthau, natural resources work under the rule that "a country that is self-sufficient, or nearly self-sufficient, has a great advantage over a nation that is not and must be able to import" the stuff it does not have. Consequently, a permanent scarcity of natural resources is "a source of permanent weakness in international politics" (Morgenthau 1993, 127). Particularly noteworthy in this definition is the relation that Morgenthau articulates between raw materials and the mechanisation of warfare. Changes in technology lead to raw materials, such as uranium and oil, becoming more critical than others militarily. For example, in past times when an atomic war was latent, nations that

controlled uranium rose their power over countries that did not control it. However, uranium was not an element of power on its own, as long as a state might also have the technological capacity to produce nuclear weapons (Morgenthau 1993, 133).

Even though Morgenthau's definition of power has been an issue of contention by neorealist scholars, it is worth noting that there is a standard view in the whole realist tradition about how material factors give meaning to this concept. For instance, in his neorealist theory, John Mearsheimer criticises Morgenthau's idea that power is the search for controlling others' minds or influencing other states. At the same time, he coincides with Morgenthau when defining the nature of the elements that create power. Mearsheimer defines power as "material resources that are available to a state." Consequently, the material is the basis of states' power (Mearsheimer 2014, Kindle loc. 1125).

For neorealists, the focus on the availability of material resources has a practical end since international politics should not depend on uncertainties given by non-material factors. For instance, according to Mearsheimer, non-material factors are the strategy, the intelligence activities or the weather, which are characterised by their unpredictability to determine both the balance of power and international outcomes (Mearsheimer, 2014, Kindle loc. 1136-1142).

Mearsheimer's definition of power considers wealth as the most critical material factor, followed by the population. States with small populations cannot be great military powers; however, to have only a large population does not straightforwardly mean that a state is powerful either. For example, countries with large populations such as India, Nigeria, Brazil and Indonesia, do not have enough power to compete with the United States. Thus, wealth is more determinant than population because it "incorporates both the demographic and the economic dimensions of power [...] wealth does require a large

population.” In addition, Mearsheimer’s conception of wealth contains two other notions: technological development and mobilizable wealth. These elements are the resources the state disposes to build military forces (Mearsheimer, 2014, Kindle loc. 1185-1212).

2.1.2. Liberal institutionalism

Contrary to realism and neorealism, in liberal institutionalism, material and ideal factors matter to the same degree (Goldstein and Keohane 1993). Paraphrasing Morgenthau, we can affirm that liberal approaches pay attention to the stability of material factors and the instability of non-material ones as well. The epistemological outcome of this dual concern is that liberal scholars do not disregard realist assumptions about material forces; on the contrary, they accept them but only by broadening the explanatory framework through the involvement of more factors such as ideas and institutions. As Keohane says, the problem is not whether material factors or ideas matter but the way they matter (R. Keohane, O. 2000).

Joseph Nye’s famous distinction between hard and soft power is a clear example of the interplay that material and non-material forces have in international relations. Namely, while military coercion and payments are forms of material forces, attraction and persuasion represent the non-material dimension of international politics (Nye 2015, 2004). Indeed, Nye portrays the use of military force as the stick whilst economic incentives are the carrots, two material objects. In this sense, hard power is the essential facet of power represented by military and economic means that help a country to get its international outcomes by forcing other states to change their behaviour through the use of physical forces (Nye 2004, 5-14).

2.2. Ideas as factors in IRT

Although the concern about non-material factors is present in post-WWII years as the psychological variable that helps to explain the war/peace dichotomy, it is in the eighties when scholars start paying attention to ideas more consistently. In these years, a disciplinary debate emerged in the United States. On the one hand, positivist theories such as realist and liberal approaches which relied on positivist philosophy of science and empirical methods of analysis. On the other, post-positivist approaches such as constructivism and what was called then as post-modernism. This side of the debate started from a common criticism to positivist-empiricism, its essentialist assumptions and idealization of the analyst as a neutral observer; however, their philosophical grounds were different since constructivism was chiefly founded on the premises of critical realism while the second trend was inspired by the philosophy of authors such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, Martin Heidegger, Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida (among other philosophical traditions). The importance given to ideas as factors that matter in international relations appears in this context.

2.2.1. Realist approaches to war in the post-World War II years

The fact that neorealism only pays attention to material factors does not necessarily mean that classical realism shares the same feature. It is worth noting that Morgenthau's theory recognises the presence of non-material elements in world politics. Let us remember his definition of power as the psychological domination of an individual over others. A second non-material element he also includes is the ideology and its role in foreign policy. Influenced by Mannheim, Morgenthau argues that ideologies have the role of disguising the

power ambitions of states. In this sense, political leaders use ideologies to get national support to accomplish the realistic goals of their foreign policies (Morgenthau 1993, 99-111).

Morgenthau's idea about the psychological feature of power is not an isolated concern in post-WWII years. In 1947, for example, George Kennan wrote about how Marxism-Leninism shaped Soviet leaders' psychology in his essay signed with the pseudonym "X." But, it was T. H. Pear who, in 1950, developed a more consistent notion of psychological factors in international conflicts. Pear aimed to contest the ambition of copying the model of the natural sciences to find universal and stable laws of international relations. He criticises "the almost obsolete idea of war as a biological necessity [...] as well as the belief or slogan that modern warfare [...] is due to human aggressiveness" (Pear 1971, 13). He also uses the notion of "patterns" as "the particular selection of potential human purposes that any particular society employs." Regarding this definition, Pear conditions peace and war to cultural patterns because they represent two poles of an axis governed by a general principle of coherence. Accordingly, culture determines consistent patterns in societies by the existence of "customs, institutions, dogmas, the sentiments, interests, and values" (Pear 1971, 22).

2.2.2. Liberal institutionalism

The influence of Morgenthau on certain liberal scholars who have theorised international relations is patent regarding his definition of power. For example, in *Soft Power*, Nye defines this concept almost as Morgenthau had written fifty years before. Power is "the ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes one wants [or] the ability to

shape the preferences of others,” Nye says (2004, 2-5). From this Morgenthauian conception of power as a psychological phenomenon, Nye formulates his concept of soft power regarding non-tangible elements such as attraction and seduction. Thus, the attention paid by liberal scholars to soft factors represents an effort to develop a liberal version of classical realism.

Keohane’s texts are crucial to understanding the role of ideas in international relations. We can synthesise his contribution to this issue in three texts. Firstly, his speech before the ISA, in which he refers to the rise of a new debate in the discipline between traditional approaches (the realist and liberal paradigms) and its critics who propose the use of post-positivist frameworks such as constructivism, poststructuralism and feminism. Keohane named this development of two schools of thought as the debate between rationalism and reflectivism (R.O. Keohane 1988).

The second text is *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, edited together with Judith Goldstein (1993). Two matters are at stake in this book. First, the rise of neorealism and its complete dismissal of ideas as explanatory factors. Second, the necessity of delimitating the liberal-institutionalist views about ideas from the reflectivist trend which had just emerged in the eighties.

The third text is *Ideas part-way down*, Keohane’s (2000) review of Wendt’s *Social Theory of International Politics* (1998). According to him, Wendt’s book is particularly important regarding the debate between rationalism and reflectivism since it narrows the frontier between the former and constructivism, creating a theoretical “middle ground.” For instance, Wendt not only recognises the reality of the state and the state system but also conceives constructivism as a scientific theory. Keohane thus separates constructivism from the rest of the post-positivist approaches insofar as “one does not have to swallow the

contaminated epistemological water of postmodernism in order to enjoy the heady ontological wine of constructivism” (Keohane 2000, 129).

In all these texts, Keohane reiterates his premise that ideas, as well as material factors, have the same role of causality in giving rise to international outcomes. His most basic conception of ideas is that they are beliefs held by individuals; then, he advances toward a more sophisticated definition of the term by classifying it into three types: worldviews, principled beliefs, and causal beliefs. The first two relate the notion of the collective knowledge of a social group. While religion and scientific rationalism are examples of worldviews, normative beliefs, such as human rights and freedom of speech are examples of principled beliefs. The third kind of ideas is not only determined by a group’s common knowledge, but also by the knowledge about others that that very group already has. Keohane affirms that it is the knowledge about others which demonstrates the causal logic of ideas in international relations. Specifically, when a social group knows the ideas of another social group, it is possible to know whether cooperation is a possible outcome or not.

Keohane’s most significant contribution to this issue is that ideas have an instrumental role in international relations. His premise is that ideas generate outcomes, and the first outcome is cooperation. In this sense, this author identifies three types of causal mechanisms. The first one is ideas as roadmaps. Namely, ideas provide the elite with guidance to determine their preferences. Second, ideas can affect strategies to facilitate cooperation among elites or cohesion under specific circumstances. Finally, ideas can

become embedded in institutions; the elite can institutionalise ideas as norms and, in that way, it is possible to affect actors' decisions and constrain their incentives⁸.

Although a premise of this sort had already been formulated by authors such as Kennan (1947), Morgenthau (1993) and Pears (1971), Keohane fleshes it out with the scientific language of rational approach. A scholar that follows these positivist tenets is Mark Haas (2005), who assumes ideology as a variable that policymakers must consider when they make decisions concerning the state security. In other words, by controlling this variable, "leaders should be able to predict" when other states are either willing to cooperate or behave more assertive (Haas 2005, 3).

3. Constructivist approach and the role of ideas

Constructivists have considerably contributed to the re-valorisation of the notion of ideas in IR since they assume that states are socially constructed by inter-subjectivities that feature a social group who share common beliefs. Moreover, people's common beliefs give meaning to material factors and explain states' actions. As Fierke (2013, 188) says, constructivists "have shared a critique of the static material assumptions of traditional IR theory;" thus, contrary to realist premises, the interests of states are not given by nature but are themselves social constructions.

Besides, constructivists have contributed to broadening the scope of the debate between realists and liberals; among them, Martha Finnemore, Peter Katzenstein, Kathryn Sikkink, Chris Reus-Smit, and Karin Fierke. But, above all, Alexander Wendt has enjoyed the

⁸ Similarly, Andrew Moravcsik's liberal theory links causal mechanisms to social preferences and state's behaviour. In this sense, one causal mechanism is defined by ideational liberalism that "stresses the impact on state behaviour of conflict and compatibility among collective social values or identities concerning the scope and nature of public goods provision." (Moravcsik 1997, 515).

highest impact because of his contribution to setting the ground to articulate rational tenets in a constructivist language (Keohane 2000, 125). Wendt's approach, built upon critical realist ontology, represents a moderate version of constructivism, a middle-ground between material and rational-choice approaches and radical post-modernist accounts (Wendt 1999, 1).

In *Social Theory of International Politics*, Wendt (1999, 24-25) offers not only a clear distinction between idealism as a social theory concept and the normative international relations paradigm called 'Idealism' but also between materialism and idealism when considering social theory tenets.

Firstly, regarding idealism as a social theory concept versus the Idealist paradigm, Wendt explains that the former is a scientific view of how the world is and not of how the world must be. In this sense, idealism is as realistic as materialism. Moreover, contrary to the Idealist paradigm, idealism is as pessimistic as materialism. It does not believe that human beings are inherently good, nor social relations as inherently cooperative. In this sense, Wendt seriously accepts the influence of Kenneth Waltz and his assumption of the anarchical structure of the international system.

Secondly, regarding idealism as a social theory concept versus materialism, Wendt explains that while the latter focuses on facts that are related to the material world out there, the former focuses on social facts. Social facts are shared ideas that can be external to certain individual actors but not external to society. Contrary to the static premises of materialism, idealism believes that social change is possible though not easy. Despite recognising that power and interests are essential to both idealism and materialism, Wendt affirms that their meaning and effects depend on actors' ideas. For example, US military power means one thing to Canada and another thing to Cuba (Wendt 1999, 24-25). Finally,

analysts who draw on material factors privilege causal relations, while analysts who focus on ideal elements privilege constitutive relations.

The difference between Keohane's approach to ideas and Wendt's idealism is that while the former conceives ideas as causal mechanisms, the latter understands that ideas have a constitutive role. However, despite this ontological distinction, Wendt's theory does not reject positivism as such (Fierke, 2013) nor the basic tenets of the rational approach (Keohane, 2000). In other words, although Wendt's theory is not rational-empirical, it is positivist because it assumes that there are unobservable real elements, such as the state, the international structure and the forces which explain state behaviours such as power and interests. Following the same line of argument, Milja Kurki also claims that causes are unobservable real elements (see Chapter 3).

Wendt thus purports to develop a realist scientific approach to explain international politics by applying a traditional epistemology represented by his state-centric theory. However, at the same time, he also seeks to define a new ontology by affirming that shared beliefs represent the social construction of all these elements. For instance, while he does not reject the idea that power and interests primarily determine social facts in international relations, he argues that such elements are not given by nature but are constituted by social ideas.

To articulate his scientific approach, Wendt relies on an external reality which is constituted by ideas through the agents' capacity of language. Thus, his approach starts, for instance, by the baptism of a new element, which exists in the external reality, with a name and meaning. Then, such a new element starts a process of socialisation and learning (Wendt 1999, 57-71). For these reasons, Wendt's constructivism constitutes a middle ground between traditional positivism and post-positivism since it understands the role of

ideas in the international structure as a logic of consequences (Fierke, 2013). The constitution of something (power, interests, and institutions) by non-material means represents the result, or the consequence, of the role that shared ideas play in social relations.

4. To what extent does the Sino-Chilean relation reflect mainstream IRT ontology?

We have hitherto studied the categories of materialism and idealism according to the realist paradigm (classical realism and neorealism), the liberal institutionalism and the constructivist school founded on critical realism. For realists, international relations are basically constituted by material factors as they are essential for industrial production and for waging war; thereby their role consists in generating power to counterbalance the power of other states. Liberals affirm that international outcomes are not only the result of material factors, but also of ideas as long as they help to constraint the anarchical character of the international structure; thus, the more desirable outcome according to liberal theory is cooperation. Both realism and liberalism foreground causal mechanisms to define the role of either material or ideal factors. Constructivists, in turn, explain international relations essentially in terms of ideas. As ideas have no causal role but a constitutive one, constructivists propose a different ontology in which international elements (such as power, the state, interests, and the international structure) are socially constructed.

Now we will turn to an analysis of whether these theoretical frameworks are applicable or not to our case of study. Regarding materialism, we saw that although rational approaches and constructivism differ on ontological definitions, there exists a consensus

about the role that material factors play in international politics. Material factors, either as given real objects or as objects of social meaning, represent the foundation of a pessimist view of the international structure. The more material resources the state has, the more powerful is the state. The scarcity of raw materials leads to competition and a struggle for power, whether this be true through militaristic or industrial means.

Therefore, it would be within this discourse where we should articulate elements such as copper, cooperation, pragmatism, Chile and China. Accordingly, China would need Chilean copper to increase its power in relation to its competitors, such as the United States. Meanwhile, Chile would be a sort of battlefield where powers struggle to seize the Chilean 'booty.' This line of argument is present in the texts of North American analysts, especially those who have worked along with the US South Command (SOUTHCOM) and think-tanks specialised on Latin America such as the Inter-American Dialogue (e.g. Domínguez, 2006; Ellis 2012; Paz, 2014). The debate in this literature is about a 'triangular relation' or the consequences of the presence of China in the US backyard. However, this discourse does not support the chief claim we found in our literature review; the assumption that Chile is China's pioneer.

Considering idealism, ideas as causal mechanisms are elaborated within the confines of thought on Western-European states. For instance, Haas (2005) studies the role of ideologies regarding the struggle for power in Europe. However, this causal mechanism does not represent an approach to exploring international contexts within the West or Europe. The only exception is that we assume in advance that states from other regions behave according to the same pattern consisting of ideas causality. For example, it would be plausible to study the ideological variable in the long-standing competition between Chile, Peru and Bolivia in the Atacama-Pacific region or the rivalry between Chile and

Argentina in Tierra del Fuego. Similarly, one could also analyse the relations of China with some of its neighbours such as Japan, Russia, India, as well as its relations with the US.

However, this causal mechanism is not helpful to analyse Chile-China relations because they are neither struggling against each other for power nor perceiving each other regarding military threat perceptions. In other words, as the mainstream of IRT is built on the axis of cooperation-conflict or the peace-war dilemma, ideas play a different role than the one claimed in the literature of Sino-Chilean relations. Namely, ideas do not constitute a causal logic of conflict, war, or security perceptions; hence, for example, in the late seventies, these countries increased their ideological differences without experiencing any conflict or high perceptions of threat. What is more, in the eighties, they moved on to increase their cooperation whilst maintaining ideological differences.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I showed the problems which arise when we try to explain Chile's pioneering role for China's relations with Latin America through the categories of materialism and idealism in mainstream IRT.

Regarding materialism, we saw that although rational approaches and constructivism differ on ontological definitions, there exists a consensus about the role that material factors play in world politics. Material factors, either as given real objects or as objects of social meaning, represent the foundation of a pessimist view of an international structure in which the scarcity of raw materials leads to competition and a struggle for power (Morgenthau, 1993; Mearsheimer, 2006; Wendt, 1998; Keohane, 2000). It would be within this discourse where we should articulate elements such as copper, cooperation,

pragmatism, Chile and China. That is, China would need Chilean copper to increase its power in relation to the United States. Meanwhile, Chile would be a sort of battlefield where powers struggle to seize the Chilean booty. This view, which realist IR literature defines as the triangular relation, does not explain the unparalleled experiences that characterise the Sino-Chilean relation since 1970.

Considering idealism, states can engage in conflict because of ideological differences; in contrast, states can increase their cooperation as a result of shared beliefs. However, these assumptions do not represent a reliable approach to explain relations between Chile and China. As we noted in Chapter 1, although it could be reasonable to think on the Sino-Chilean cooperation regarding common ideas anchored in expressions such as ‘parallel economic liberalisations,’ such cooperation is not pursued in order to avoid military conflict. Moreover, we have seen that different sets of ideas do not constitute a causal logic of conflict, war, or security perceptions between Chile and China. Thus, for example, in the 1970s, we see that the relationship experienced hard political differences between Allende’s socialist Chile and Mao’s socialist China. Then, in the 1980s, we see that the relation prospered between Pinochet’s anti-communist Chile and Deng’s communist China. Finally, in the 1990s and 2000s, we see that Chile, the most excel model of both neoliberalism and transition to democracy, is eager to engage with a communist and authoritarian regime like China.

In the next chapter, I will introduce post-structuralism and post-Marxism and explain how the latter proposes ontological assumptions to overcome the materialism/idealism duality.

CHAPTER 3

Post-Marxist Discourse Theory: How to overcome the causality of material factors and ideas in Chile-China relations?

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that the ontology of mainstream IRT does not provide us with satisfactory answers to understand why Chile became China's pioneer in Latin America. Regarding China, this framework mainly represents the way the IRT mainstream understands the US relationships with China in an objectivist scenario of power competition. However, the competition for international power does not allow us to understand the Sino-Chilean relationship. What is more, if we apply mainstream IRT tenets to this issue, we would fall into the trap of analysing the competition between China and the US in Latin America, thus, resigning our intention to take account of Chile's agency to undertake its foreign policy in the Pacific basin.

My purpose in this chapter is to justify that PDT represents the type of approach that can help me to account for Chile-China relations. I argue that PDT replaces the closure of causal explanations, based on materialism and idealism, with the notion of *the instability of objects* which is contingently articulated within discursive practices. This ontological definition was proposed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1990) in order to

overcome the essentialist feature of the materialism/idealism conundrum. I also flesh out my argument by contrasting PDT with Roy Bhaskar's critical realism (CR), which is the philosophy of science that supports the ontological tenets of what Keohane calls middle-ground constructivism, which is primarily represented by Alexander Wendt's works.

In the first section, I examine the philosophical origins of the empirical-positivist foundations of IRT and its principle of causality of materialism and idealism. Then, I move on to describe the main characteristics of PDT and explain the instability of objects as the ontological category that resolves the idealism/materialism dilemma. In the third section, I contrast the philosophical principles of PDT with those of CR to finalize my argument of why PDT is a suitable approach to account for Chile-China relations.

1. Deconstructing the principle of causality of material factors and ideas in IRT

In rational IRT, the categories of material and ideal factors are related to positivist approaches. In general terms, positivist IR theories assume that scientifically tested causes explain agents' actions, which, in turn, contribute to predicting outcomes and controlling behaviour.

Positivist approaches correspond to mainstream theories of realist and liberal traditions, which dominate the discipline in term of knowledge production (Campbell 2013; George 1994; Reus-Smit 2009). The predominance of positivist approaches leads to the creation of specific knowledge about what the world is and how it works. According to Kurki and Wight (2013), positivism determines the types of questions that count as valid as well as the types of evidence that count as the sources of valid knowledge.

Critics of this philosophy of science highlight that positivists formulate problems by conceiving that the world is a given reality made of tangible and concrete objects which are observed by given subjects (Campbell 2013; George 1994; Smith 2013). The source of knowledge for positivist IRT is the sensory experience of a reality comprising the material and measurable things which are assessed by a neutral observer (Campbell 2013, 227; Kurki and Wight 2013, 20). Positivists claim that “scientific knowledge emerges only with the collection of observable data,” which in turn lead to the identification of patterns and then the formulation of laws (Kurki and Wight 2013, 18).

As we noted in the previous chapter, Keohane (1988) denominates this style of knowledge as rationalism, which he opposes to reflectivism. However, he was not the only scholar who was keen on this meta-theoretical debate. Steve Smith and Martin Hollis distinction between explaining and understanding is crucial for this debate (Kurki and Wight 2013). These precepts come from Max Weber’s distinction between *Erklären* (causal explanation proper to natural science) and *Verstehen* (understanding proper to social science) which allow us to differentiate scientific approach from the hermeneutic approach (Hollis and Smith 1991; Kurki and Wight 2013; Fierke 2013).

“Explaining” represents the intention to emulate natural sciences. Through the scientific method, scientists look for laws and general causes of the world they see. This method means that things are measured (i.e. quantitative methods quantify qualitative data) constituting what a community of scientists recognises as valid knowledge. The authors affirm that this image responds to a Newtonian picture of science, namely “nature as a mechanical system of causes and effects, driven by invisible forces and governed by ineluctable laws” (Hollis and Smith 1991, 46).

“Understanding” is related to the role of language in social relations. What happens in the social world has a meaning which is given by social actors. Actions, like words, have public meanings governed by rules, and they take place because of intentions and motives (Hollis and Smith 1991, 68-70). From this viewpoint, the purpose of IRT is to find the meaning of international actors’ actions (Hollis and Smith 1991, 70).

Hollis and Smith discuss Max Weber’s notion of hermeneutics and Peter Winch’s idea of social science. Regarding the former, the observer figures out the meaning of social actions by knowing the institutions that govern the action in a socially defined game as well as the reasons by which the agent acts in such a game (Hollis and Smith 1991, 68-72). Weber conceives social actions as “the calculated means to an end.” So, as we can see in the postulates of rational approaches such as game theory (e.g. Bueno de Mesquita 2010), a social action essentially means that “the agent never makes an inferior choice” when the alternative has a higher expected utility (Hollis and Smith 1991, 75-76). In this sense, George (1994, 18-22) observes that Weberian hermeneutics is an illusory alternative insofar as “Verstehen approaches, like Weber’s (and Morgenthau’s), represent the other side of the positivist coin and lie at the heart of the orthodox consensus in the backward discipline of International Relations” (George 1994, 21).

Hollis and Smith see an alternative approach in Peter Winch’s idea of social science. Inspired by Wittgenstein, Winch criticises the idea that what we know “is for something to be ‘real’ and for someone to ‘understand it.’” On the contrary, he asserts that to be real is to “satisfy criteria for being real which belong to some social practice or institution.” Examples of institutions with particular organised practices are religions, scientific communities and national cultures. In sum, Winch affirms that “to learn about the world is to learn the rules of the institution” (Hollis and Smith 1991, 82-83).

The upshot of this view is that meanings are subjective meanings whereas choices like rational choices depend on such institutional framework of practices. In other words, contrary to notions such as the search of universal laws, what we know by rational choices are expressions of subjective meanings and practices which reflect particular forms of social relations. As Hollis and Smith point out, “social relations are expressions of ideas about reality” (Hollis and Smith 1991, 83).

2. The instability of objects: Materialism and Idealism in Post-Marxist Discourse Theory

I have hitherto explained the way in which mainstream IRT mostly appertain to positivist tenets, especially causal mechanisms, to conceive of the material and the ideal. Now I will turn to post-structuralism. Specifically, I consider PDT developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe and their approach to these same categories.

2.1. Discourse as a meaningful social space

To begin with, poststructuralist IR conceives discourse as the core of its analysis. At first glance, this focus could lead us to the understanding that poststructuralism is an idealist approach; that the attention to language solely means focusing on the *parole* instead of “the external, the real and the material” (Campbell 2013, 235). However, as David Campbell (2013, 235) stresses, “a concern with discourse does not involve a denial of the world’s existence,” but the consideration of the ideal and the material in a performative fashion. For example, in the international sphere, states are formed by a range of discursive practices

such as immigration policies, military deployments, economic investments, trade, or culture. Each of these performances of the state includes both material and ideal categories.

In contrast to constructivism, poststructuralists affirm that the material is not external to discourse. Campbell explains this argument by challenging Wendt who observed that: “[N]o discursive understanding can help you when faced with something as material as a bullet in the head.” Poststructuralists respond to this observation by affirming that although the external world exists apart from language, its elements and the world do not represent anything on their own (Campbell 2013, 235-236). In Wendt’s statement, then, the materiality of the bullet in the head or the body lied on the ground are not put into doubt. But, at the same time, the meanings associated with them depend on contexts thereby they do not exist outside of particular discourses.

The latter point could tentatively lead us to affirm that the elements which are outside of a discourse have no meaning at all. To solve this problem, PDT differentiates this kind of assumption from the efficacy that the surplus of meaning elements already possess to constitute and destabilise discourses. To understand this idea better (I will broaden it in Chapter 6), let us resume the definition of discourse, this time following Laclau and Mouffe (2014):

[W]e will call articulation any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice, we will call discourse. The differential positions, insofar as they appear articulated within a discourse, we will call moments. By contrast, we will call element any difference that is not discursively articulated (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 91).

Laclau and Mouffe portray this definition of discourse by using the example of two people constructing a brick wall. Person A asks person B for a brick, then person A adds the brick to the wall. While the first action is linguistic, the second one is extra-linguistic. However, both actions are socially meaningful in that they together form the operation of building a wall. Discourse is thus not only speech but the totality of an act. The assumption that every social configuration is meaningful lead to the authors to establish that discourse is a system of relations which “are not given by the mere referential materiality of the objects, but are, rather, socially constructed” (Laclau and Mouffe 1990a, 100).

To affirm that the materiality of the object does not determine the system of relations does not mean that we must deny the existence of the very object as its existence is independent of its discursive articulation. In the case of the Chilean-Chinese relation, copper is the same physical object either in the bottom of the mine or the international market, “but it is only a commodity within a determinate system of social relations” (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 101). Moreover, the same discourse that articulates copper in this context into a commodity will simultaneously constitute Chile and China as trade partners.

2.2. How does PDT resolve the dilemma of idealism/materialism?

For Laclau and Mouffe, the idealism/materialism conundrum should be resolved in ontological terms. Influenced by Marx, and by assuming the premise that there is nothing meaningful in the mere existence of the material, they propose a definite movement away from idealism by weakening the classical notion of ‘form’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990, 107-111). Weakening the form means that being is “historical, contingent and constructed.”

Thus, Laclau and Mouffe do not conceive of form as a static and stable being but as an unstable being. More precisely, they elaborate the notion of *the instability of the object* or the possibility to reinsert the being “in the ensemble of relational conditions which constitute” the society (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 111). The authors formulate this notion by applying the idea of the unconscious in psychoanalysis, which turns all signification ambiguous, and structuralist linguistics, which enables us to understand the notions of relational meaning and difference.

It is precisely in the context of the elaboration of this notion that Laclau and Mouffe deconstruct the opposition between idealism and materialism. The authors carry out this deconstruction in three steps. First, they inquire about the existence or non-existence of a world of objects external to thought. They affirm that a set of ideas is realist insofar as it does not “put into question the existence of a world external to thought”. From this viewpoint, they declare that their position is “unequivocally realist” (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 106).

Secondly, what distinguishes idealism from materialism is not the existence of a world external to thought but the classical differentiation between form and matter. Plato and Aristotle defined form as the ultimate and most basic thought or idea of an object, thereby it is the “ultimate affirmation of the rationality of the real.” Matter, on the other hand, is the irreducibility of the thing or object to the concept (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 106-107).

Laclau and Mouffe focus on the meaning of the form and conclude that what we know as material approaches, e.g. Marxism, are also fundamentally idealist since they cannot escape from the most basic and ultimate ideas or concepts given to objects. For example, Marx’s law of the motion of history, whose course is determined by material conditions such as the contradiction between the development of productive forces and the relations of

production, is, at its heart, conceptually derived. Therefore, they stress that the reduction of the matter to the concept as its only possibility is essentialism as long as idealism, after all, is the reduction of the matter to the concept (the form).

However, Laclau and Mouffe thirdly conclude that Marx provides a transitional point to move away from idealism. To explain this transition, the authors remind us that Hegel inspired Marx's idea of history as motion. In this sense, the movement is within the form, so the form is not "the reduction of the real to a hierarchical universe of static essences" as we find in Aristotle and Plato (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 109). Consequently, Laclau and Mouffe elaborate their notion of the instability of the object from the conception of form as a movement, which also means the contingent opposition between form and formlessness.

Laclau and Mouffe's proposal to get away from idealism leads us to assume that, if the action of giving meaning to words depends on the context of that very action, then "no discursive totality is absolutely self-contained [...] there will always be an outside which distorts" that very totality and prevents it from a full and definite constitution. Therefore, the form is always "penetrated by a basic instability and precariousness" (Laclau and Mouffe 1990a, 109; D.R. Howarth 2013, 259-260).

3. Post-Marxist Discourse Theory versus Critical Realism

An issue of fundamental importance in my argument that justifies the suitability of post-Marxism to account for Chile-China relations is the necessity of identifying the counterpoints with CR, which is the philosophy of science behind the constructivist trend related to Wendt's work. I focus on Wendt's social theory at the expense of the critical contributions of constructivists such as Nicholas Onuf and Friedrich Kratochwil that draw

on Wittgenstein's philosophy and the linguistic turn in social sciences. I do so because of the influence Wendt's constructivism has reached within international studies. Following Maja Zehfuss (2004, 10-22), who correctly stresses in her distinction of the three kinds of constructivism identified with these three respective names, Wendt is the scholar "credited with popularising the approach" (Zehfuss 2004, 11). This discussion is critical because, as I have shown so far, these approaches are alternative ontologies to positivist empiricism and, therefore, candidates to explain Chile-China relations.

Although PDT and CR agree on rejecting the empirical-positivist philosophy of science as the only valid way to generate knowledge, they disagree about crucial ontological issues. Such disagreements were well defined in a debate between Ernesto Laclau and Roy Bhaskar (1998), in which a critical issue of contention was what and how they understand the intransitivity of objects. While PDT holds that a system of relations, which is always incomplete, determines the contingent meaning of an object, CR defends the intransitivity of certain objects because there is a world out there of thought with its mechanisms which are not necessarily grasped by discursive practices. Thus, for example, while Bhaskar highlights the intransitivity of global warming or cancer because they were in a sense out of thought before the human grasped them by language, Laclau stresses that PDT does not reject the existence of these phenomena out of our thought; but, the way that we know of these phenomena is part of systems of relations which classify the world through discursive practices.

The debate between PDT and CR then is not about the existence of objects, but about the way whereby the objects are or not part of discursive totalities. According to Laclau, if an object is part of a discursive totality, it means that it has several possibilities of being because of the performative function of the discursive practice. In contrast, if we

assume *a priori*, as Bhaskar does, the intransitivity of certain objects, we close their plural dimension as long as we suture their possibilities of being through the sedimentation of a closed and essentialist idealism given by a world which is waiting to be grasped by language.

Let us dig into this last point in the context of IR discipline by analysing constructivist tenets and paying particular attention to the notion of *cause*. Kurki defines cause as something that has “a real existence in the world outside our thought and observations” (Kurki 2006, 201; see also Wendt, 1999, p. 47). Kurki’s approach to cause is particularly interesting regarding that we are assessing the causality of material factors and ideas in the Sino-Chilean relation.

Kurki starts by arguing that IRT scholars have narrowed the meaning of cause to Hume’s conception of cause and the principle of regularity (Kurki 2006, 2007). Hume “argued that when regular successions of types of events have been observed, the mind through ‘custom’ comes to associate these events in such a way as to create the ‘illusionary belief’ in a causal connection” (Kurki 2006, 192).

The narrowness of the term cause is not only limited to empirical-positivism but also to those scholars who criticise this philosophy of science. Independently of whether scholars embrace or reject the Humean idea of causality, Kurki argues that they nonetheless discuss from the same ontological framework. For example, Kurki observes that Cox’s notion of the historical forces that shape the world - material, ideal and institutional forces - have an implicit causal effect in his argument; so, Cox’s neo-Gramscian IRT would be as causal as neorealist accounts (Kurki 2006, 200).

In contrast, Kurki argues that Bhaskar’s principle of intransitivity of objects must be applied to the notion of cause, thereby causes exist outside closed systems:

the world, in fact, consists of ‘open systems,’ where multiple causes interact and counteract each other in complex and, importantly, unpredictable ways. Thus, the central focus of causal analysis is not the analysis of isolated independent variables (through statistical methods) (Kurki 2006, 202).

The idea of an open system where causes exist rejects the closure of the Humean principle of observed regularity. In other words, Kurki defines cause as something unpredictable and unobservable, contesting the conventional idea of cause as a regular and empirical phenomenon. Cause is something that has a real existence in the world, which in turn means that it can exist in the category of matter like natural causes and the category of form like social causes (Kurki 2007, 206-208). Indeed, she accepts that “it is only by accepting that causal forces really exist ‘out there’ that we can make intelligible scientists’ efforts to explain why and how processes around us work as they do” (Kurki 2006, 365).

However, these assumptions do not move Kurki’s constructivist thesis away from the essentialist feature of idealism; this is particularly problematic when thinking upon the relationship between the existence of intransitive causes in international relations and open social systems. That is, the contestable point is not the denying of the existence of natural causes in the material world out of human thought but the belief that the social, and hence international relations, work in the same way as the natural world does.

Conclusions

How to overcome the causality of material factors and ideas claimed by both IRT and the Sino-Chilean literature? I propose to apply the post-Marxist notion of the instability of objects as a novel ontological mode that makes possible the weakening of form in

international relations. When we talk about weakening of form, we abandon not only the metaphysical category of form or idea but also the last symbolical residue assigned to matter.

PDT ontology then illuminates how it is possible to understand that Chile became China's pioneer. This phenomenon is neither the result of a teleological logic of depoliticised pragmatism nor the natural cause of raw materials. Post-Marxism sets the ground to claim that the Sino-Chilean relationship is a discursive practice. It articulates elements whose flow and proliferation of meanings are partially fixed within a contingent totality. The tension we have here then is not between materialism and idealism but, as Laclau and Mouffe (2014, 97) suggest, between interiority and exteriority. While interiority is one particular historical moment in which Chile and China articulate an un-sutured system of relations (e.g. the establishment of diplomatic ties or the signature of an FTA), exteriority is the field of discursivity where an infinitude of other articulatory practices is possible. Therefore, instead of conceiving this relationship as a given international phenomenon, we affirm that it is an open system of relational identities whose moments are contingently articulated to dominate the discursive field.

What is now needed then is to formalize a research strategy to explain the constitution and transformation of the Sino-Chilean relationship. In Part II, I will define the way in which PDT can be used to analyse this international phenomenon by reviewing what PDT scholars have said so far in the field of IR and proposing my post-Marxist approach to international practices.

PART II

**DESIGNING A STRATEGY TO ACCOUNT FOR CHILE-
CHINA RELATIONS**

CHAPTER 4

The Essex School and International Relations: Post-Marxism's advantages and disadvantages in explaining Chile-China relations

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I proposed applying PDT to Chile-China relations because its ontology offers the possibility of solving those essentialisms and ontological deficits that emerge from the literature of Chile-China relations and mainstream IRT. Regarding the essentialisms of the Sino-Chilean literature, the post-Marxist notion of discourse provides us with the ontology to understand the partial character of Chile as the pioneer of China's relations with Latin America. Regarding the ontological gaps of mainstream IRT, the notion of the instability of objects leads to the disclosure of the ultimate conceptual rationalisation of material factors and ideas. In this regard, my chief claim is that this ontology reveals the parochial Western attempt to fix the idea of world structure as an anarchic totality, and international subjects as rational agents looking to satisfy selfish interests. It also reveals the exclusion of other possibilities with which to explain international phenomena, beyond oppositions such as materialism/idealism, pragmatism/ideology and conflict/cooperation.

In this chapter, I examine what has been written about international relations from a post-Marxist perspective, drawing out the issues that scholars have studied and the concepts they have applied to conduct their research. One of the findings is that, although it is possible to see an increasing interest in developing international analysis by using PDT, rather than accounting for international relations, most studies focus on nation-states' foreign policy as a domestic practice.

This observation entails an empirical problem because it not only generates questions regarding my object of study (an international relation), but also echoes the concern for domestic politics as a prominent element that characterises post-Marxism as a whole. For this reason, I explain this concern for the domestic and shed light on its origins entrenched in Laclau and Mouffe's notion of hegemony.

This endeavour leads me nevertheless to face a second problem: because the concept of hegemony was formulated by thinking on European advanced capitalist societies, it features a Eurocentric bias or a lack of peripheral sensitivity. This feature entails some extent of normative failure when we see, for example, that some post-Marxist works define China's identity with the yardstick of Western democratic values. It is in this context that I rely on Mouffe's notion of pluriverse and reformulate it to supersede this problem through a dialogue with non-Western/European scholars.

In the last section, I defend the suitability of my refurbished notion of pluriverse by addressing the structure/agency problem in IR through a critical revision of neo-Gramscian IRT.

1. Post-Marxism and the problem of ‘the political’ as a domestic concern

Although poststructuralism is no longer a chimera within the field of IR, and despite the invaluable contributions of a good number of scholars to position a poststructuralist agenda, it is worth noting that the influence of post-Marxism has been rather marginal. As Nabers and Stengel (2019) portray, although PDT is characterised as offering a fully-fledged approach towards social phenomena and the political, its presence in international studies resemblances a conceptual cherry picking rather than the formalization of a post-Marxist turn to this discipline.

To assess the presence of post-Marxism within IR studies, one can frame the analysis by following a threefold criterion. First, it is possible to consider scholars’ works that have applied Laclau and Mouffe’s concepts in the context of their endeavours to develop a poststructuralist IR agenda; for instance David Campbell (1998), Jenny Edkins (1999), Lene Hansen (2006) and Ole Wæver (2005). Second, I differentiate these works from those ones elaborated by scholars who have been trained by the Ideology and Discourse Analysis programme at the University of Essex (e.g. Stavrakakis 2005; Karakatsanis 2014) and, thirdly, consider other scholars who have embraced in more depth either the ontology or strategies of the Essex School with the intention to formulate post-Marxist international approaches (e.g. Nabers 2017; Eberle 2016; Nabers 2019; Nymalm 2015).

All these works contribute to fleshing out my attempt to develop a post-Marxist analysis of the Sino-Chilean relationship in, at least, three ways. Firstly, all of them capture what Edkins calls the necessity to overcome the technology of expertise, which reduces the analysis to calculative games that confront pre-given interests and agents who are portrayed

as rational, individual and ahistorical subjects. Instead, these texts bring attention to the social character of subjects and the performative and, therefore, the contingent articulation of national identity and foreign policy. Secondly, attention is paid to the concepts of antagonism and hegemony, and thus to the conception of social practices as relations of power which take place in certain historical moments. A third point which matches our interests is the emphasis that some scholars put on the non-essentialist character of those elements that are constitutive of international relations. Accordingly, international phenomena, such as the Western intervention in the conflict of the former Yugoslavia (Hansen, 2006), the US foreign policy (Campbell, 1998; Nymalm, 2015) and the so-called war on terror (Nabers 2017; Solomon 2009) are discursive articulations whose constitutions exceed the causality of material factors and ideas as well as strategic choices.

Although these works are undeniably valuable, it is also possible to note that most of these texts call attention to domestic articulatory practices instead of international practices. Even Nabers's (2017; 2019) novel endeavour to redefine the concept of crisis in global politics, by foregrounding the notion of dislocation, does not escape from this pattern. He argues that dislocations are canalised through the re-articulation of national identity, an argument that is chiefly formulated to explain the dislocatory effects of the 9/11 attacks in the US's foreign policy. Eberle (2016) and Nymalm (2015) explain Germany's foreign policy towards Iraq and the United States foreign policy towards Japan and China, respectively. Stavrakakis (2005) replicates the same pattern by defining Europe's identity as a symbolic order constructed by a plurality of internal forces that struggle to hegemonize the European Union process of identification. Wojczewski (2020) applies Laclau's approach to populism and accounts for national identity in India's foreign policy. In this

context, the emphasis on domestic practices represents a problem for our purpose: to analyse relations between two countries.

There are of course exceptions: Karakatsanis (2014), Wæver (2005) and Wodrig (2014). Karakatsanis is the only author that studies a bilateral relationship (Turkey and Greece). However, he deploys a strategy to account for civil society dynamics, particularly those from marginalised political groups. In fact, there is no intention to place this study within the IR field but to reject top-down IR approaches which suffer from “a policy-oriented bias” (Karakatsanis 2014, 19).

Drawing on PDT to understand the regional identities that mediate peacebuilding operations in Burundi, Wodrig’s accounts for the heterogeneous ground of plural identities that mediate interventions in this country. She argues that since “the ‘regional intervener’ is not a homogeneous subject group, but an analytical category composed of diverse forces with different organizational backgrounds and socializations, it is less convincing to assume that all regional interveners share the same conception of their regional selves” (Wodrig 2014, 217)

In contrast, Wæver (2005) carries out a top-down analysis of German and French foreign policies, concerned with unearthing their critical role in the constitution of the European identity. In this sense, although Wæver’s text cannot be considered a post-Marxist work, even though it appeals to some post-Marxist categories such as hegemony, it is worth noting that he sheds light on the way we can carry out a poststructuralist top-down analysis of the articulation of two foreign policies. I will return to Wæver’s layered structure model in the next chapter.

1.1. Explaining the political as a domestic concern

The fixation of the Essex School on the domestic is not surprising at all if we consider that, in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe (2014) develop a theory for internal social orders by superseding the essentialist social structure that Marxism had conceived of in terms of clear lines of social demarcation and class struggle. Instead, they propose the radicalisation of domestic democratic politics by revealing the irreducible character of regimes and practices.

As Laclau and Mouffe explain: “every form of power is constructed in a pragmatic way and *internally* to the social, through the opposed logics of equivalence and difference” (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 128, emphasis given by the authors). Howarth, Glynos and Griggs (2016) make the point more explicit when conceiving post-Marxism as “a novel approach to *policy studies*, which foreground the critical evaluation of policies and practices in order to explore underlying issues of power and ideology” (Glynos et al. 2016, 99, Italics added).

The roots of this approach lie in the necessity of accounting for the plurality of differences which had not been grasped by the false closure of class struggle articulated by traditional Marxism.⁹ According to Laclau and Mouffe, structural dislocations, such as those experienced in 1968 in Western Europe and the US (Laclau 1990, 179-180), did not emerge from the reductionist social division of classes and their struggle based on supposedly given interests. Instead, they recognise this period as representing the articulation of a series of new subject identities into the socio-political arena. (Laclau and Mouffe 1990b, 76-77; 2014, 46).

⁹ Laclau and Mouffe affirm that ‘traditional Marxism’ is firstly represented by the discourse of the Second International (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, p. 37).

Thus, by rejecting the Marxist belief in the existence of “one foundational moment of rupture” and a “unique space” where the political is constituted, Laclau and Mouffe declare “the acceptance, on the contrary, of the plurality and indeterminacy of the social” which is constituted by the relational character of identities and hegemonic articulations (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 135-136).

In this context, when they advocate for a political project founded on the belief that “socialism is an integral part of the ‘democratic revolution’ and has no meaning outside of it” (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 124-126) they are drawing attention to hegemonic articulations that take place at the domestic level of politics (see also Mouffe 1993, 2005).¹⁰

2. Thinking the international sphere as a pluriverse

In this part, I argue that by thinking upon the international sphere as a pluriverse, Mouffe not only plants the seeds with which to formulate a post-Marxist approach that goes beyond (without excluding) the focus on domestic practices but also sets up the terrain for a dialogue between post-Marxism and those scholars whose concern is non-Western voices and experiences. In doing so, I will explain the concept of pluriverse and its advantages, assess its limitations, and try to solve such limitations by establishing a dialogue with Amitav Acharya’s notion of the *multiplex world* and Eduardo Devés’s *peripheral sensitivity*.

¹⁰ Mouffe contextualises such a view by arguing that, since the fall of Communism in 1991, societies have experienced the attempt to be fixed not by socialist-democratic projects but by the contingent articulation of liberalism and democracy.

2.1. Pluriverse

According to Mouffe (2013, 41), pluriverse is a world with multiple poles related to each other by agonistic encounters between adversaries. An agonistic encounter is “a confrontation where the aim is neither the annihilation nor the assimilation of the other, and where the tensions between the different approaches contribute to enhancing the pluralism that characterises a multipolar world” (Mouffe 2013, 41).

Mouffe stresses that both antagonism and hegemony are concepts that constitute the base of her agonistic approach. If we understand that every social order is hegemonic in the first term, we must assume that such order results from a configuration of power relations that fix the meaning of social institutions. This definition entails three features that constitute the instability of every social order:

1. If any social order is a hegemonic articulation, what changes are the relation of power and the meaning of social institutions; therefore, every social order is contingent because it is a precarious and temporal articulation.
2. A hegemonic articulation entails the exclusion of other possibilities of social construction.
3. Since a social order is contingent and presupposes the exclusion of other possibilities, it can be challenged by counter-hegemonic practices.

It is worth noting that Mouffe differentiates this ontology not from traditional Marxism but from post-Cold War liberalism. In this sense, she criticises what she calls the “cosmopolitan approach to democracy” because of an essentialism at its heart that conceives democracy as a universal social order which does not capture the never-ending social incompleteness revealed by antagonisms (Mouffe 2013, 19-21).

Pluriverse takes its meaning from this framework; that is, it is the undecidability of an international order which is revealed by antagonistic struggles. The world is neither characterized by a universal hegemonism nor a politically unified world, but by a plurality of international hegemonies or “regional poles organized according to economic and political models without a central authority” (Mouffe 2013, 22). This definition is a critical step forward that Mouffe takes to call attention to the re-politicisation of the international. In a nutshell, pluriverse is the international discursive field where hegemonic practices take place.

2.2. Some limitations of pluriverse

Although pluriverse means the reactivation of the political at the international level, it is a concept that is not free from limitations. Firstly, Mouffe utilises the concept of the pole, which in IR means the unequal distribution of power, which causes not only a permanent state of anarchy but also the rise of powerful centres of attraction for other states by hard and soft means of power (Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth 2011; Nye 2004). Her conception of regional poles resembles some texts of the realist mainstream such as Henry Kissinger’s (1995) ‘Diplomacy’ and John Mearsheimer’s (2006) structural realism. In other words, Mouffe’s attempt to reveal the essentialism of post-Cold War liberalism and liberal unipolarity results paradoxically in reaffirming the neorealist tenets on multipolar world politics.

In empirical terms, Mouffe advocates for a pluralist world by using the European Union (EU) as her case of study. She does so despite introducing some non-European intellectual undertakings which think about the relationship between democracy and native intellectual

traditions (Mouffe 2013, 35-39). Thus, by analysing Europe, and because her model is founded on a pluralist but still liberal democracy, Mouffe leaves an empirical vacuum to operationalise her agonistic model in other contexts such as Africa, Latin America and Asia, where neither liberalism nor democracy is taken for granted.

In sum, if pluriverse relies on the concept of pole and the conflict/cooperation dichotomy, and if it also finds in Europe the place to be applied, what I put into question is how one can apply this notion to analyse Chile-China relations.

2.3. Pluriverse, the multiplex world and the peripheral sensitivity

Pluriverse means the politicisation of international relations and the possibility of engaging in a dialogue between post-Marxist ontology and non-Western/non-European empirical fieldwork. Indeed, Mouffe argues that pluriverse is not only an agonistic encounter between adversary poles but also a plural world constituted by different political principles and regimes. “Democracy, understood as ‘rule by the people,’ can therefore take other forms – for instance, forms in which the value of community is more meaningful than the idea of individual liberty.” says Mouffe (2013, 29-30).

Mouffe’s maneuverers enable a more effective inclusion of what Acharya (2011) calls non-Western voices and experiences and provides us with an opportunity to introduce another field of literature into this framework, one in which the first purpose is not only to deconstruct Western ethnocentrism of international discourses (e.g. Hobson 2012; George 1994) but also explain non-Western/European peoples’ agency. In what follows, I will pay special attention to the Indian-Canadian Amitav Acharya and the Chilean Eduardo Devés

because their works provide us with a considerable empirical base built upon non-Western or peripheral relations.

In contrast to Mouffe, Acharya (2014) proposes the concept of the *multiplex world* to challenge the idea of the pole. The world is neither unipolar nor multipolar but multiplex; it assimilates a ‘multiplex cinema’ with several movie theatres working at the same time. A multiplex world considers the complex dynamics of states’ interdependence as well as the particularities of each regional environment rather than the balance of material power among the mightiest states. Further still, contrary to the whole spectre of Western theorists, Acharya’s idea of a multiplex world does not take for granted the authority of great powers to impose their will over the rest (Acharya 2014, 6-9).

Similar to Mouffe, Acharya contests moral cosmopolitanism and its belief in universal values from which external agents teach the rest of the world what is correct and incorrect. However, the difference between them is that Acharya goes a step further in superseding Western parochialism by proposing the concept of the *cognitive prior* or “an existing set of ideas, belief systems, and norms, which determine and condition an individual or social group receptivity to new norms” (Acharya 2009, 20-23).

Regarding Mouffe’s interest in advocating for the existence of different forms to understand democracy, Acharya (2009) addresses this kind of problem by developing the notion of *constitutive localization* to argue that local ideas and local institutions also matter in the process of norm diffusion. Acharya defines localization as “a process in which external ideas are adapted to meet local practices” (Acharya 2009, 19). Norm diffusion, in other words, is not a unidirectional process by which Western ideas and norms nest in non-Western societies but a complex process of localization. This concept also marks a relevant

contrast with Mouffe's pluriverse since the latter does not address the interaction between the local and the foreigner explicitly.

However, the questions that arise from Acharya's concepts are how external ideas are adapted to meet local practices and what kinds of articulations we can expect from the interaction between the West and the rest. In this respect, Devés's (2012) peripheral thought theory gives us some answers worth being considered. Let us start by the way he draws attention to the problem of adaptation:

It is frequently assumed that in different regions around the world ideas were 'imported' from Europe, and then they were 'adapted.' Such an 'adaptation' means the selection of some aspects and the dismissal of other ones, the emphasis of some ones and the fact of paying less attention to other ones. Although this [notion of adaptation] is correct, it eludes a more crucial issue. Such ideas were not only 'adapted' to societies which originally were 'out of their place' but also, they got new meaning because they circulated to a new environment. [Therefore] The concept of 'adaptation' is not enough to express this [phenomenon] (Devés 2012, 30).

It is worth noting that what Devés names as societies that are "out of their place" resembles what post-Marxism calls dislocation. That is, the ontological contingency of every social formation attained by hegemonic discourses articulated on behalf of a principle or ideal. In this sense, elements that circulate from one environment to another acquire new meanings insofar as hegemonic struggles occur in the receptive social environment to re-signify those elements.

After having studied intellectuals and political leaders' thought from Asia, Africa and Latin America, Devés argues that peripheral thought appears after a long process of

interaction with Western/European societies by which peripheral intellectuals realise that their people are no longer at the centre of the world; so, they suffer the dislocation of being out of their place. Because of this dislocatory experience, peripheral intellectuals embrace a special feeling of fascination, perplexity, or rejection regarding the new centre. Attention is paid then to the multiple expressions of what Devés denominates as the peripheral sensitivity defined as the awareness of a condition of inferiority or vulnerability with respect to the centre.

Regarding our dialogue with Mouffe, we shall stress that Devés broadens our understanding of the empirical field by considering peripheral sensitivity. In terms of our case study, it can now be stated that the discursive field informs Sino-Chilean articulatory practices not through cosmopolitan logics, as Mouffe and Acharya criticise, but as political articulations based on experiences of localization, rejection, adaptation and circulation of foreign and native discursive elements.

Hence, in pluriverse, the flow of identities cannot be reduced to the antagonistic interplay between socialist and liberal democracy, as certain interpretation of post-Marxism suggests.

If we assume in advance such a Western discursive structure for China, we could fail in recognising particular normative biases such as defining this country as authoritarian according to the Western yardstick. For instance, Peter Bloom's (2009) dissertation represents, to some extent, such a bias because of his definition of post-reform China's identity as "authoritarian capitalism." So, although he aims to carry out a post-Marxist discourse analysis of China's economic reforms, Bloom implicitly reveals his understanding of (Western) liberal democracy as a pre-condition of the market by pointing

out the necessity of analysing an odd authoritarian capitalist case. Henceforth, Bloom reduces China's identity to 'the authoritarian' because it is a non-democratic country.

3. Structure and agency

Since we are discussing different understandings of international relations as a totality (e.g., as an anarchical structure, a multiplex world, a world with a centre and peripheries), we shall now turn our attention to the structure-agency problem and the answers that post-Marxist discourse theory offers to solve such a problem.

The structure-agency problem does not only represent one of the key issues that poststructuralism, and post-Marxism in particular, address in order to mark an ontological difference from positivism and critical theory (Howarth 2013) but also it is one of the most contentious issues in IRT since the emergence of a post-positivist IR tradition in the eighties (Bieler and Morton 2001).

In the positivist tradition, the concept of social structure emerged to capture "the constraints of social action and the limits of human agency" (Howarth 2013, 152). Indeed, this idea of structure, explained by Ashley (1984) in his in-depth analysis of neorealism, is used by mainstream IRT to define world politics as an anarchical structure which constrains rational actors' strategic decisions by either the balance of power among powerful states or by following a set of liberal-democratic institutions (e.g. Bueno de Mesquita 2010).

Positivist categories of structure and the agent represent what Laclau and Mouffe define as objectivism or the complete reality out there waiting to be discovered. In contrast, they argue that, instead of being full totalities, both structure and subject are "expressions of the desire for a fullness that is permanently deferred" (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 108).

In this sense, PDT aims to deconstruct the discursive character of any structure and hence reveal its weaknesses and contingency (the instability of objects) as well as consider other possibilities of discursive articulations that pluralise the structure model (Howarth 2013). Seen this way, it could be a mistake to replace the anarchic structure model with another attempt to fill the lack of meaning in the sphere of international affairs; rather, it is necessary to recognise that multiple incomplete totalities are taking place simultaneously within an infinitude of possible articulations (a multiplex world). This is what pluriverse attempts to grasp.

In turn, insofar as discursive totalities are not taken for granted but are contingent and incomplete structures, subjects are neither taken for granted individuals nor external agents of the structure; on the contrary, the subject is defined in terms of “subject positions” within a discourse. Thus, because “all ‘experience’ depends on precise discursive conditions of possibilities,” the subject is not featured by a kind of a pre-discursive character by which one could conceive it as the origin of social relations (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 101). Agency, therefore, is not understood as an external force by which subjects shape a structure from outside but as the subjects’ capacity to be mobilised within a discursive structure on behalf on an ideal. I will return to this point in more depth in the next chapter.

4. Post-Marxist discourse theory versus Neo-Gramscian IRT

Having addressed how post-Marxism defines structure and agency, now it is time to assess PDT again with regards to another IR school of thought: the neo-Gramscian IR approach. Why do I propose using PDT, whose main characteristic is its focus on domestic politics, instead of this already established IR approach founded on Gramsci’s idea of hegemony?

Cox breaks with mainstream IRT by placing his approach within the tradition of historical materialism, which he identifies with figures like Marx, Gramsci and Hobsbawm, though he also recognises the influence of other figures such as Giambattista Vico and E.H. Carr (Bieler and Morton 2001; Cox 1981). Historical materialism focuses “on the dialectical possibilities of change within the sphere of production and the exploitative character of social relations, not as unchanging ahistorical essences but as a continuing creation of new forms” (Bieler and Morton 2004, 86). Cox recalls that Gramsci contrasted “the efficacy of ethical and cultural sources” of historical materialism to understand political action with the “reduction of everything to technological and material interests” (Cox 1981, 134). He also points out that another critical characteristic of historical materialism is the attention it draws upon imperialism, understood as a vertical dimension of power that supplements a more horizontal conception of competition among the mightiest states (Cox 1981, 134).

A key development of this approach is the idea of *historical structure*, which is formulated from Cox’s claim that an international analyst must be aware “that action is never absolutely free but takes place within a framework of actions” (Cox 1981, 135). Historical structure is a configuration of forces that the analyst cannot ignore since they impose pressures and constraints against social actors. Three categories of forces operate in a structure: material capabilities, ideas as both inter-subjective meanings and contesting imaginaries, and institutions understood as those practices that “reflect the power relations prevailing” at certain point in history (Cox 1981, 135-137; Bieler and Morton 2004, 88).

Contrary to the structural ahistoricism cultivated by neorealism, Cox argues that historical structures do not “represent the whole world but rather a particular sphere of human activity in its historically located totality”. This idea means that the interaction of

forces within a historical structure takes place at different levels of human activity. Despite the infinitude of possibilities, Cox (1981, 138) defines three levels of human activity for methodological purposes: social forces or the organization of production; forms of state, which refers to the relation between state and society; and world orders, a concept defined as “the particular configurations of forces” that define the problem of war and peace.

Additionally, material power, ideas, and institutions represent the forces that not only operate at these three levels of human activity but also constitute Cox’s idea of hegemony. Accordingly, hegemony is a contingent structure that results from the dialectic logic of historical materialism expressed in terms of “the rise of contending social forces linked to changes in production” that mutually reinforces “transformations in forms of state and world orders” (Bieler and Morton 2004, 88). In this context, to formulate his idea of world order, Cox does not think upon social forces as if it were constituted by actors playing roles within the state exclusively but as forces overflowing states boundaries:

The imperial system is a world order structure drawing support from a particular configuration of social forces, national and transnational, and of core and periphery states (Cox 1981, 141).

Cox’s contribution consists of formulating an anti-essentialist approach to international politics by conceiving a mutual constituency between social forces of production and the historical structure; that is, the former’s potential to reinforce or change the latter.

Notwithstanding, there is, at the same time, a determinist view in understanding such a constituency. For example, at the level of world orders, Cox formulates the idea of ‘international production’ and the emergence of a ‘global class structure’ which is headed

by the transnational managerial class with its own ideology and institutions of collective actions such as the World Bank, IMF and OECD. Such an upper class “penetrates countries through the process of internationalization of the state” and justifies the constitution of other transnational classes at the lower levels of the structure, such as industrial workers from the advanced capitalist states and non-established workforces from developing countries (Bieler and Morton 2004, 90).

Hence, what is at stake in this conception of world order is the critical role the neo-Gramscian approach attributes to this vertical logic of relations of production. Despite advocating for a dynamic conception of the world structure, Cox reduces the constitution of the world structure and social relations to the sphere of the economy and economic relations.

Moreover, his approach reduces world politics to just two axes: horizontal competition between the mightiest states and vertical relations determined by imperialism. In doing so, this distracts from a broader range of identities articulated in terms of ethnicity, nation, religion, gender, not to mention those identities constituted from the peripheral sensitivity that arises when non-Western/European peoples articulate global upper-class elements.

From a post-Marxist perspective, Laclau and Mouffe argue that “if the ‘economy’ is determinant in the last instance for every type of society, it must be defined independently of any specific type of society; and the conditions of existence of the economy must also be defined separately from any concrete social relation.” In contrast, they argue that “society and social agents lack any essence, including the economic relations, “and their regularities merely consist of the relative and precarious forms of fixation” (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 84).

Hence, regarding my object of study, the neo-Gramscian logic does not help to reveal the performative character of the Sino-Chilean relation because what I precisely contend is the attempt to fix the ultimate and immanent moment of the relationship as the moment of the economy and forces of production. Besides, even though structural materialism explains the structural change in international relations, it explains the constitution of world orders from a vertical political logic. This vertical logic characterises relations between the empire and the periphery. Still, it does not leave too much ground to deal with the periphery's plurality and account for the multiple possibilities of the periphery's agency.

Conclusions

This chapter aimed to account for the IR literature that has applied PDT to some degree, revealing advantages and disadvantages of PDT in carrying out international analysis, while formulating some answers as to how we may overcome such disadvantages. In this regard, its main contribution is to reaffirm the possibility of re-politicising the analysis of Chile-China relations as it had been stressed in Chapter 3.

This project's main disadvantage in accounting for Chile-China relations from a post-Marxist perspective is the overwhelming post-Marxist focus on domestic practices. In the context of post-Marxist attempts to develop international approaches, this problem is represented by analyses of foreign policies.

To solve this problem, I brought Mouffe's notion of pluriverse to the fore in a novel way. Assuming that pluriverse is the international discursive field, hegemonic practices do not derive exclusively from the articulations of socialist, liberal and democratic moments,

nor the struggle between imperialism and its victims, but from the plurality of possibilities that can result from a multiplex world. Namely, instead of preconceiving the flow of identities in the vast periphery through the yardstick of being socialist, liberal or democratic, the idea of a peripheral sensitivity leads us to explore the plurality of identifications by considering the way peripheral peoples articulate foreign ideas.

In the next chapter, I will introduce my post-Marxist approach to international relations by explaining how to operationalise PDT's assumptions and formulating my research strategy to account for the articulation of practices between two countries.

CHAPTER 5

A post-Marxist strategy to account for international practice

Introduction

Chapter 4 completed the task of settling down my argument as to why post-Marxism is a suitable approach in accounting for the constitution and transformation of Chile-China relations. My argument considered a proposal to draw attention to international relations, instead of domestic politics, by applying Mouffe's notion of pluriverse and articulating it with Acharya's multiplex world and Devés' peripheral sensitivity. In a nutshell, I claimed that there is antagonism in social orders other than Western/European democratic regimes and that the identity of those regimes shall not be necessarily defined as, and associated in opposition to, democracy. Secondly, I also argued that in IR, hegemony should not be reduced only to antagonisms between the mightiest states and their will to dominate weaker states, but it must also consider the complex range of political relations between all countries worldwide.

This chapter formalises my post-Marxist research strategy by introducing two crucial categories to carry out international analysis: *international practice* and *logics of international relations*. In doing so, I firstly explain Glynos and Howarth's Logics¹¹ of critical explanation approach and their five inter-connected steps of research strategy and

¹¹ I capitalize the word Logic to differentiate the approach from the unit of analysis called logic (social, political and fantasmatic logics).

disclose its limitations to account for international relations. In the next section, I bring to the fore my ontological assumption of the instability of objects to place my post-Marxist international approach within the field of international relations. Following the tenets of the Logics approach, I explain the category of international practice, its four constitutive elements (dislocation, pluriverse, agents and antagonism), and its logics. Regarding the latter, I import Laclau and Mouffe's notions of political logics of equivalence and difference to international relations, and I re-define them as logics of convergence and divergence. The following section is dedicated to formulating my research puzzle and questions and describing my empirical fieldwork and data analysis strategy. I finish by applying Derrida's hauntology to my data analysis strategy and carry out a discussion with the IR Copenhagen School's notion of sedimentation.

1. Logics of critical explanation: Advantages and disadvantages of a 5 steps research-strategy

One of the foremost criticisms that poststructuralists have faced from positivist-empirical scholars is the supposed neglect of rigorous methods and research design (Nymalm 2015; Eberle 2016; Glynos, Griggs, and Howarth 2016; D. Howarth 2005). To solve this problem, Howarth (2005) argues that method is not a "free-standing and neutral set of rules and techniques that can be applied mechanically to all empirical objects" (Howarth 2005, 317). It is from this stance that scholars who have tried to bring post-Marxism to foreign policy studies claim that, rather than using ready-made 'toolkits' to test hypotheses and make predictions, methodology is a process that takes shape through the research process (Eberle 2016, 91; Nymalm 2015, 102).

What is necessary to stress then is that PDT is a *problem-driven* approach rather than a type of *problem-solving* approach (Glynos and Howarth 2007; Howarth 2005, 318), in which the development of a science-mimicking strategy (Eberle 2016) or toolkits for prediction and causal inference (Nymalm 2015) are not methodological options. On the contrary, methodological questions “are always understood within a wider set of ontological and epistemological postulates, and in relation to particular problems” (Howarth 2005, 317). In turn, the development of a problem-driven approach requires a twofold process of critical explanation. The first one consists of the formulation of the *explanandum* or a social phenomenon that is not self-evident. The second one consists of the development of the *explanans* or the appropriate explanation of the object of study.

In this context, Glynos and Howarth propose the approach of Logics of critical explanation, which they define as a strategy of five connected steps: problematization, retrodution, logics, articulation, and critique. These steps can be briefly defined as follows:

First, in the formulation of a problem, an object of study is never taken to be self-evident. On the contrary, the requisite to formulating an object of study is the observer’s level of abstraction; thus, the analyst makes the phenomenon intelligible through the problematization process (Griggs and Howarth 2013, 45-46). Namely, the analyst must shed light on the contingent, historical and political character of any practice (Glynos and Howarth 2007; Glynos et al. 2016).

Second, through the process of problematization, the analyst starts by creating the conditions to formulate a proto-explanation or hypothesis which “renders the problematised phenomenon intelligible.” This step is defined as retrodution and represents the starting point of the explanatory task since the formulation of the hypothesis addresses “a paradox

or a wondrous phenomenon” which is a “tractable explanandum” (Griggs and Howarth 2013, 45-46).

Third, Glynos and Howarth define the logic of practice as the unit of analysis since it “comprises the rules or grammar of the practice [social logics], as well as the conditions which make the practice both possible and vulnerable [political logics]” (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 136). Hegemony is vital to conduct empirical analysis of this kind since, through this concept, an analyst can grasp how subjects accept a particular set of social practices “even though they may have previously resisted or opposed it” (Griggs and Howarth 2013, 25). Hegemony represents, in this sense, the political relationship that involves the political logic of “equivalences between disparate elements via the constitution of political frontiers” (Griggs and Howarth 2013, 27). On the other hand, hegemony also entails those counter-hegemonic political practices and their political logics of difference which reveal the instability of a regime. Political logics of difference are the counterweight to logics of equivalence because they break up chains of signification and prevent the coalescing of political frontiers.

They also provide a fantasmatic logic that interconnects those mechanisms by which social actors face a dislocation or crisis, by concealing it or envisaging a new regime of practices interconnected to social myth, imaginaries and fantasies (Griggs and Howarth, 2013; Glynos and Howarth, 2007).

Fourth, a post-Marxist analyst defines articulation in methodological terms as the process “of linking together” the plurality of logics. It is “an explanatory chain” of logics which does not reduce or subsume the elements of such a chain “to higher-order laws or abstractions” (Howarth 2005, 326). Citing Laclau and Mouffe, Howarth defines an articulatory practice as “any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their

identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, 105. Cited by Howarth 2005, 326). Applying this definition to an articulation of logics, Howarth explains that it involves “a mutual modification of the logics and concepts articulated together in the process of explaining each particular instance of research” (Howarth 2013, 327).

Fifth, critique is the concept that the Essex School formulates to stress the capacity of judgement, or situated ability, of any researcher to connect a concept to an object or to apply some logic to a regime of practices. This definition requires an awareness that any explanation that the analyst can formulate is always contingent and contestable (Griggs and Howarth 2013, 50).

However, as was stressed in the previous chapter, post-Marxism must face the issue of dealing with a theory that was formulated predominantly for domestic politics. It follows then that the Logics approach is also not exempt from this vulnerability, and we can take steps to address this here.

The logics step of the Logics approach is the category through which the analyst interprets empirical data to construct his/her units of analysis; but, at the same time, it is also a convincing way to operationalise post-Marxist ontology and fill gaps within policy studies (Glynos, Griggs, and Howarth 2016). This step has somehow overshadowed the rest of the steps that are equally important in developing post-Marxist strategies to account for international phenomena. The contrast relies on the fact that the other four steps do not need significant reformulations to carry out international analysis.

This point is crucial to understanding one of the challenges faced by this dissertation; that is, the focus upon the domestic has not been acknowledged so far by those who have endeavoured a sort of logics turn in international analysis because, rather than having

studied international relations, this literature has accounted for domestic logics of foreign policy articulation (Nymalm 2015; Eberle 2016).

Therefore, what separates the Logics approach from the international analysis is its very conception of logic and, by extension, the equally important category of practice. By stressing so, I am not suggesting that international analysis must obliterate the national dimension of world politics, nor that post-Marxist terminology does not fit international relations (Laclau used to start problematizing political phenomena by drawing attention to world order changes in his post-1989 writings (e.g. Laclau 2007a)). On the contrary, I suggest that it is necessary to complement post-Marxism's domestic concern with an international one by importing post-Marxist categories to international relations' inquiry.

The inescapable interrelation between national and international politics is a disciplinary problem that has been settled at least since Robert Putnam's (1988) two-levels game theory. However, the acknowledgment of Putnam's contribution does not mean that one has to follow his taken-for-granted notions such as national identity, agents and international structure. As a positivist-empirical scholar, Putnam believes in the existence of unmediated totalities (universalities) and actors (domestic and foreign) whose identities do not require anything external to themselves to be what they are.

While Putnam operates at an ontical level of fixed objects, I try to operate at an ontological level in which I investigate the underlying presuppositions that constitute practices and objects' identities. Paraphrasing Laclau, it means that I conceive the identification process and the constitution of fullness as hegemonic relations in which the triumph of a discursive formation over the rest does not collapse particularities but articulates them into an equivalential chain of political signification by subverting each element's meaning temporarily (Laclau 2007a, 38, 47).

Hence, I claim that domestic hegemonic discourses are articulated, constituting international identities and international discourses. Consequently, it is necessary to develop a strategy that accounts for how countries articulate with each other domestic discourses that constitute international discourses.

In the following sections, I propose a strategy to solve post-Marxism's international gap by proposing the international practice category, which has been enunciated throughout the problematization I have carried out in Chapters 3 and 4. In general terms, I define the international practice as the articulation of foreign policies between two or more states. I also define other elements that furnish my post-Marxist approach to make it suitable for analysing international practices.

In this endeavour, my first step is to resettle the ontological terrain of the instability of objects from which I intend to formulate my post-Marxist international approach through a critical engagement with IRT.

2. The instability of objects as the ontological assumption of post-Marxist IR

Having restressed the problem that post-Marxism's domestic concern entails for this dissertation, one crucial question is: How to situate post-Marxism within the IR discipline? I argue that insofar as the formulation of research problems presupposes ontological assumptions (D. Howarth 2005), any attempt to develop a post-Marxist approach to international relations shall start from weakening IRT's ontological assumptions. In doing so, I bring to the fore Laclau and Mouffe's notion of the instability of objects.

To a certain extent, in the development of this argument, I try to follow Kuhn's claim that if scientific paradigms (in our case, the positivist-empirical paradigm that takes form as the rational approach, game theory, neorealism and neoliberalism) are not neutral systems of languages or concepts then, "the proposed construction of alternate tests and theories must proceed from within one or another paradigm-based tradition" (T. Kuhn 2012, 146). In this sense, my tradition is the Essex School.

As it was shown in Chapter 2, IR excludes a considerable range of international political phenomena because it is primarily reduced to a static set of presuppositions that conceives material and ideal factors as the causes of conflict and cooperation (Morgenthau 1993; Mearsheimer 2014; Bueno de Mesquita 2010; Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Nye 2004; Frieden, Lake, and Schultz 2019). In this regard, the instability of objects represents an ontological turn to solve the materialism/idealism dichotomy and, therefore, broadens the discursive field to account for international phenomena that are not mediated symbolically by Western/European securitized concerns.

Then, in Chapter 3, I introduced the notion of the instability of objects by explaining that Laclau and Mouffe criticise the essentialist definition of form as the ultimate and most basic thought or idea of an object, whilst they also question the idea of matter as "the last individual residue" of the object which is independent of human rationality (Laclau and Mouffe 1990, 106-107).

Seen this way, we know that approaches centred on material factors, such as neorealism, are idealist as other approaches, such as neoliberalism and constructivism. They cannot escape from the most basic and ultimate ideas or concepts given to elements, such as the state, the structure, and the property of cause. Hence, any critical explanation of international relations must start by getting away from idealism without falling into the

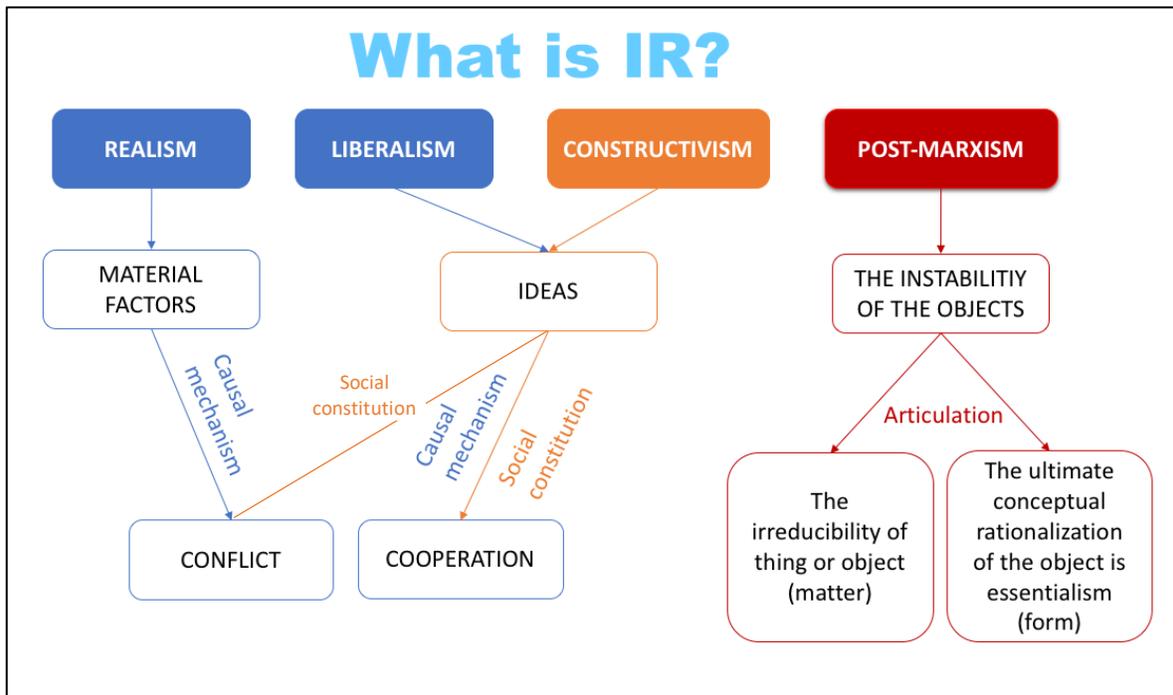
traps of returning to materialism and dwelling in realism since there is nothing essential beyond the mere existence of objects. To progress then requires proposing a poststructuralist theory centred on discourse as a contingent social space that articulates and gives meaning to objects and subjects (the material and the ideal) according to particular contexts.

Applying this ontological discussion to IR (and by allowing me as well to condense, as much as I can, the prolific family of IR schools and sub-schools), we find that, while realists define IR as a theory of conflict determined by material factors, liberals define it as the conjuncture of material factors and ideas to explain how to avoid conflict by pursuing cooperation. According to these theories, both material factors and ideas are ontic categories capable of causing conflict or preventing it.

IR can also be defined in terms of constitutive social ideas or common beliefs. This is the way constructivism defines international relations. All these approaches have in common a hierarchical and cosmopolitan centre-periphery logic articulated around either the distribution of material capabilities or the distribution of (Western liberal) knowledge.

Next, I define IR in terms of ‘the instability of objects,’ an ontology with undeterminable ways of being, to understand the articulation of practices and signify different kinds of elements in particular historical contexts by historical actors whose identities change with regards to those contexts (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. What is IR according to materialism and idealism?



To understand Figure 1, let me exemplify with the case of Chile's copper. From a positivist scientific point of view (realism and liberalism), Chilean copper comprises a natural resource whose scarcity can be either the cause of conflict with other states or a commodity that can be bought and sold in international markets. In both cases, the identity of copper, either as a potential cause of conflict or cooperation, is static, temporarily limitless. So, the question of engaging in conflict or cooperation is subordinated to Chile's and its counterparts' rational choices based upon payoffs of costs and profits.

Second, from a constructivist viewpoint, the meaning of copper is a social construction derived from the intersubjectivity of signifying copper as a strategic natural resource. In this approach, it would be assumed that such a meaning has a supposed point of origin, a

social baptism; however, the baptism of copper as a strategic resource is undecidable (when was the exact moment in which copper started to be conceived as a strategic resource?).

Thirdly, seen from a post-Marxist ontology, a piece of rock at the bottom of the mine acquires different meanings depending on how hegemonic discursive structures articulate it. Copper can be a mineral with no international value that surrounds a land that is rich in saltpetre. It can be a new trade opportunity after the collapse of the international saltpetre industry. It could be the most strategic national resource that justifies powerful armed forces ready to protect such rich lands from foreign invasions. A strategic commodity that the state must nationalize to protect national sovereignty from imperialism. Finally, it can be Chile's first commodity traded on behalf of global free markets.

Thus, this map is crucial to our transition from post-Marxism to international post-Marxism. It places post-Marxism as an ontological alternative to existent international approaches, which opens the discursive field to new possibilities of international politics. Now, this scheme leads us to another kind of problem: How to apply this ontology to international analysis? The following section's task consists of furnishing a research strategy by importing Laclau's notions of practice and political logics.

3. International practice and logics of international relations

3.1. International practice

As briefly introduced in Chapter 4, post-Marxism defines the practice as routinized actions or social practices and the articulation of elements symbolically mediated (articulatory practice) that constitute a structured totality (discourse). In this sense, political practice is the articulatory process through which the social practice or a regime of practices comes

about and is contested. This section aims to explain this category and justify my proposal of international practice.

First, as far as the social practice is concerned, post-Marxism uses Bourdieu's notion of practice as everyday actions within a social structure, such as dropping off children at school, going to work, having breakfast and so forth (Bourdieu 1990; Glynn and Howarth 2007, 104).

It is worth noting that what differentiates habitus from practice is Bourdieu's idea of action in time or the property of urgency. For instance, even though an individual has a daily routine of doing something, each time s/he does so is different because "practice is inseparable from temporality" (Bourdieu 1990, 81). Hence, Bourdieu criticizes positivism for its inclination to construct atemporal models that account for practice laws. "Because science is only possible in relation to time which is the opposite of that of practice, it tends to ignore time and so to detemporalize practice," he affirms (Bourdieu 1990, 81).

Nevertheless, although temporality differentiates practice from habitus, some authors question that this attribute does not constitute per se the social dimension of practice. So, what differentiates practice from personal habits (or even behaviour) to make the former a social category? To start answering this question, I rely on the works of constructivist scholars who have applied Bourdieu's work instead of Bhaskar's critical realism. For example, according to Kratochwil, practices are not every action but our "doings plus examination and reflection" upon matters of meaning that constitute social rules and norms. Seen this way, he stresses that the analyst must draw attention to our doings' contextual meaning concerning a social order (Kratochwil 2019, 30). In this sense, the point to elucidate here is what this constructivist trend means by the social order category. Onuf defines it as "any stable pattern of rules, institutions, and unintended

consequences.” In other words, the social order is a given structure “recognizable a such to any observer.” In turn, the observer is defined as a social being or agent who makes choices within the structure. “The important point to remember” - Onuf stresses – “is that structure is what observers see, while institutions are what agents act within.” In this conceptual framework, practice assimilates to people’s actions, which have consequences for better or worse (See Onuf 1998, 50-62).

In contrast, as explained in Chapter 4, PDT does not define structure and agent as two separated realities featured by a pre-discursive condition but categories we shall understand within the political logics that constitute discourses. According to post-Marxism, to understand the idea of social order, we must draw attention to the notion of the regime. According to Glynos and Howarth, a regime is a system of social practices ordered by antagonism against an excluded or contested regime of practices (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 106). For instance, a regime that these authors use to exemplify is the Thatcher regime and its antagonism to the Keynesian regime.

In turn, post-Marxism relates the notion of antagonism, understood as the condition that constitutes a regime of social practices, to political practices. In Glynos and Howarth’s words, political practices “comprise struggles that seek to challenge and transform the existing norms, institutions and practices - perhaps even the regime itself – in the name of an ideal or principle.” Nonetheless, they continue, “political practices also involve efforts on the part of the power bloc to disrupt the construction of antagonistic frontiers by breaking down the connections that are being forged between different demands” (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 105).

In other words, political practice is the kernel of post-Marxist inquiry and what makes it original in relation to Bourdieu’s practice theory and constructivist works that rely

on it. Political practice is the category through which the analyst accounts for the contestation of social practices and those political struggles from which the hegemonic bloc sediments a new customary regime of practices. In other words, it represents the category that allows me propose an approach to structural change in international relations. How is this possible?

There are another two post-Marxist premises about practice, which are crucial to my international practice formulation. First, “all practices and regimes are discursive entities [...] an object’s identity is conferred by the particular discourses or systems of meaning within which it is constituted” (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 109). Second, recalling the ontology of the instability of objects, any discourse is marked by ontological contingency; that is to say, the impossibility or the failure of any discourse to constitute full objectivities of elements, identities, practices and regimes. This negative ontology is what post-Marxism calls radical contingency (Glynos and Howarth 2007; Laclau and Mouffe 2014).

Regarding these premises, one must bear in mind that practice is synonymous with discourse (Laclau and Bhaskar 1998, 9) and that discourse is politically constituted by definition. Consequently, the analyst’s first aim is to account for how discourses are articulated and how they constitute contextual universalities.

Having depicted the category of practice and the ontology that opens the symbolic ground to supersede IR essentialism, I am well placed to propose international practice as a key concept informing the development of a research strategy to account for Chile-China relations. Therefore, from now on, this dissertation uses the term international practice as follows:

- In its broadest sense, it refers to the articulation of elements of two (or more) countries’ foreign policies.

- In this articulation, each state is willing to make a new meaning investment in certain elements when engaging politically with its counterpart(s).
- Countries do so to construct a meaningful international horizon, which is always vulnerable due to the possibility of discursive antagonisms or unexpected events that dislocate the practice disrupting its hegemonic formation.

Figure 2. *The representation of an international practice*

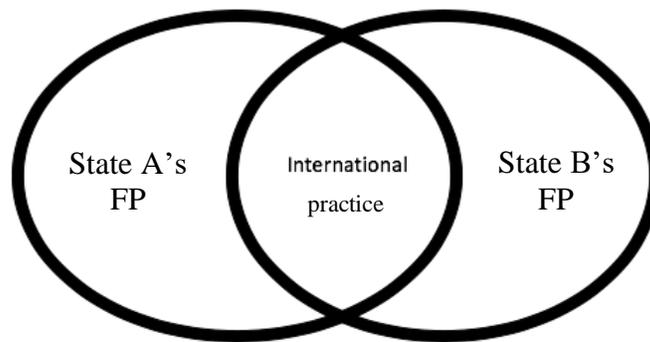


Figure 2 represents an international practice articulated between two states. The intersection area shows the bilateral signification given to some aspects of the countries' respective foreign policies. In contrast, the two areas outside of the intersection represent those elements of each country upon which it is impossible to get a convergent bilateral signification. In this sense, I understand bilateral convergence as the political articulation that two or more states carry out to structure the symbolic field by attaching certain elements to contextual meanings. International practice differs from the mainstream concept of international cooperation (see Chapter 2) since mainstream approaches formulate the latter to account for individualist actors' rational choices to get relative gains,

whereas the former accounts for the political moment in which social agents try to objectivize international relations precariously, in particular historical conjunctures.

Imagine, for instance, Chile and Bolivia during the 1990s. These two countries articulated foreign policies centred on the principles of economic integration and macroeconomic stability, which were in-fashion signifiers in South America because of the embracement by many policymakers of the Washington Consensus guidance and its supposed materialization in many cases of cooperation that had resonated in the region, such as APEC, the Maastricht Agreement and NAFTA. In this context, Chile and Bolivia signed a Complementary Economic Agreement in 1993. However, this agreement did not preclude these countries from renouncing other crucial elements for their respective foreign policies, such as Bolivia's claim for sovereign maritime access, which was lost in the Pacific War against Chile and Chile's defence of the 1904 Peace and Friendship Treaty and its territorial integrity. Although crucial for their foreign policies, these elements were not articulated into this international practice even though Bolivian sovereign maritime access seems decisive for Bolivia's integration into global markets, including Chile. Thus, Chilean-Bolivian economic integration is questioned each time a bilateral crisis dislocates this international practice due to Bolivia's maritime claim and Chile's stubbornness to defend the 1904's Treaty. This example shows that international practices, rather than being given international phenomena, represent discursive articulations that two or more states carry out to create a customary way to signify something up to the moment of dislocation or political contestation.

To progress in my strategy, an important task is to formulate those elements that make this category of international practice possible. Some crucial questions that it is necessary to clarify in this sense are: What does post-Marxism understand by the political

and how can it be applied to international analysis? What must a post-Marxist analyst understand by the international discursive field in which international practices are constituted? What is an international agent? How are we to operationalize the ontological contingency of international practices empirically? To answer these questions, I identify four constitutive elements of international practice: dislocation, pluriverse, agents, and antagonism.

3.1.1. Dislocation

Let us remember that radical contingency is the impossibility of any discourse to constitute full objectivities of elements, identities, practices, and regimes. This crucial post-Marxist definition aims to solve a philosophical problem that is also present in Morgenthau's works on morality. According to Morgenthau, there is a decisive moment that overcomes the dichotomy between naïve idealism and the Hobbesian human nature. However, Morgenthau continues, this moment is never fully attainable insofar as "an unbridgeable chasm must permanently separate the rules of rationalist ethics from the human reality." What is more, these two sides do not "recognize the permanency and inevitability of this chasm." How is this possible? From a post-Marxist viewpoint, this unbridgeable chasm that appears in the very moment of putting into practice a state's foreign policy is radical contingency. In other words, it is what dislocates foreign policy preventing it from fulfilling the principle upon which has been articulated.

If international practices are constituted by radical contingency, one of the analyst's aims is to account for dislocations which can be defined as those moments in which "the subject's mode of being is experienced as disrupted" (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 110).

Dirk Nabers provides us with a first approach to dislocation in international politics by applying post-Marxist tenets. He applies the ontological premise of dislocation to world politics through the notion of crisis. A crisis is not objective and external phenomena (“independent variables”) affecting states’ international behaviour but elements that each state articulates to either conceal the radical contingency of an established practice or regime, such as a foreign policy or to counter-hegemonize such a practice (Nabers 2017, 2019). Following this argument, an international crisis’ meaning will depend on how a country articulates it domestically.

To make the empirical account of dislocation a viable enterprise, Glynos and Howarth differentiate dislocation from public contestation. While the former highlights the radical contingency of social relations, the latter is an antagonistic relation or political “contestation of the norms which are constitutive of an existent social practice (or regime) in the name of an ideal or principle” (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 111).

If any social order suffers from a constitutive lack, public contestation reminds us of such spurious origin by making radical contingency obvious. From this perspective, Nabers’s approach to the international crisis can be seen as the study of political struggles upon the contestation and defence of a regime, whose radical contingency is either uncovered or concealed when the regime faces an event that disrupts routine practices, such as a global economic crisis, the rise of a new powerful state, a foreign terrorist attack or a pandemic.

Both dislocation and public contestation are interrelated or overlapped in the constitution of social reality. On the one hand, the category of dislocation refers to social reality’s ethical and ideological dimensions, forming an ethical-ideological axis. When confronting the radical contingency of social relations, subjects can respond to it

authentically (ethically) or inauthentically (ideologically). Namely, subjects can acknowledge a dislocation or deny it and conceal it respectively. In this sense, the question that an analyst shall formulate when analysing data is “to what extent do subjects engage authentically with the radical contingency of social relations [...] or to what extent are they complicit in concealing it?” (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 110)

On the other hand, public contestation refers to the social and political dimensions, which constitute a social-political axis. In other words, they represent how subjects articulate a dislocatory experience politically. Subjects can articulate a dislocatory experience as the opportunity to change the current regime of practices by articulating a chain of demands whose particularities are subverted on the name of a new principle or ideal that represents the possibility of a new social order.

Otherwise, the hegemonic bloc’s subjects can de-politicise the dislocatory moment by recognising and absorbing the political demands individually. These practices are characterised as political logics of difference. That is to say, when subjects avoid the constitution of an equivalential chain of demands that threatens the regime’s existence on behalf of the principle or ideal that already sustains the existent regime.

In sum, in the social-political axis, subjects can either induce “the forgetting of political origins” and “enable subjects to live as if their practices were natural” or impose a new set of practices (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 117).

3.1.2. Pluriverse

International practices take place in an unattainable international discursive field that I call *pluriverse*. Remember that I bring this term to the fore in a twofold movement (see Chapter

4). First, I follow Mouffe's attempt to open up positivist and liberal cosmopolitan discourses of world politics by attaching international plurality to the post-Marxist notion of hegemony. Second, I flesh out this category with some approaches to non-Western international relations and non-European ideas that help me to de-Europeanize the logics of hegemony. I claim that political practices are not only a feature of democracies from Western advanced capitalist societies but also every social order from anywhere. In this sense, my interest is to avoid normative biases such as the characterisation of China as a non-democratic regime or Chile as a pure democratic regime.

Besides, contrary to other post-positivist schools such as constructivism and neo-Gramscian IRT, the pluralisation of the international space also entails assuming the complexity beyond the traditional idea of the hierarchical structure of power. Verticality, horizontality and obliqueness are equally important depending on the international practice that the analyst is formulating as a tractable explanandum. In pluriverse, it is possible to observe successive and simultaneous hegemonic struggles at particular historical conjunctures between central, semi-peripheral and peripheral international actors. It comprehends practices that challenge a hegemonic way to signify the world order and an undecidable range of other practices that take place across the vast peripheries and semi-peripheries.

Hence, the reader must not misinterpret pluriverse as a new acronym of international structure but as the discursive field in which limitless international discourses are articulated by international agents.

Figure 3. *The representation of 'pluriverse'*

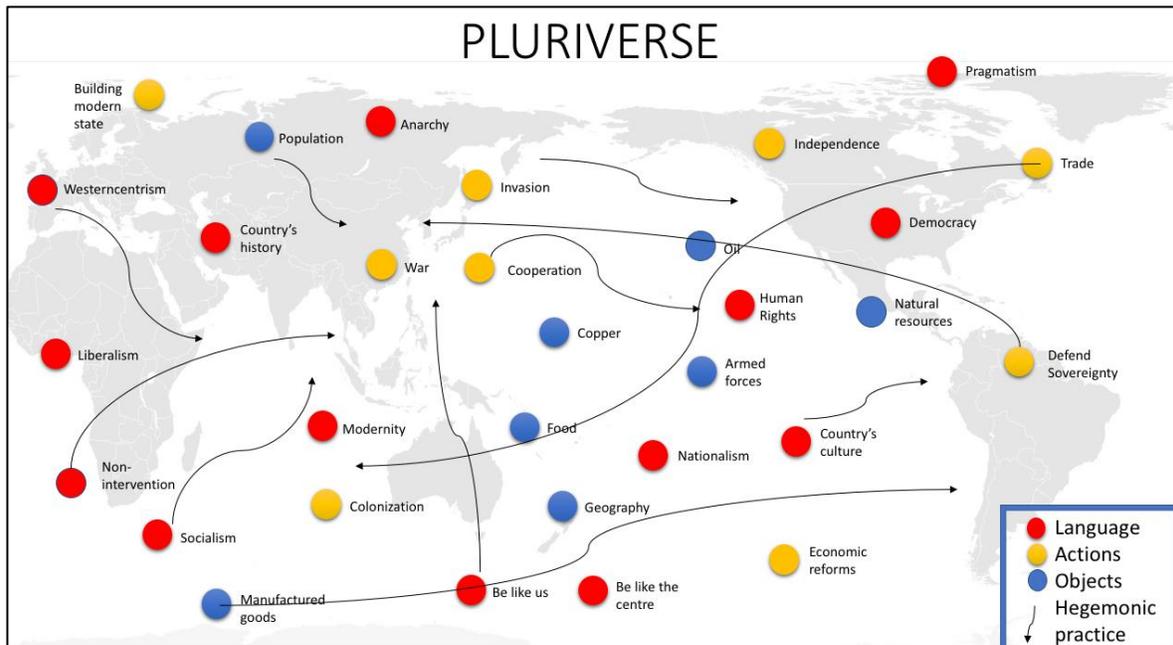


Figure 3 tries to represent the discursive field where endless elements worldwide can be articulated to constitute limitless international practices. Discourses are intertwined by three types of elements: language, actions and objects (Griggs and Howarth 2013). Insofar as the elements can also be linked together in different ways by different international actors, articulating them in different contexts, they do not constitute just one discursive structure but endless possibilities.

Following the way Laclau addresses the problem of the constitution of universality and its political logic, it is possible to say that an international discursive structure is not an unmediated fullness (it is neither an anarchic structure nor a global liberal order), but several totalities which are constituted by a threefold mediation: First, in the domestic level, “the transformation of the particularistic interests of the rising dominant sector in the emancipatory discourse of the whole of society; secondly, the presence of an oppressive regime which is the very condition of that transformation” (Laclau 2000, 46). Third, the

articulation of two or more countries' foreign policies that, rather than deriving from outer elements that conform interests in a Hegelian understanding of needs,¹² are derived from their respective hegemonic blocks whose domestic discourses of exclusion, articulated at the domestic level, look for international convergences of signification. Hence, in pluriverse, the analyst finds as many international discursive structures as s/he intends to problematise.

Pluriverse can be seen as a post-Marxist answer to the “poverty of neorealism” problem that Richard Ashley formulated in the eighties. Inspired by Bourdieu, Ashley aimed to reinstate political practices as the key element of international studies that neorealism had purged in the name of positivist (utilitarian) science. Following E. P. Thompson’s criticism of structuralism (especially that of Althusser), Ashley criticises neorealism’s rigid views upon the categories of the international structure, the state and the instruments and arenas in which states carry out their power struggles. “[N]eorealism is itself an “orrery of errors,” a self-enclosed, self-affirming joining of statist, utilitarian, positivist, and structuralist commitments,” Ashley (1984, 228) says. Then, he continues, “by appeal to objective structures, which are said to dispose and limit practices among states (most especially, the anarchic structure of the modern states system), neorealists seemed to cut through the subjectivist veils and dark metaphysics of classical realist thought” (Ashley 1984, 233). For Ashley, the structuralist promise is unfulfilled because in neorealism “practice becomes the product of structure” in the same way that structuralism conceives that “speech becomes the product of language.” As a consequence, “far from

¹² That is to say, “a realm of pure particularities”, in which material factors have the same meaning for all since they are scarce resources whose unequal distribution constitutes states’ power. (Laclau 2000, 49).

expanding international political discourse, the neorealist orrery excludes all standpoints that would expose the limits of the given order of things” (Ashley 1984, 235-237).

However, what makes my post-Marxist answer distinguishable from Ashley’s is that the return to the political does not mean, as he suggests, the return to traditional realism’s tenets in a strict sense. As I explained in Chapter 2, authors such as Morgenthau assign essentialist attributions to material factors, such as territory, population, military preparedness, natural resources, and so on, and circumscribe them to the war/peace dilemma. These presuppositions hardly coincide with the ontological premise of the instability of objects in which each element’s meaning depends on its place within a contextual discursive structure.

3.1.3. Agents

In Chapter 4, I explained that Mouffe’s reinterpretation of Karl Schmitt’s friend-enemy distinction, which is a classical realist thesis, falls into the neorealist trap of conceiving international politics as a hegemonic competition between regional powers and the dismissal of peripheral and semi-peripheral political relations. This is why a proper definition of international agents is a crucial international practice’s component.

The account of international practice requires the identification of those actors and the relational places they occupy within the international practice. According to post-Marxism, agents are not outside the discursive structure but are part of it; consequently, the analyst identifies and defines agents’ identities with regards to this structure (Howarth 2013).

The literature of IR already recognises a broad range of international agents besides the state, such as international organisations, non-governmental organisations, transnational companies and any other type of actor capable of challenging sedimented international practices. However, if the question is how to identify and define international agents and account for their identities in the context of this research, my answer must consider two further points that need to be specified.

Firstly, the first and foremost signifier that frames the agent in this work is the nation-state. To be specific, on the one hand, I follow the most traditional and conservative way to understand international politics because the observer who carries out a discourse analysis of diplomatic files, official documents, and national leaders' speeches, as it is in my case, must rely on this term, though in its most abstract sense. In Putnam's (1988, 431) words, there is "a crucial point that central decision-makers ("the state") must be concerned simultaneously with domestic and international pressures."

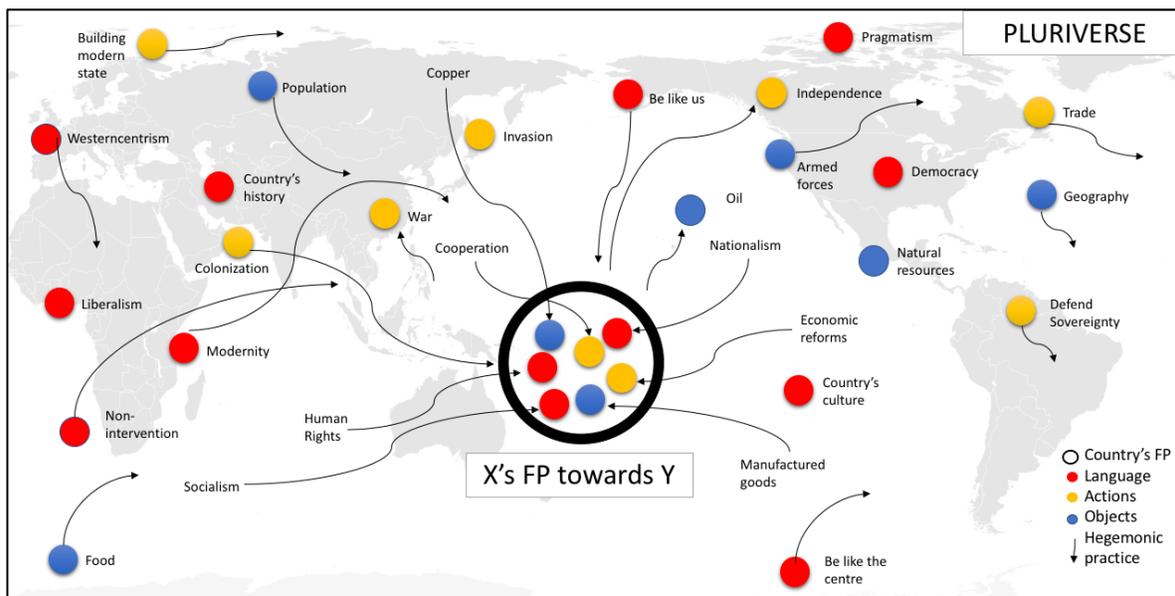
On the other hand, I start from the ontological premise that the nation-state is neither a given unitary-actor out there waiting to be discovered nor a social fact whose significance, notwithstanding being derived from social intersubjectivities, the observer attaches to the cosmopolitan language of Western academia. In this study, the nation-state is not subordinated to the Westphalian straitjacket, but it is an abstraction whose meaning depends on the context and space the observer accounts for when formulating the intelligible international phenomenon.

The second point is the selection of the nation-state's participants when designing the methodology. If countries' foreign policies and international practices change, it is because the participants also change. Therefore, the empirical data shall provide the

material to identify the participants (Putnam's central decision-makers) engaged in articulating international practice in different historical conjunctures.

Figure 4 captures this combined consideration of agents (the nation-state) and the pluriverse (the discursive field), together representing a national discursive structure where hegemonic and counter-hegemonic practices take place to articulate different elements that constitute, at different times, a nation-state's (X) foreign policy towards something (Y). The discursive structure is nourished with signifiers that flow in the multifaceted discursive field; thus, it is possible to see how different elements (words, actions and objects), and their contingent meanings, shape the foreign policy of one country towards another.

Figure 4. Foreign policy articulation in pluriverse



3.1.4. Antagonism

The critical element that challenges positivism's assumptions is antagonism, which can be defined as a negative relation (ontologically speaking) that reveals the limits of every

objectivity or prevents the constitution of any objective social reality (Laclau 2006; Laclau and Mouffe 2014).

In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe define an antagonistic relation. Antagonism is neither real opposition nor a logical contradiction. On the one hand, real opposition is related to the notion of contrariety. Natural objects displayed in opposition have their positivity independently of their relationship with each other (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 108). On the other hand, logical contradiction is when the relation of two elements -concepts, ideas, thoughts, propositions- exhausts the reality of both (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 109).

This clarification helps us reveal the limits of rational approaches in International Relations theory (see Chapters 3 and 4). In concrete, Laclau and Mouffe point out that antagonism is not a crash between two objects. An opposition is a physical fact with positive laws, so social sciences – among them International Relations and Conflict theory - have borrowed this concept from sciences like Physics. In this sense, opposition in social sciences is used as a metaphor (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 109). Besides, Laclau and Mouffe criticise when scholars appeal to common sense and experience to complete the meaning of the antagonism they are trying to explain. The explanation “is interrupted” – Laclau and Mouffe say - when works conclude in sentences like: “this provoke a reaction” or in a particular situation X “found itself forced to react” (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 110). From this perspective, an Israeli missile falling on Palestinian soil or a US Navy’s warship crossing China’s maritime border do not explain anything antagonistic on their own.

In contrast, antagonism does not imply a full presence or full identity. In other words, while opposition and contradiction are full identities, in antagonism, “the presence of the ‘Other’ prevents me from being totally myself. The [antagonistic] relation arises not

from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their constitution.” Thus, since language is the permanent effort of constructing an objective and closed society, antagonism is the experience that subverts such an effort by revealing the “the impossibility of a final suture” or “the limit of the social” (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 111).

In an article entitled *Ideology and Post-Marxism* (Laclau 2006),¹³ Laclau stresses that an antagonistic relation entails four conditions: discourse, empty signifiers, name or nominal order, and radical affect.

Laclau defines discourse as the articulation of different elements that constitute a social totality that is never a total objective entity due to the presence of an antagonistic Other that prevents it from fully being. Then, he formulates the category of empty signifiers,¹⁴ which are those elements that signify incomplete totality or try to objectivize it. The meaning of an empty signifier is not determined by a conceptual order which would entail the homogeneous and non-political terrain of a contradiction between two concepts but by a nominal order. Naming, says Laclau, is a primal baptism not grounded on neutral descriptions of reality and positive contents but on subjects’ arbitrariness or catachrestical operations of signification. Therefore, a nominal order pertains to a heterogeneous terrain in which antagonistic relations take place. Finally, understanding the empty signifier as an arbitrary name instead of a concept means that its production requires the investment of affects to irradiate its signification to the rest of the social totality.

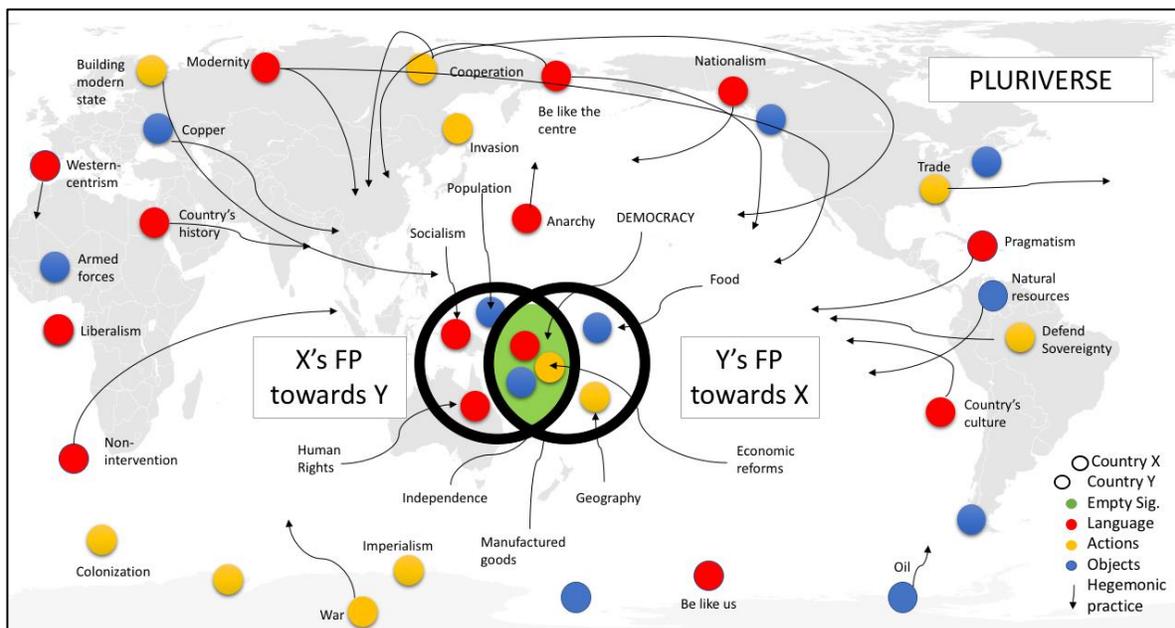
¹³ See also Laclau’s “On Populist Reason” (Laclau 2005, 68-69).

¹⁴ This category does not appear in such a literal way in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* but as the notion of a ‘nodal point’. In both cases, Laclau and Mouffe draw on Lacan’s psychoanalytic notion of the master signifier, looking to bring this concept to the field of political theory. In this context, Laclau’s empty signifier is the result of his endeavor to supplement his theory with rhetoric.

Given these four conditions, we have that antagonism reveals the limit of social objectivity and that this limit is not homogeneous but heterogeneous and, hence, political.

Figure 5 portrays my image of the international practice described in Figure 2; that is to say, it shows the articulation of two foreign policies' elements in pluriverse. The green area that hegemonizes the intersection represents the empty signifier that makes discursive closure possible.

Figure 5. *The articulation of two foreign policies in pluriverse (empty signifier)*



For instance, Iran-US relationships under George W. Bush's and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's administrations would be neither like the physical crash of two stones nor a conceptual contradiction between a liberal-democratic country and an Islamic republic but an antagonistic relationship in which the former signifies the latter as the imperialist agent that threatens the full realization of its national sovereignty. In contrast, the latter signifies

the former as the dangerous anti-Western agent that threatens the full realization of its national security and the idea of a stable Middle East. In turn, the US would articulate relations of convergence with those countries that foreground the same elements to signify Iran equivalently around the empty signifier of ‘threat to international security’ (Israel) and the latter would do the same regarding the former around the empty signifier of ‘US imperialism’ (Venezuela).

I have hitherto defined international practice and its four constitutive elements. These ontological premises allow me to claim that international practice is not a given phenomenon waiting to be discovered but a politically constituted phenomenon that can always be contested. Hence, the observer’s role is not to discover universal laws of international reality but to characterise those political moments of constitution and contestation. The following section moves the research strategy forward to account for international practice by proposing the category of ‘logics of international relations’ with which to frame the empirical approach of my research strategy.

3.2. International logics of convergence and divergence

Suppose that international practice comprises an antagonistic relationship between states whose constitution is marked by ontological contingency. In that case, it is possible to affirm that international practice is international agents’ attempt to objectivise the international discursive field by articulating an international horizon on behalf of an ideal. This argument raises crucial empirical questions: How do states articulate international horizons? How do they conceal their spurious political origin? How do they reveal the radical contingency of their discourses? In this section, I answer these questions by

applying Laclau's approach to ideology and the notions of political logics of equivalence and difference.

Contrary to the positivist IR tradition that treats ideology as either an independent variable or, in the case of the Chilean-Chinese literature, as a moral imperative for principled actions, post-Marxism makes an ontological turn to define it as a hegemonic and contingent moment of signification. Ideology is not a fully objective space of representation, but the attempt to be so.

In this definition of ideology, Laclau criticises Marx's followers who believe in the existence of laws governing social evolution, in well-defined social classes and their struggle, as if Marxism were built upon the direct observation of natural laws that govern the development of human society and the historical inevitability of socialism. Let us remember that, as the Editor's Preface to Marx's *Essential Writings* points out, "by the 19th century, attention was being turned from the natural sciences of physics and biology to the "social sciences" of economics and political science. The new wave of scientists hoped to discover the "universal laws of nature" which guided the development of social processes, just as Newton had discovered the laws of mechanics and Darwin had discovered the laws of biology. It was during this search that Marxism came into being" (see Marx 2010, 8). Against this backdrop, Laclau abandons the dichotomy between false consciousness and true knowledge (Laclau 2006; Glynos 2001), which is not only present in Marxism but in positivist IRT and the Sino-Chilean literature, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

Laclau's ontological approach to ideology is intrinsically related to empty signifiers. Appealing to rhetoric, he uses the figure of catachresis to explain that empty signifiers can be understood as non-literal uses of words whose meaning try to close the signification of a social totality. Hence, ideology is a catachrestical operation by which subjects try to

objectivize the social; it is, in other words, “the representational, metaphorical and precarious closure that stabilizes meaning within specific contexts” (Laclau 2006, 103). For instance, one of the catachrestical operations in one of our previous examples would be the US-Israel objectivation of Iran as a threat to international security.

Regarding this framework, logics of international relations represent the strategy to characterise the constitution and contestation of international practices. More pointedly, it is the empirical approach with which to account for catachrestical operations carried out by two or more states and those moments when the same states fail to make these operations possible.

In formulating this approach, I import Laclau and Mouffe’s categories of political logics of equivalence and difference, developed from Saussure’s synchronic linguistics, in which he explains the duality between associative and syntagmatic relations (Saussure 1916/2012). While political logics of equivalence represent the expansion of the associative pole of language in which words are related in such a way that one word can be substituted for the other, logics of difference represent the expansion of the syntagmatic pole of language which makes impossible to pronounce two elements simultaneously (Laclau and Mouffe 2014, 113-119).

It is needless to say that logics of equivalence and difference were formulated not to explain international phenomena but domestic ones. These notions firstly appeared as decisive categories to explain discourse formation in Laclau and Mouffe’s (2014) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, but their definitive application to domestic politics was formulated by Laclau in *On Populist Reason* where he defines them as the presence of populist demands (equivalence) and democratic demands (difference). That is to say, “the emergence of the ‘people’ requires the passage – via equivalences – from isolated,

heterogeneous demands to a ‘global’ demand which involves the formation of political frontiers and the discursive construction of power as an antagonistic force” (Laclau 2005, 110). For this reason, I import these political logics to international relations by associating equivalence to political convergence and difference to political divergence. How is this possible?

The processes of constitution and destabilisation of international practice are logics of convergence and divergence. On the one hand, the analyst reveals the international practice’s ideological dimension within the convergences by searching for those empty signifiers that countries bring to the fore in their attempt to objectivise their ties in antagonism to an excluded Other. Paraphrasing Laclau (2005, 110-111), such objectivation is the passage from each nation-state’s foreign policy demand to an international convergence that identifies the entire international practice with an ideal or principle. In other words, it is the power of naming an empty signifier as the signifier that centralises the international practice’s meaning and orders the rest of the convergences. Moreover, because the associative pole of language is “governed by the unconscious,” this irreducible moment of international signification belongs intimately to the terrain of affects represented by the arbitrariness there is behind any catachrestical operation.

On the other hand, as the agents can also antagonize each other around the meaning of some aspects of their respective foreign policies (which explains the heterogeneity of antagonistic frontiers) the analyst must also account for those elements that make the international logic of divergence possible. Regarding this point, I borrow Laclau and Mouffe’s (2014, 99, 120) notion of floating signifier to explain why countries cannot prevent the surplus of meaning of some elements due to political antagonisms within the international practice; put differently, when countries are unable to make the catachrestical

dictatorships during the seventies and eighties. However, this international practice's stability was constantly threatened by Argentina's ambition to project its Patagonian territory towards the Pacific and Chile's military preparedness to defend its southern regions. Thus, we could say that the relationship between these two democracies was constituted around the promotion of political freedom (associative pole) and the geopolitical principle of Chile in the Pacific and Argentina in the Atlantic (syntagmatic pole).

As we can see in this example, once again, international practice is not synonymous with international cooperation. In contrast, this approach aims to explain the political and contingent meaning of those elements that constitute cooperation, conflict, and whichever type of relationship is carried out by states.

With the definitions of international practice and logics of international relations, it is possible to formulate my international phenomenon as a tractable explanandum. So, problematization and retroductive steps would proceed as I explain in the next section.

4. Chile-China relations: Puzzles and research questions

Recapitulating our previous chapters, I explored the conditions with which to question how Chile and China have articulated their relationship by carrying out a problematisation at two levels, the ontic and ontological level, which also entailed a twofold deconstruction.

Firstly, at the ontic level, I analysed what the literature of Chile-China relationship takes for granted and identified the instabilities of those narratives. We shall remember that the literature tends to characterise the Sino-Chilean relationship by using a problematic notion of *being pragmatic* as opposition to the idea of *being ideological*; demonstrated in

the belief that the causes of such pragmatism are the protagonist role of trade in natural resources (*material factors*) and, paradoxically, a firm belief in free trade (an *ideal factor*). These accounts tend to de-politicise the analysis through the elaboration of what certain post-positivist authors (e.g. Edkins 1999; Mouffe 2013; Cox 1981; Smith 2013) would characterise as technological tools to account for commercial exchange which, in turn, conceal the political logics of the constitution and transformation of this relationship.

The second level of analysis was ontological. I drew attention to the gaps there are between what international studies take for granted regarding Chile-China relations and the positivist ontology that constitutes the core assumptions of IRT. In a nutshell, I concluded that mainstream IRT falls into positivist and normative essentialisms that suture the scholarly discursive field by conceiving *material factors* and *ideas* as the causes of international conflict (realist tradition) and its avoidance (liberal tradition). It also falls into essentialist traps either when understanding the notion of *cause* as real forces or when assuming that *structure* and *agency* are social facts constituted by the unidirectional distribution of knowledge that flows from the West to the rest of the world (constructivist tradition). Therefore, the IRT mainstream fails in providing us with the ontology to understand different ways of being, in terms of matter and form in international relations, particularly in non-Western/European practices. Seen in Foucauldian terms, I claim that the Sino-Chilean relation is not part of the mainstream IRT anxiety which looks for the maintenance of the established order by creating a system of exclusions. On the contrary, this relationship is indeed part of what IRT mainstream excludes.

Despite this gap between Chilean-Chinese ontic assumptions and IR positivist ontology, it is worth noting that both coincide not only in attributing a causal mechanism to the categories of materialism and idealism but also in developing de-politicised analyses.

To be specific, these levels remain enclosed in a vicious circle of contestable assumptions which make it difficult to understand the political constitution and transformation of Chile-China relations:

Figure 7. *The onion trap of the Sino-Chilean literature*

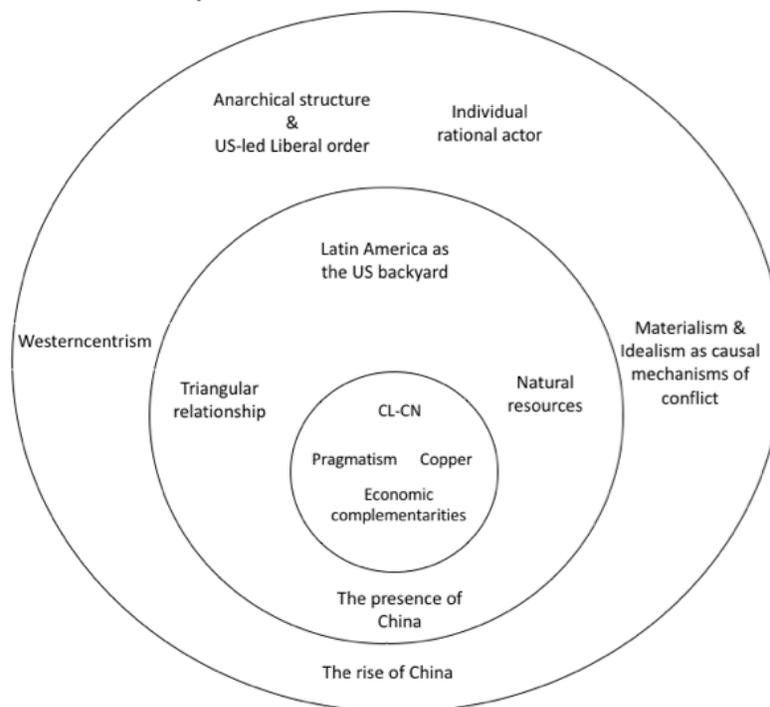


Figure 7, that resembles an onion, has three layers: the first is the layer of the Western idea of international relations as an anarchic structure, constrained by a US-led liberal order, which is threatened by the rise of China. This layer represents the traditional mainstream discourse that totalizes our understanding of world politics by suppressing a plurality of other possibilities. The second layer represents a regional imaginary of the mainstream discourse by regarding Latin America in the context of the rise of China; that is to say, it portrays the US' backyard ambioned by a rising world power. It is from this

imaginary that emerges the notion of *a triangular relationship* since it would not be possible to grasp the phenomenon of China in Latin America without the US. The third layer represents the claim that Chile-China relations are constituted by a pragmatic and de-politicised economic complementarity that does not threaten the US hegemony in its backyard. Seen the other way around, this model reflects the (unconscious) way the scholarly literature has encapsulated the Sino-Chilean relationship within the mainstream discourse of the Western-centric world order; this is such that, even at the expense of reproducing Western parochialism, this interpretation obliterates the agency of Latin American countries, along with their ideological biases whilst covering over ontological gaps.

It is against this double deconstruction that I propose PDT as the approach that can provide me with the ontology to better understand the political ways Chile and China came to constitute their relationship at different historical moments and the meanings and positions that certain element (objects, speeches and actions) occupy in the discursive articulations of this relationship. This problematization leads me to formulate the following questions:

- How are Chile-China relations, understood as international practices articulated in different historical contexts, constituted?
- How have these international practices been stabilised and destabilised?
- What elements do Chile and China bring to the fore when articulating their international practices, and what elements disclose their international practices' radical contingency and under what circumstances?

In turn, these general questions must be contextualised regarding the most important historical conjunctures the relationship has experienced since Chile and China established diplomatic ties in 1970. Based on the Chile-China literature accounted for in Chapter 1, it is possible to identify three historical moments crucial to understanding the constitution and transformation of Chile-China's international practices. These moments are the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1970, the political rapprochement of 1978 after the coup d'état against Chilean president Salvador Allende, and the FTA of 2005. Thus, I complement these general questions with the following contextual-dependent questions:

- Regarding that socialist president Salvador Allende's Chile was the first South American country to recognise the People's Republic of China, how did China and Chile establish diplomatic ties in 1970? Is it possible to find ideological antagonisms between socialist countries? What did socialism mean in this international practice's constitution, and what was the role of ideology?
- Regarding that the People's Republic of China did not break out diplomatic ties with Chile after the coup d'état against President Allende; and regarding also the following political rapprochement between General Augusto Pinochet's anti-communist Chile and communist China in 1978, how did these countries relaunch their bilateral relationships? How did they conceal the disruptive effects of the anti-communist Chilean coup d'état? Is it possible to find an ideological element within the rapprochement, and if it were so, how does it look like?
- Regarding that Chile's new democratic regime of 1990 decided not to break out diplomatic ties with the Chinese communist dictatorship and that since then these countries rapidly engaged into a chain of pioneering commitments which included

China's first bilateral free trade agreement signed ever in 2005, how did these countries sign an FTA? How did they conceal their political antagonisms? Is it possible to find an ideological element within the relationship, and if it were so, how does it look like?

As a general hypothesis, I argue that each of these three historical conjunctures represents three different international practices or three historical moments in which Chile and China articulated some elements of their respective foreign policies. That is to say, Chilean-Chinese practices take place when Chile and China can attain some degree of political convergence or when they signify together certain elements that provide a meaningful horizon to their relationship at particular historical moments. When they do so, they do it on behalf of a principle or ideal whose convergent meaning is arbitrarily assigned by these two nation-states. Paraphrasing Howarth, each of these international practices normalises the constitution of "the identities of subjects and objects by articulating together a series of contingent signifying elements available in a discursive field" (Howarth et.al. 2000, 7).

However, this is so only up to the moment of political divergence (public contestation) that reveals the international practice's radical contingency. In other words, because each international practice has no foundational moment, its undecidable origin is revealed when countries cannot fix the surplus meaning of certain elements vital to their respective foreign policies.

Political divergence can also be manifested as a dislocatory experience that exposes the instability of the practice's identities. A dislocation is when an event that is not contained within the current discursive practice, such as a pandemic, a global economic crisis or the

disruption of an outsider, reveals the contingency of that practice. This can open up space for challenges to the international practice so that countries seeking to defend the existing symbolic order must first and foremost articulate the dislocation into their existing respective foreign policies before rearticulating the international practice to account for the dislocation.

Thus, the moment of rupture defined either by public contestation or dislocation is the moment that discloses the heterogeneity of discursive possibilities and the failed attempts to objectivise Chile-China relations as if it were a self-evident international phenomenon.

According to this general claim, my empirical analysis aims to identify and explain those elements articulated in the constitution and transformation of Chilean-Chinese international practices, as well as to identify and characterize the logics that make these practices possible and vulnerable. Hence, regarding these three historical moments, I formulate the following historical-contextualised arguments:

- *Logics of the establishment of diplomatic ties*

In 1970, Chile became the first South American country to recognise the PRC; this decision was taken by the then recently assumed socialist president Salvador Allende. The international logic of convergence that comprises the establishment and the first years of the relationship is the logic of mutual recognition and respect of sovereignty and self-determination. The element ‘anti-imperialism’ is the empty signifier that partially stabilises the bilateral discourse. The international practice’s radical contingency is paradoxically revealed when Chile and China struggle for the meaning of the floating signifier of ‘socialist revolution,’ which is manifested in three international logics of divergence: the

identity of being a socialist revolution, the articulation of economic transformation with the socialist revolution, and the signification of the USSR' socialist identity.

- *Logics of the political rapprochement*

In 1978, after five years in which China and Chile had cooled down their relationship because of the coup d'état against president Allende (1973), these two countries' governments decided to relaunch their relationship on behalf of the principle of 'non-intervention' in domestic affairs. This international logic of convergence represented Chile's and China's inauthentic response to the dislocatory effect of the Chilean anti-communist coup d'état. Then, when this principle was not enough to conceal the international practice's radical contingency, Chile and China rearticulated its centrality by signifying the USSR as 'social-imperialism,' threatening their national sovereignties. This arbitrary signification given to the USSR in association with non-intervention represents the rapprochement's ideological dimension. It also allows for non-intervention to become the empty signifier from which another two convergences were articulated: the identity of being Third World countries and the identity of being backward economies. The chain of these international convergences made the Sino-Chilean rapprochement possible.

- *Logics of free trade*

After having antagonized the meaning of 'human rights' in the nineties, Chile and China conceal this international logic of divergence by rearticulating a new discursive totality during the first half of the 2000s. This international practice was constituted by a new chain of political demands articulated around the signifier 'free trade.' Free trade is the

international practice's empty signifier, while the arbitrary association of this element with the signification of Chile and China as two 'market economies' represents the practice's ideological operation. This ideological operation also makes it possible for Chile and China to converge in two other political demands, such as their expected positions against protectionism and unilateralism in world politics. It is within this international practice that Chile is placed as the world's first individual country to sign an FTA with China.

5. The empirical fieldwork

5.1. Collecting and selecting data

I start from the premise that to select and collect data is neither a neutral nor a mechanical process through which an observer expects to discover empirical regularities. The data collected for this project presents the following characteristics:

First, the interest in developing a top-down approach to Chile-China relations determines the data of this dissertation. The types of sources analysed here are texts such as declassified diplomatic files, high authorities' speeches, governments' press releases and official statements. I also consider files from third parties such as international organizations where Chile and China participate as members and other countries that address the Chilean-Chinese question at different historical contexts. Complementarily, I use autobiographies, biographies and manuscripts written by political actors who played considerable roles in articulating Chile-China relationships, such as presidents, ministers of foreign affairs and ambassadors.

Second, most of the empirical data consists of declassified diplomatic files provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile. For the 1970 and 1978 periods, these texts were

fully provided by its Historical Archive. In this case, the Archive's authorization means that the researcher can access the entire Chile-China database, including ordinary, reserved and secret files. This empirical fieldwork was carried out in July 2018 and August 2019.

On the other hand, the Archive denied access to files corresponding to the 2005 period. The Archive's rejection means that there is a criterion to limit the dates that a researcher can access folders of the Chile-China database. However, according to Chile's Transparency Law, if the Archive denies access to files, it is possible to proceed with a formal enquiry to the Ministry's Undersecretary. According to this law, all public organisms have an obligation to provide the requested information, except for those secretaries that work with national security issues, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Consequently, the Undersecretary can declassify information discretionally. So, I submitted three formal requests specifying the particular kind of information I was interested in; namely, the folders (ordinary, reserved and secret files issued from the Government of Chile to the PRC and from the PRC's government to Chile) corresponding to the year Chile supported China's entrance to the WTO (1999), when it recognised China's market economy status (2004), and the year of the free trade agreement signature (2005). The Undersecretary answered each request as follows:

- ***Resolution N° 5619***

The Undersecretary found three documents: "A) Negotiations for the accession of the People's Republic of China to the WTO, November 2nd, 1999." B) "Brief of the VII Political Consultation between the Republic of Chile and the People's Republic of China, November 2nd, 1999." C) "Brief of the XVII Chile-China Economic and Trade Joint

Commission, November 2nd, 1999.” The Resolution states that “the release of the requested documents will affect Chile’s international relations with the People’s Republic of China as long as these documents’ content include statements [...] made by Chilean and Chinese representatives with the reasonable expectation of keeping them under reserve.” Besides, “the requested documents entail opinions and analysis about third parties such as the United States of America, the Russian Federation, Canada, Australia, Pakistan, North Korea, Indonesia and New Zealand,” which, if they were released, could affect Chile-China’s mutual trust. In consequence, the Undersecretary “resolves to deny the access to all requested documents” (Chile 2019a, 1-3).

- ***Resolution N°4621***

The Undersecretary found 25 documents, from which fifteen were denied and ten were declassified. Among the denied files, there was a Reserved Brief about a meeting between Chile’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chinese Minister of Commerce (June 2nd, 2004). Two letters sent by Chile’s President to China’s President (July 26th and October 13th, 2004). Three Notes (N°18502, N°13739, N°10607) issued by Asia Pacific Department’s Director to the Chinese ambassador in Santiago. Among the authorised files, there were President of Chile’s and President of China’s speeches on November 18th, 2004. The Minute of the Meeting between Chile’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and China’s Minister of Commerce (September 29th, 2004). Two Joint Communiques (September 29th and November 18th, 2004). Regarding the denied files, the Undersecretary declared that “the requested documents entail opinions and analysis about third parties such as Haiti, Iraq and

South Korea.” which, if they were released, could affect Chile-China’s mutual trust (Chile 2019b, 1-5).

- ***Resolution N°4622***

The Undersecretary found 11 documents, from which five were denied, and six were declassified. Among the denied files, there was a Reserved Message (N°736) issued by the Chilean Embassy in Beijing and the Report of the First Round of Negotiations of the Free Trade Agreement (March 8th, 2005). Among the authorised files, it was possible to access the Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs’ speech on December 12th, 2005. President of Chile’s letter to China’s President (November 29th, 2005). Minister of Foreign Affairs’ letter to China’s Minister of Commerce (January 25th, 2005). Regarding the denied files, the Undersecretary declared that “the requested documents entail opinions and analysis about third parties such as Greece, New Zealand, Australia and Canada”, which, if they were released, could affect Chile-China’s mutual trust (Chile 2019c, 1-4).

These diplomatic sources were complemented with online sources of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the PRC and Chile, the digital Archives of the US Department of the State and the Central Intelligence Agency, the Marxist Internet Archive, the digital Historical Archive of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the digital Archive of Chile’s National Library, the digital Presidential Archive of Patricio Aylwin, and the digital archive of the World Trade Organization.

Third, all these data are written texts which means that they are a different type of linguistic material from interviews. Following Howarth (2005), this feature means that while the latter is a reactive linguistic source in which the interviewer reacts in situ while

facing questions about past events, the texts of declassified files are by definition non-reactive sources. This distinction matters methodologically because diplomatic folders are the most reliable sources that express the meaning of decisions, actions, and speeches in a particular historical period. Besides, most people involved in the articulation of Chile-China relations in 1970 and 1978 are dead. Considering the high costs associated with developing empirical fieldwork in both Chile and China, and regarding the limitations of language, the Chilean archive represents the most efficient way to access Chilean and Chinese official sources.

Fourth, this type of data creates the necessity of broadening the search to other historical sources that nourish the interpretation of the contexts in which such official texts were written. This strategic move requires the carrying out of an intertextual analysis; in other words, I assume that a text is not a closed system because it does not exist as a self-contained whole. Following Julia Kristeva, Martinez suggests that understanding a text means “that each word (text) is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read.” Therefore, Martinez continues, intertextuality is “a dialogue among several texts” (Martinez 1996, 268). From this perspective, Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ files, which are complemented with other institutions’ official documents, are assessed in relation to key actors’ writings and statements such as memoirs, autobiographies, chronicles and speeches; in turn, these data are analysed and contrasted by regarding specialised literature such as authorised and non-authorised biographies and academic works that account for a determinate political context in both Chile and China.

After collecting the diplomatic files, the next step is to select and organize the documents from Chile’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs according to the historical moments of 1970, 1978 and 2005. At this stage, I also include the rest of the official documents

obtained from other organizations and third parties. The period that each moment covers is not strictly restricted to the aforementioned years but to longer periods that enable us to pin down the context in which states articulate their international practices:

- *The 1970 period*

The year 1970 is largely determined by Salvador Allende's government (1970-1973) and China's last stage of its campaign to be legitimized as a UN member (1970-1971). When necessary, this period is broadened to the sixties in order to understand, for example, China's policy towards the USSR and the influence of dependency theory in Chile's politics. The data includes declassified diplomatic files of the Historical Archive of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, digital declassified files of the US State Department, digital material of the Chilean left-wing magazine *Punto Final*, the Spanish Edition of *Monthly Review*, the Archive of the Sino-Soviet Split Document Archive and the Archives of Chinese leaders' selected works, both of them published by Marxists Internet Archive.

- *The 1978 period*

The year 1978 is characterised by the rise of a new Chinese leadership after Mao Zedong's and Zhou Enlai's deaths in 1976, and the beginning of Chile's institutional transformation in 1975, carried out by the military dictatorship. This period lasts up to the early eighties, when China starts its policy of learning from abroad (1978-1982) and Chile establishes a new Constitution (1981). Here, I chiefly rely on diplomatic declassified files of the Historical Archive of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the digital Historical Archive of the General Assembly of the United Nations, digital declassified files from the US State

Department, Chinese leaders' selected works published by Marxists Internet Archive and the digital Archive of Chile's National Library.

- ***The 2005 period***

The year 2005 represents the corollary of a political process that had started in the early nineties, when Chile antagonised with China the meanings of human rights and Taiwan after having re-established its democratic regime. Then, during the first half of the 2000s, there was China's campaign to become a WTO's member, the Doha Round negotiations and the UN Security Council's debate about military actions against Iraq. For this period, I analyse early nineties' declassified diplomatic documents of the Historical Archive of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declassified diplomatic files released by Chile's Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, the digital Presidential Archive of Patricio Aylwin, the online archives of the WTO and the Security Council, the digital Archive of Chile's National Library, and the online press archives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of China, Chile and the US State Department.

5.2. Analysing data

To carry out my intertextual analysis, I divide this step into three sub-steps. First, I read the declassified diplomatic files from each period and identify those words or written expressions that significantly determine the meaning of the whole text and repeatedly appear in other diplomatic documents. These signifiers represent the candidates to become either empty or floating signifiers, insofar as they give a particular political meaning to the

texts in which they appear and the whole international practice's historical context. They allow me to characterise the international logics of Chile-China's international practices:

- In the 1970 period, I identify signifiers such as sovereignty, socialist revolution, dependency, self-reliance and imperialism.
- In the 1978 period, there are signifiers such as non-intervention, social imperialism, Third World and backward economies.
- In the 2005 period, elements appear as human rights, the market economy, protectionism and multilateralism.

Secondly, I start a new searching stage for these signifiers' historical-political meaning. Here, I assume that these elements signal that official documents were elaborated under particular historical circumstances and, therefore, their meanings are contextually dependent. In this sense, when reading the diplomatic files, I identify those political actors, such as presidents, ministers of foreign affairs and ambassadors, who played a crucial role in articulating Chile-China's international practices at each period. I also identify those organisations and third parties that are in some way part of Chile-China's practices, such as the UN, the WTO, the US and the USSR. Hence, I supplement my material with autobiographies, actors' personal chronicles and manuscripts written by those actors that played in some way or another a role in the articulation of Chile-China practice. I also use official documents of international organisms.

For the 1970 period, I account for texts from Mao Zedong's selected writings referring to economic issues during the revolution (1945), self-reliance (1966) and Soviet economics (1977), Zhou Enlai's dialogue with Henry Kissinger after the Chilean coup d'état (US

Department of State, 1973) and the letters exchanged between the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of China (1963) and the Soviet Union (1963) in the context of the Chinese-Soviet split. The book of Salvador Allende's speeches edited by Hugo Latorre (1974), Clodomiro Almeyda's (1979) speeches edited in a book published after the coup d'état, the first Chilean ambassador in Beijing Armando Uribe's (2016) memoirs, former General Secretary of the Chilean Socialist Party Carlos Altamirano's (1977) memoirs, and the Unidad Popular's Government Programme.

For the next period (1978), I study Hua Guofeng's speech after Mao's death (1976), his speeches to the 11th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (1977a) and the Tachai Conference (1977b), all published by China Report; Deng Xiaoping's selected works referring to the 1975-1982 period such as his criticism to Hua's two "whatevers" (1977b), his understanding of Mao's thought (1977a), and the four modernizations (1978). Augusto Pinochet's Chacarillas speech (1977a), the 1976-1977 Presidential Address, and his speech after the Referendum for a new Constitution (1981), Pinochet's former ministers and government officials such as Hernán Büchi's (1993) and Joaquín Lavín's (1987) books about Chile's economic transformation. Speeches of official representatives at the General Assembly of the United Nations are also crucial because they allow the observer to see Chile's (1973) and China's (1973) statements about the Chilean coup d'état, as well as Chile's (1975, 1976, 1977; 1978) discourse about human rights violations. I also consider former Albanian communist leader Enver Hoxha's (1979) writings criticising China's relations with Pinochet's Chile.

For the last period (2005), I analyse official documents of the digital Presidential Archive of Patricio Aylwin (1990-1994), which has invaluable Chilean and Chinese files regarding the first trip ever of a Chinese president to Santiago, Yang Shangkun (1990),

president Aylwin's trip to Beijing (1992), Taiwan's lobby to be re-recognised by the new democratic Chilean government (1993; 1992) and Chile's initial inclination to approve so (1993), as well as Aylwin's letters exchange with the Dalai Lama (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive, 1992b, 1993c). I also analyse public statements released by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Jiang Zemin's (1999b, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b) and Hu Jintao's (2003, 2004, 2005a; 2004) presidencies, president Ricardo Lagos's (2012) memoirs and Chile's former ambassador at the United Nations Heraldo Muñoz's (2008) chronicle of the Iraq war. Of special importance are the WTO's documents regarding China's accession (2001) and Chile's and China's participation in the group of negotiations called G-20 (2017), as well as former Chinese Ministry of Commerce Bo Xilai's (2005b) speech at the 6th Ministerial Conference of the WTO for the Doha Round. Here, I also include Hans Blix's (2004) memoirs about his role leading the UN's commission working on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, which is a valuable source that offers an authoritative view to contrast what leaders affirm about Chile's and China's roles as Security Council's members claiming for multilateralism.

Finally, I furnish my analysis of all these sources with academic material, drawing particular, though not exclusive, attention on Chinese and Chilean scholars, which helps me understand the meaning of the aforementioned signifiers (and the struggle to signify them academically) in specific contexts. For example, of critical importance were Chinese works such as Zheng Dahua's (2013) text on Mao's national revival thought, Jiang An's (2013) historical account of the origins of the Three Worlds theory, Rui Pan's (2015) paper about the discriminations against China's market economy status, Wang Weiguang's (2014) article about Mao's Sinicization of socialism and Feng Hui's (2017) research about the politics of China's accession to the WTO. On the Chilean side, I considered texts such as

Carlos Hunneus' (2000, 2016) work about the Chilean political transition to democracy or Eduardo Devés's (2004) research about Chile's social scientists in the long sixties. Regarding literature that is more contemporary to the periods under scrutiny, I included works such as Ronald Keith's (1983) text about China's self-reliance, Dorothy Fontana's (1982) and Jürgen Domes's (1977) papers about Hua Guofeng's political rise and fall, Joaquín Fermandois's (1985a) book about Allende's foreign policy, Heraldo Muñoz's (1986) book about Pinochet's foreign policy and Pilar Armanet's (1992) text about the making of Chile's foreign policy towards the Pacific Basin. Other works transcend one particular period because they, for instance, document a Chinese leader's life or try to offer explanations of a critical historical conjuncture. In this regard, I use Deng Xiaoping's biography written by Ezra Vogel (2011), Robert Kuhn's (2004) biographical book of Jiang Zemin, and Wang Hui's (2009) and Javier Pinedo's (1997, 2000) works about Chinese and Chilean thought between the seventies and nineties, respectively.

This academic literature offers critical insights to form my interpretation of empty and floating signifiers' meanings and their role in constructing Chinese-Chilean political identities, political antagonisms, and consequently allow me to characterise Chile-China's international practices in terms of international logics of convergence and divergence. In this sense, the way this material helps me to do so is not because of its neutral-scientific value (when reading Chilean, Chinese and Western scholars who have written about political phenomena, it is impossible not to find, in some way or another, political biases) but because they help me to construct my logics model of analysis within a theoretical framework that starts from the ontological premise of radical contingency, which for empirical analysis means that signifiers are overdetermined significations rather than objective elements.

I will develop this point more in depth in the following section.

6. A discussion with the IR Copenhagen School upon empirical strategies

The first upshot of this chapter is the definition of the research strategy by formulating both the category of international practice and the analytical units that I call logics of international relations. However, there is still one question to be answered: If the international practice is constituted by radical contingency, what is the excluded Other that threatens its closure? Put differently, what do I mean when I propose that my strategy's empirical focus is to search for those signifiers that allow me to characterise the international practice's logics? In this part, I answer this question by applying Derrida's hauntology; in other words, I try to hunt for the spectres of international practice.

Derrida (1994, 63) defines the spectre as “neither living nor dead, present nor absent: it spectralizes. It does not belong to ontology, to the discourse on the Being of beings, or the essence of life and death. It requires, then, what we call [...] hauntology.” So, the spectre is beyond formally present or, following the Laclauian terminology, what is excluded from the articulatory practice.

At first glance, this notion can be related to Saussure's problem of the sign's arbitrariness as long as the thing that is neither spirit nor flesh still can make visible the invisible. There is a natural bond between the signifier and the signified, says Saussure, although it is possible to find exceptions such as onomatopoeias or interjections. He explains that the bond (the meaning) is contextual insofar as the arbitrariness he refers to is fixed by rule as a temporary arrangement (Saussure 1916/2012, Kindle loc. 1923).

Nevertheless, Derrida sees in this definition the possibility to disentangle what is beyond that momentary arrangement, which, in turn, is a problem that cannot be resolved at the semiotic level of the analysis. In such a move, he evokes the metaphysical tradition and its exclusions (the epoch of ontological transcendence) which characterises Western philosophy and its written means of expression (“writing is nothing but the representation of language” (Derrida 1997, 32)).

In other words, by following Heidegger’s rejection of metaphysical transcendence, Derrida rejects the idea of the transcendence of being. In this view, hauntology is the logic of revealing the instability of meaning. Therefore, I do not look for what has been signified but what is beyond the formally present; I hunt the excluded thing that performs itself as an active thing (the spectre) that permanently threatens the being.

Explaining the spectre’s logic, Laclau asserts that Derrida’s hauntology is a deconstructive move that consists of understanding the spectre as the undecidable being that exists “between the two extremes of body and spirit” and that, at the same time, contaminates these extremes (Laclau 2007b, 68). This is why “time is out of joint” when the spectre makes itself visible because it is the “dislocation corrupting the identity with itself of any present” (Laclau 2007b, 69). Now, if spectrality presupposes an undecidable relation between spirit and flesh, Laclau questions the mediation between these two extremes that supersedes the heterogeneity of such undecidability. Such a kind of mediation is not akin to God’s, one that establishes the link in between the son and the holy spirit for example but is mediated by hegemony. A hegemonic relation “is one in which a certain body tries to present its particular features as the expression of something transcending its own particularity,” Laclau affirms (2007b, 71). The spectre, in this sense, is an absent fullness that resemblances the empty signifier and its formation as a hegemonic operation

of catachresis, through which “universality and particularity get confused” while, at the same time, other spectres compete “to be incarnated” in such a materialization (Laclau 2007b, 71-72).

If this research’s primary empirical data are diplomatic files, the critical contribution of hauntology relies on assuming that there is no such a thing as the tyranny of writing (Derrida 1997, 38). Writing “is not originally subordinated to the logos and truth,” says Derrida (1997, 19), as long as the meaning of what is written is unstable and has no a foundational moment of signification.

Thus, if written signifiers make themselves visible again and again in ways such that they centralize not only the meaning of the diplomatic file but also the entire international practice (its present), I must search for (hunt), paraphrasing Derrida (1997, 43), what has been excluded from the signification, by searching for the spectres in other kinds of texts and carrying out an intertextual analysis.

Let me be clear; in my empirical fieldwork, I hunt the spectres that haunt the three international practices I have identified (1970, 1978, 2005). I separate such a methodological purpose from the temptation of hunting the phantoms of current Chile-China academic literature, such as ideology and political identities, that scholars conceal by appealing to technocratic pragmatism and positivist causality, as it was shown in Chapters 1 and 2.

This empirical strategy contrasts with the kind that the Copenhagen School’s scholars propose.

It is feasible to compare and contrast my post-Marxist international approach with the Copenhagen School because the latter offers top-down models of post-structuralist analysis and accounts for the articulation of two or more foreign policies. Mainly, Ole

Wæver's (2005) study of Germany and France sheds light on this issue with accuracy¹⁵ as he studies France's and Germany's national identities and foreign policies in the constitution of Europe's identity.

In the development of his model, Wæver applies the notion of sedimentation in a contestable way from my standpoint. Wæver (2005) (and other authors such as Lene Hansen (2006)) claims that within national discourses, there is a reliance on hierarchical structures of concepts and meanings. He structures different levels of sedimentation that he calls a *layered structure* of the elements that constitute the articulation of national identity within foreign policy. He (2005, 37-39) suggests that "the deeper structures are more solidly sedimented and more difficult to politicise and change."

Wæver conceives a structure of three layers by considering Germany and France. The most sedimented layer corresponds to France and Germany's core national concepts. It then follows the layer of the relational position of France and Germany with Europe respectively and, finally, the most superficial layer is the one by which Germany and France promote their idea of Europe. He looks for those concepts that constitute each layer of national identity and figures out how these concepts shape foreign policies' meaning and orientation.¹⁶

¹⁵ Similarly, Hansen's object of study are Western discourses, articulated within the debates over the war in Bosnia, from which she argues that 'the Balkans' is a key representation and object of different articulations. Her methodological problem is how to map discourses; in response, she introduces the notion of intertextuality to capture how "texts draw upon other texts to establish legitimacy and authority for their constructions of identity and foreign policy" (Hansen, 2006, p. 12). In other words, the selection of texts relies on those materials from which it is possible to trace the genealogy of significant representations. In so doing, she proceeds to distinguish three 'arenas' or intertextual models: foreign policy discourse, oppositional forces (political oppositions, media, and corporate organisations), and popular culture and marginal political discourses.

¹⁶ Similarly, when Hansen explains her strategy to account for the Bosnian war, she explains that the sources should be chosen in accordance with considerations which are similar to the layered structured approach: "First, the majority of texts should be taken from the time under study, but historical material that traces the genealogy of the dominant representations should also be included. Second, the body of texts should include

What is at stake, however, by looking for concepts from the deepest and most sedimented layers to the shallowed ones in the articulation of foreign policies, is the association of sedimentation with the absence of change in national identities, which, in the end, I think Wæver does unconsciously insofar as in his model it seems quite difficult to destabilise France's deepest national identity.

By bringing this problem to the fore, I do not reject the very possibility of sedimentation. Instead, rather than understanding its applicability as a variable that determines the most profound sense of national identity, I assume the possibility of sedimentation as a partial stabilisation of practice at specific historical contexts by exercising political power that excludes other possibilities. National identities are temporarily constituted because they are haunted by the spectre that threatens its stability in particular historical circumstances.

Suppose, for example, that the concept of modernity in China is a highly sedimented element, which has been present from the decline of the Qing dynasty in the 19th century to current times. Applying the layered structure, one could argue that modernity is the first and deepest layer, followed by a layer characterised by China's goal to find a development strategy when the economy became a modernity achievement factor. Finally, we could conceive a third and most superficial layer consisting of China's economic models of development such as the great leap forward or the 1978-opening-up reforms. Something similar would happen considering Chile. First, it has the deepest layer of modernity which is presented since the second half of the 19th century, then Chile's idea

key texts that are frequently quoted and function as nodes within the intertextual web of debate" (Hansen, 2006, p. 82).

of development as a national goal and, finally, superficial layers of economic models of development such as the import substitution model and the neoliberal model.

From this layered structure, a hypothesis comes up automatically: Chile and China articulated their relationship around their traditional discourses of national modernity whose most superficial layers were determined, first, by their respective socialist revolutions in the early seventies and, then, by the so-called parallel economic reforms since the late seventies.

This layered structure leads the analyst to assume that the meaning of modernity does not change or changes somewhat insignificantly through time. Nobody could question that both China and Chile have tried to achieve modernity since the 19th century. Nevertheless, the question is, in what sense? How does the meaning of modernity change regarding the historical context? If we consider, for instance, the works of authors such as Javier Pinedo and Wang Hui, it is possible to see that modernity is an element of hegemonic struggles and, therefore, its meaning has been defined and re-defined again and again in both Chile and China (H. Wang 1998, 2009; Pinedo 1997, 2000).

Thus, sedimentation understood as a variable that creates a layered structure of identities, is inconsistent with the logic of the spectre (hauntology) and my ontological premise of the instability of objects. If I understand sedimentation as a methodological variable, I renounce to the signifier' overdetermined character and the effectiveness of hegemonic struggles to centralise international practices' meaning at specific historical conjunctures. Put differently, the Copenhagen School's application of sedimentation challenges the principle of overdetermination that determines the political struggles that subjects carry out to hegemonize signifiers' meaning. Thus, overdetermination, the permanent tension between dispersion and partial fixation (Laclau and Mouffe 2014;

Althusser 2005; Buenfil 2000), leads me to claim that, in my example, modernity is an unstable element whose meaning is ungraspable and contextually dependent and not a variable.

Conclusions

In these last two chapters, I formulated my post-Marxist approach towards Chile-China relationships. I defined three things. First, the Sino-Chilean relationship is the articulation of a discourse between two nation-states. Following Laclau, discourse is a complex of elements (speeches, objects and actions) that plays a constitutive role; elements do not pre-exist such articulation but are constituted through it by relations of difference (Laclau 2005, 68-69). Bearing this in mind, I conceive Chile-China relationship as an articulatory *international practice* rather than a given international phenomenon.

Second, this international practice is neither static nor a fully closed system of relations but a contingent form of power in which subjects mobilize with reference to signifiers that promise the fullness that is always lacking in any discourse (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 122). In this sense, the promise of fullness is given by what Laclau (2007c) calls empty signifiers, which are elements that have the capacity to partially fix, by exclusion of an antagonistic other, the flow of meanings of other particularities that altogether constitute a discourse. This means that I aim to discover relations of power that constitute and transform Chilean-Chinese international practices.

Third, my units of analysis are the logics of such a practice. By applying the notion of logic, I do not assume that international relations are strategic interactions built upon decisions taken by rational and transparent actors. Rather, I am keen on figuring out the

grammar of an international practice as well as the conditions under which it is possible (international logics of convergence) and vulnerable (international logics of divergence).

The characterisation of the international practice's grammar as logics of convergence and divergence requires an intertextual analysis of different types of sources whose texts reveal the presence of signifiers that centralise the international practice's meaning by the exclusion of the Thing that threatens to reveal the practice's ontological contingency. This method means that the analyst characterises the international practice's logics after analysing texts and not before.

Contrary to what Eberle (2016, see Chapter 4) claims in his logics approach to Germany's foreign policy, I argue that logics do not precede the practice's articulation. It also means that hunting spectres through a post-Marxist way to understand the role of rhetorical categories in discourse analysis does not necessarily require that they are complemented with exogenous techniques such as Critical Discourse Analysis, as Nymalm (2015, see Chapter 4) proposes in her research about the US' discourse of the rise of Japan and China.

In the next part, I will apply these definitions to explain three crucial moments of the relationship. The establishment of diplomatic ties, in 1970, under the administration of two socialist governments; the bilateral rapprochement of 1978 taking place between Augusto Pinochet's anti-communist dictatorship and the Chinese communist regime headed by a new leadership represented by Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping; and the signature of the FTA, in 2005, which is China's first agreement of this sort ever signed. In doing so, I analyse a broad range of empirical data and primary and secondary sources. The analysis of these texts leads me to argue that international practices have been constituted and normalised at certain times through the articulation of discursive elements, whose

grammars can be comprised by the international logics that I will proceed to define and characterise in the following chapters.

PART III

LOGICS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:

CHILE-CHINA RELATIONS AS INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES

CHAPTER 6

Chile and China in 1970: Logics of the establishment of diplomatic relationships

Introduction

Why did the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Chile establish diplomatic ties? At first glance this question seems simple enough to answer, as when these countries formalized their relationships in December 1970, a Chilean left-wing coalition, led by Salvador Allende, had taken power three months earlier with the promise of making a socialist revolution. Thus, the first and foremost answer that is given by the Sino-Chilean literature is that the cause is ideological (e.g. Errázuriz 2006; Schmidt 2011).

However, for those who study ideologies in IRT, such an answer may not be generalizable to other contemporary cases in which China established diplomatic ties with Western Hemisphere countries. Chile was the first South American country to recognize the PRC as the only legitimate China, but it was immediately followed by other countries governed by different types of regimes and ideologies.¹⁷ In 1972, President Richard Nixon made his historical trip to Beijing and started a long negotiation process to establish diplomatic relationships. Besides, insofar as Allende's government took power in the context of the US domino doctrine, some scholars suggest that Allende's foreign policy was pragmatic rather than ideological (Muñoz 1986; Fernandois 1985b). Thus, many

¹⁷ Juan Velasco Alvarado's Peru in 1971, Alejandro Lanusse's Argentina in 1972, and Ernesto Geisel's Brazil and Carlos A. Pérez's Venezuela in 1974.

researchers' main challenge is defining the role of ideology in this kind of international phenomenon.

In IRT, one major theoretical issue that has dominated the field for many years concerns the definition of ideational elements, including ideologies, as causal factors. Contesting both the neorealist dismissal of ideas and the rise of post-modernist IR, these scholars claim that ideas have an instrumental role because they are variables that guide rational actors' choices and facilitate cooperation. However, one criticism of much of this kind of literature is that not all causes work as efficient causes and "since there is no common measure for all things, incommensurability exists" (Kratochwil 2019, 5).

In this chapter, I show that the establishment of Chile-China diplomatic ties was not determined by the causality of ideas, such as the socialist ideology, but by a much more complex articulation of different elements that constituted an international practice. I do so in a twofold step. First, I show the elements that Chile and China bring to the fore from their foreign policies when trying to articulate a bilateral symbolic order, drawing attention to those elements Chilean and Chinese leaders converge politically and the empty signifier upon which these countries reveal the ideological attempt to objectivise their relationship. Second, I show those elements of political divergence whose overdetermination destabilises the bilateral discourse.

Allende's socialist Chile and Zhou Enlai's communist China converged in the meaning of some elements, such as sovereignty and mutual respect, and would come to signify the relationship's ideological horizon around the empty signifier of 'anti-imperialism.' In contrast, when each side tried to articulate the element of 'the socialist revolution' within the relationship, they antagonized political positions revealing the practice's radical contingency and showing that socialism is an incommensurable element

that can be characterised as a floating signifier. This signifier is an element that challenges the cohesive narrative structure these two countries are trying to articulate. Hence, this element's surplus of meaning prevents us from associating ideology with law-like generalizations of causality in IR, reconfiguring our understanding of the status of socialism within the Chile-China relationship as an element of political divergence.

To characterize this international practice, I analyze a range of relevant empirical data such as diplomatic files of the Historical Archive of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and official documents from Chile, China and the US. Following my post-Marxist research strategy, I first identify the elements that constitute this international practice and then characterize its international logics of convergence and divergence.

The first section examines the notion of ideology formulated in texts that account for Chile-China relations and analyze it with respect to the positivist IRT interpretation. In the following sections, I describe how the Sino-Chilean diplomatic ties were established and identify the elements that constitute this international practice. Finally, the fourth section presents the research findings, focusing on the characterization of the aforementioned international logics of convergence and divergence.

1. Ideology and International Relations

As shown in Chapter 1, Sino-Chilean relations literature tends to circumscribe ideology within the conventional positivist dilemma between naive idealism and rational realism. Namely, pragmatism characterizes the current state of the relationship concentrated on trade, and it signals the contrast with a past overdetermined by ideological identities (Bernal-Meza 2012; Errázuriz 2006; Schmidt 2011). Unfortunately, however, no study has

been found that defines these two categories and explains their role in the constitution and the transformation of this relationship satisfactorily.

Some texts conceal the relationship's ideological features by signifying either Chile's or China's foreign policy as pragmatic. However, the attempt to objectivize one side of the relationship in that way is fruitless because such an objectivation does not necessarily mean the relationship itself is pragmatic, as these scholars suggest (Dingemans, 2014; Ross, 2007b). Thus, another gap one can find in this literature is the absence of empirical studies that account for the articulation of the two foreign policies.

It is worth noting that, in the Cold War context, some scholars define either Chile's or China's foreign policy as the intersection between ideological strategy and operative pragmatism (Fermendois 1985b; Young 1981). This kind of approach criticizes the thesis of the US containment policy¹⁸ deployed in East Asia and Latin America or what Gould-Davies (1999) calls realist fallacies that lead to mistaken but logically constructed conclusions (for instance, socialist states are genuinely aggressive). According to the containment approach, Chile-China ties would have been the effect and cause of the spread of an ideology that put at risk the US' desire of a harmonious global community (Ninkovich 1994; Kennan (X), 1947a).

However, although the articulation of ideological strategy and operative pragmatism solves the ideology-pragmatism conundrum by arguing that Chile's and China's pragmatic

¹⁸ This thesis, attributed to George Kennan (1947), is part of a comprehensive US tradition known as the domino theory. Kennan claims that the political personality of Soviet power "is the product of ideology and circumstances" (Kennan (X), 1947, p. 566). He affirmed that the Soviets did not junk anything from Marxism-Leninism to destroy capitalism. This theory relies on the premise that the anarchic feature of the international system can be contained by spreading a value-system of a global community that, according to Howard (1989, p. 4), "would be perceived as universal if only all its members could be reached, liberated and where necessary educated." Considering this definition, Kennan goes upside down inasmuch as his idea of containment aimed to stop the domino of destruction triggered by socialism. To dig more into the history of domino theory in the US' foreign policy, see Ninkovich (1994).

decisions conduct ideologically constructed foreign policies, one limitation of this thesis is to assume that ideology is a rigid set of beliefs that informs agents' preferences to achieve desired outcomes.¹⁹ Paraphrasing Howard's (1989), one could suggest that this limitation is generated by a conscious or (more likely) unconscious belief in ideologies' causality in generating international outcomes.

As was explained in Chapters 2 and 3, the attention that scholars draw to this particular definition of ideology has been subject to considerable discussion among rational and, in particular, liberal approaches (e.g. Goldstein & Keohane, 1993; Keohane, 2000). Following Smith (1996), we can affirm that this literature relies upon positivist-scientific epistemology based on deductive logic, empirical verification, theory and observation distinction, and the Humean theory of causation. Rational approaches that draw attention to ideas aim to know the ideal factors that govern individuals' actions in a socially defined game and why they act in such a game (Hollis and Smith 1991, 75-76). From this viewpoint, ideas are a factor that reduce uncertainty and facilitate cooperation by framing institutions that, in turn, constrain the anarchic nature of the international structure, help states to maximize relative gains, and prevent conflict. For example, Haas (2005) suggests that the control of this variable enables policymakers to predict when other states are either willing to cooperate or behave more assertively.

However, questions have been raised about the assumptions of this approach, such as the idealization of the analyst as a neutral observer as if s/he were able to get detached

¹⁹ This approach formulated by Chilean and Chinese scholars recalls Morgenthau's essays on morality in world politics. The policymaker, Morgenthau suggests in his essay *The Evil of Politics and the Ethics of Evil*, "may subordinate all ethical considerations to the realization of his political goal, yet his act cannot be beyond good and evil, not even from his own point of view, as long as he makes the apparent harmony of his act with the ethical standards part of the goal to be realized" (Morgenthau 1945, 5) From this viewpoint, Chinese and Chilean foreign policies reflected somehow such apparent harmony when acting pragmatically in the pursuit of their respective ideological or ethical standards.

from subjectivities when analyzing ideologies (Edkins, 1999; Mouffe, 2013). There has also been little agreement on the positivist objectivation of knowledge from which it is assumed that social analysis methods can delimit the boundaries between ideological and non-ideological domains (George, 1994).

These problems are certainly true in the case of democratic peace theory (Frieden, Lake, and Schultz 2019). This theory entails a twofold problem considering my case study. First, the assumption that mature democracies do not fight other mature democracies disguises that the US has indeed fought, by using non-military means, other democracies such as Allende's Chile. In 1970, the Chilean democracy was more than 150 years old, much older than many European modern democracies, and mature enough to elect a president whose project was to build a Chilean way to socialism by respecting long-lasting democratic institutions. Second, this theory assumes a reductionist view of the world as if it were divided between democracies and non-democratic regimes; namely, there would not have been differences between countries such as the PRC, Saudi Arabia, and Cuba. Hence, this liberal approach to ideas denies international diversity and leads to, paraphrasing Gould-Davis, mistaken but logically constructed conclusions and the smuggling in of Eurocentric biases.

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that ideologies are incommensurable. Ideologies are not external objects (independent variables) that affect policymakers' rational choices and possess a consubstantial causal capacity to generate international outcomes in terms of conflict and cooperation. These positivist beliefs create an unsuitable epistemological straitjacket to study international phenomena such as Chile-China relations during the Cold War. To overcome these problems, I propose to draw attention to post-Marxism by arguing that the establishment of Chile-China's diplomatic

ties can be understood as the political articulation of different but relational elements into one bilateral discourse.

2. The establishment of diplomatic ties

When Chile established diplomatic relationships with the PRC, both parts signed a declaration in which the former committed to recognising three principles: First, there is only one China. Second, the PRC is the only legitimate government of China. Third, Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory.

In 1970, as the Republic of China (Taiwan) was officially a member of the United Nations (UN), the agreement between the PRC and Chile can be seen as a part of the PRC's global strategy to push Taiwan's surrender by diplomatic means (Lin 2001).²⁰ For this reason, the Chilean-Chinese declaration was almost the same one that China had signed that same year with Canada and Italy (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1970c, 1971d) and with Peru one year later (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971f). China became a UN's member in 1971, when the General Assembly (1971) approved the Resolution 2758²¹ with the support of the totality of the 54 states that, at that time, had established diplomatic relationships with the PRC.

In Chile, because the absence of formal ties with the world's most populous country was absurd, the question of the recognition of the PRC was one of Allende's first

²⁰ As Luard stresses, "the question of the People's Republic of China's membership of the UN is not, of course, a question of 'admission'. China has been a member of the UN since its foundation. It is a question of 'representation.'" See (1971, 729)

²¹ The Resolution of the General Assembly declares the restoration of "all its rights to the People's Republic of China and to recognise the representatives of its Government as the only legitimate representatives of China to the UN". The PRC's official statement says that it was "recognised that there is but one China in the world, of which Taiwan is an inalienable part, and that the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legitimate government representing China" (P.s.R.o. China 2000c)

international concerns.²² Immediately after assuming as minister of Foreign Affairs, in November 1970, Clodomiro Almeyda stated that “there are some countries that maintain a stubborn attitude towards the entry of this important nation; but, we will contribute to getting this closer and closer” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1970b). So, in January 1971, both countries announced the establishment of diplomatic relations and one month later, the new PRC's mission in Santiago notified to the local authorities that they had occupied the building of “the spurious ‘Embassy’ of Chiang Kai-shek's clique” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971b).

To recognize the PRC, Chile had advocated for the principles of sovereignty and self-determination as a subtle way to denounce the US attempts to frustrate Allende's election and then destabilize his government. In this context, in the presentation of credentials, the *chargé d'affaires* read a letter written by Almeyda which states that, with the establishment of diplomatic ties, “the Chilean government has fulfilled one of the basic postulates of the Unidad Popular's (UP)²³ international programme [...] that Chile will have relations with all the countries of the world regardless its ideological and political position; on the basis of respect for self-determination” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971c).

In this context, both Chilean and Chinese leaders articulated a common identity of being two developing countries fighting against imperialism to become fully sovereign. For instance, Almeyda stated that Chile's developing condition “does not only generate

²² Allende's position regarding China was already known before assuming as President. A telex sent from Chile's Embassy in Taipei, on September 18th, 1970, informs about Taiwan's concern about the elected President's steps regarding the PRC (H.A.o.C.s.M.o.F. Affairs 1970a).

²³ The UP was the coalition that supported the candidacy and then presidency of Allende. It was integrated by Chile's Communist Party, Chile's Socialist Party, Chile's Radical Party, Chile's Social-Democrat Party, the Movement of People's Unitary Action (MAPU), and Independent People's Action. The UP's programme declares that Chile will look for encouraging ties “of friendship and solidarity with both independent and colonized peoples, especially those who are carrying out their struggles for freedom and independence.” See (1969, 32)

sympathy and natural bonds with Latin America but also with Asia and Africa. In this sense, countries like Chile and China struggle for their independence and development” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971c). Likewise, Zhou affirmed that “being Chile and China equally developing countries, we can understand very well the difficulties that Chile is currently facing, and we have heartfelt sympathy for this country” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973g).

During the first year of relations, China foregrounded the South American initiative of 200 nautical miles from land as an exclusive economic zone. As long as China had the interest to denounce the US’ violations over her sovereign continental shelf, this issue was critical in the establishment of diplomatic relationships with Chile and Peru (Chile 1971c, 1971a, 1971b). This initiative had been the outcome of two regional agreements between Chile, Peru and Ecuador, signed in 1952 and 1954 respectively, to protect their coastal zones from maritime exploitation carried out by third parties.²⁴ According to China, this norm represented the defence of national resources and state sovereignty from imperialism. Chinese Deputy Director of the Department of Western Europe, Americas and Oceania explained in-depth why the PRC “strongly supports the just struggle that the Latin American countries face, against imperialist plundering, for the defence of national resources and state sovereignty” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971e). China justified its solidarity because, regardless of their continental shelves’ differences, it had the interest to denounce the violations perpetrated by the US over her sovereign continental shelf (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971g).²⁵

²⁴ This initiative was recognized by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982).

²⁵ Chile’s ambassador in Beijing associates this position with Mao’s idea of standing by “whatever the enemy opposes and oppose whatever the enemy supports” (H.A.o.C.s.M.o.F. Affairs 1971g; see also Mao 1939).

These elements framed the agreements that these countries subscribed to during the 1970-73 period. For example, when they signed a maritime transport agreement, in January 1973, the Chinese representative, deputy minister of Transport, Yu Mei, re-stressed China's support of the 200 maritime miles initiative (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973i). Then, when the Chilean government dealt with attempts to destabilize the national economy, the same agreement facilitated contract credits with China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Import and Export Corporation. Chilean leaders conceived this cooperation as the "manifestation of revolutionary and human solidarity that characterizes the attitude of [the Chinese] government towards Chile" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973b, 1973h). In turn, this cooperation was possible thanks to a trade agreement signed in 1970, in which both countries had committed to "provide all kinds of facilities for the import and export of goods [and] reciprocally grant the most-favoured-nation treatment concerning licenses for import and export of goods and in all matters concerning customs fees and other tariffs" (Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1972).

For Chile, these bilateral agreements had a particular meaning. A Chilean report made just a few weeks after the coup d'état that overthrew Allende characterized the array of Chile-China agreements as a demonstration that "The Chinese government is always based on the principle of equality and mutual benefit when assisting other countries [...] it does not pursue the goal of making those countries dependent on China" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973f).

3. The elements of the diplomatic ties

3.1. Socialist revolution

The files of the Sino-Chilean diplomatic archive frequently bring to the fore the element of socialist revolution. So, as we are trying to assess the role of socialism in this international practice, it is crucial to question: What did Chile and China understand by socialist revolution? How did each country articulate this element within their respective foreign policies?

When interacting with Chinese counterparts, Minister Almeyda defined Chile as a “socialist and developing country [...] that pursues to build the bases of a socialist society” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971c). Indeed, the UP's (1969) program had declared that “the popular and revolutionary forces have not joined together to fight for the simple replacement of a President of the Republic by another [...] but to carry out substantive changes that the national situation claims.” It is from this identity that Chilean leaders articulated a self-identification having China as a reference. Allende expressed so in a letter to Zhou, in which he said that Chile admires Chinese achievements “in the struggle to transform its social and economic structure and overcome the long years of exploitation and backwardness” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973c).

However, China never acknowledged Chile as a socialist revolution. According to Chile's ambassador in Beijing, Armando Uribe, what China highlighted the most from Allende's government was the nationalization of the copper industry, because it was a demonstration that the country was “moving forward in the fight for the defence of state sovereignty and the safeguarding of national independence.” Nevertheless, instead of being proof of a socialist revolution, this achievement meant a step forward “to advance through

the path of the national-democratic revolution.” It is worth noting that the ambassador was glad to see that China publicly recognized Chile’s revolutionary character, although he also regretted that this expression did not mean a socialist revolution. At least, the ambassador continues, “it seems that China acknowledges that we are in transit towards it” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971h).

This appreciation would not have been wrong, because the notion of “democratic revolution” (民主革命) did not have any sense of disaffection from China’s way to understand a revolutionary process. Quite the contrary, Mao defined this concept as the first stage of Chinese rejuvenation or what Zheng (2013) re-defines today as great renaissance (伟大复兴). Accordingly, a national-democratic revolution aims “to overthrow the rule of imperialism and feudalism to achieve national liberation and the nation’s independence.” While the second phase was the socialist revolution and construction (社会主义革命和建设), thereby its mission is “to build China into a modernized socialist nation” (Zheng 2013). Thus, as US companies controlled the Chilean copper industry, its nationalization was a critical step toward achieving a democratic revolution.

China’s views about the Chilean revolution were spoken clearly when Almeyda met Premier Zhou Enlai, in Beijing, in January 1973. Zhou expressed his doubts about Chile’s political conditions to make the socialist revolution and construct a socialist state. As far as the socialist revolution was concerned, Zhou asked Almeyda: “Who controls the Army?” Almeyda answered that “the political change in Chile did not occur after war or acute crisis. On the contrary, it comes after a state of relative normality; that makes our revolutionary process so special.” The dialogue continues as follows:

Zhou: (...) How is your government controlling military action right now?

Almeyda: There are divisions. If the time comes, some will act against us (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973g).

As we can see here, Zhou manifested his concern about military power to carry out a revolution. This concern was not far from internal differences that the Chilean left was dealing with at that time. According to former General Secretary of the Chilean Socialist Party, Carlos Altamirano, some conceived violence as a highly in-advance-planned strategy, while others thought that violence was just a hypothetic tactic subordinated to a peaceful strategy (Altamirano, 1977).²⁶ At last, the peaceful strategy prevailed with Allende as his first supporter. For instance, he stated at the United Nations that “Our people’s democratic will has the challenge of boosting the revolutionary process within the framework of a highly institutionalized regime that has been flexible to changes” (Allende 1972a, 138).

This view contrasted dramatically with the Chinese Communist Party’s “Proposal concerning the general line of the international communist movement,” which had been elaborated during the Sino-Soviet split. From a Chinese viewpoint, it was impossible to conceive the success of a socialist revolution without breaking down the bourgeois political system and without taking over the monopoly of the means of violence:

if a Marxist-Leninist Party falls into legalism or parliamentary cretinism [...] this will inevitably lead to renouncing the proletarian revolution [...] there is no historical precedent

²⁶ Carlos Altamirano reflected in-depth about this problem: “The desire to reduce a fundamental strategic problem to the category of a tactic, whose questions would be solved through the process, was ultimately the substantial cause of the defeat of the People's movement. [...] The armed way can use the bourgeois institutions and legal forms of struggle for a long time. Still, it must also foresee the use of violence at the decisive moments of the process” (See Altamirano 1977, 57-58).

for peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism (Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party 1963).

Regarding socialist construction, Zhou criticized the speed under which Chilean changes were taking place. For example, Zhou questioned the policy of feeding Chilean children with half a litre of milk per day. Almeyda, in turn, had to explain that they had to reduce the amount of milk because of import problems:

Zhou: We dare not do so after 23 years [...] you have gone too fast.

Almeyda: I don't think so. I think that the policy we have adopted is fair.

Zhou: I don't see it the same way. As a friend, I tell you this frankly [...] I am worried after reading the information about your country (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973g).

In other words, the construction of a socialist state was impossible without preparing in advance the conditions to make radical changes. In this context, Zhou wrote a letter to Allende in which he suggested that Chileans “have to work hard for a long time, pay some price and make certain sacrifices” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973d). A couple of months after the coup in Chile, Zhou confirmed these thoughts to Kissinger by stressing that Allende “shouldn't do everything at one go.” (US Department of State, 1973).

The antagonism upon the meaning of socialist revolution was explicitly communicated after the Chilean military coup (September 11, 1973). The Chinese representative at the UN's General Assembly, Guanhua Qiao (1973), after expressing the condolences on Allende's “heroic death,” added that “we hold one should not forget how harmful the absurd theory of so-called ‘peaceful transition’ is to the anti-imperialism revolutionary

struggles.” In fact, in his memoirs, former ambassador Uribe expressed that Chinese leaders would have thought that “politically, Chile’s was heresy” (Uribe, 2016: Kindle loc. 5595).

3.2. Economic development and socialist revolution

When Chinese and Chileans exchanged views about economic development and revolution, there were also different approaches by each side. While Chile articulated an economic discourse built up on the precepts of dependency theory, China did it by foregrounding the notion of self-reliance. The questions that arise from here are: What are the meanings of dependency theory and self-reliance in the Chilean and Chinese contexts, respectively? How Chile articulates dependency theory regarding China and how China articulates self-reliance regarding Chile?

3.2.1. Chile and Dependency Theory

When Almeyda introduced Chile to his Chinese counterparts, he stated that his government was seeking “to modify its relations of international dependence that inhibit the nation’s free determination” (Historical Archive of Chile’s MOFA 1971c). Then, in Beijing, he stressed *dependentist* ideas in the context of the Chilean request for Chinese economic aid. This request, in turn, was analysed by Zhou as follows:

Zhou: It is always dangerous to depend not on your resources but foreign aid.

Almeyda: Yes, it’s true (...) We inherit a dependent economic structure, we cannot amend the course from one day to another (Historical Archive of Chile’s MOFA 1973g).

Almeyda's words reflect the influence of a complex array of ideas and theories that we know as dependency theory or structuralist economics.²⁷ The important point to be considered here is that this approach was mostly cultivated in Santiago. Since the fifties, the Chilean capital had become the centre of the Latin American thought of development thanks to the presence of an outstanding community of social scientists who worked not only in universities but, overall, in international organizations such as the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (See Devés-Valdés, 2004; 2008).²⁸ A good number of these scholars were policy activists; some of them were also politicians or were politically well connected.²⁹

In his paper about the UP's economic foundations, Ruiz (2005) explains that since the beginning of the 1960s, ECLAC scholars brought to the fore the dichotomy development–underdevelopment considering there are not developed countries without underdeveloped ones. In this context, he suggests that the ultimate goal of the UP was to alter the specific dominant structure radically and change the internal factors that facilitate and promote the state of underdevelopment. Some UP leaders, especially socialists, were active supporters of these intellectual networks' ideas and agents; for instance, Almeyda, who was a member of the Chilean Socialist Party, was the Director of the Spanish edition

²⁷ Devés-Valdés observes that the intellectual background of this network was as heterogenous as sophisticated. For example, Raúl Prebisch formulates his notion of development as industrialization strategy inspired by J.M. Keynes and Raúl Haya de La Torre. North American neo-Marxist economists, such as Paul A. Baran and Leo Huberman, were also important in André G. Frank's works. Other scholars were inspired by Max Weber, Jean Paul Sartre and Eric Fromm. See (Devés-Valdés 2004)

²⁸ Among them, Raúl Prebisch, Theotonio Dos Santos, André Gunder Frank and Fernando H. Cardoso.

²⁹ There are several examples, the most conspicuous one being perhaps the case of former Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2003) who published, in 1969, "Dependency and Development in Latin America," co-authored with Enzo Faletto. Kathryn Sikkink studies Prebisch's role as a policy-making activist. In 1955, he requested a three-month leave of absence from ECLAC to design the economic plan of the military government that had overthrown J. D. Perón, in Argentina. Paradoxically, Prebisch's political connections with anti-Peronist forces diminished his influence in his homeland. This situation, explains Sikkink, is in sharp contrast with the high influence that Prebisch enjoyed in Chile and Brazil (Sikkink 1988).

of *Monthly Review*, a journal that used to publish *dependentist* scholars' works (See, for instance, *Monthly Review*, 1969)³⁰ and collaborated with authors such as Andre Gunder Frank (1969).³¹ Moreover, some historians affirm that the foreign policy chapter of the UP program was written entirely by socialists (Fermendois, 1985a:79).

Thus, if we compare the diplomatic files from the Chile-China database (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973g; Allende 1973), with other official texts concerning Chile's foreign affairs at that time (Allende 1971a, 1971c, 1971b; Almeyda 1973, 1971a; Allende 1972b; Unidad Popular 1969; Almeyda 1971b), it is possible to see that Chilean leaders articulated a consistent *dependentist* thinking from which the making of the foreign policy towards China was formulated.

3.2.2. China and self-reliance

Zhou suggested that if Chile wanted to overcome the imperialist aggression sequel, the fundamental thing was “to take self-reliance as a principal means and external aid as a complementary measure” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973d). Then, in a meeting with Kissinger, he commented that his letter to Allende had been “useless because the word of a foreigner meant nothing” (US Department of State 1973).

³⁰ *Monthly Review*'s directors at this time were Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy. The Spanish edition included notes contextualising the translated articles to Latin American readers. See, for example, Edition N°65 (*Monthly Review* 1969)

³¹ In the preface of *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, Frank (1969) thanks Almeyda for his comments.

Contrary to the broad social network that constituted the intellectual background of dependency theory, the sources we find in China's notion of self-reliance (自力更生)³² come from a much narrower social circle constituted largely by Mao and his closest political circle. According to Zheng (2013), the term appeared in a report about the military strategy against Japan, written by Mao, at the end of the Long March in 1935, when the Red Army reached Yan'an city. Self-reliance meant a survival strategy under wartime conditions, far away from central urban areas (Keith, 1983; Wu, 1981). So, to accomplish the goal of defeating the Japanese invader, Mao commanded that "all army units and government and other organizations must engage in production in the intervals between fighting, training or work." (See Mao's Selected Works 1945, 20, quoted in Mao 1966).

Self-reliance experienced a dislocation when communists took over power in 1949. Contrary to the conditions in the countryside, communists now had to find out a way to be self-reliant throughout the whole country, particularly in the cities. However, they did not have too many options but the foreign assistance of the USSR. Since then, self-reliance was no longer an expression of material practice but an element of theoretical reflection about Chinese creativity and ability to progress (Wu, 1981). For instance, Mao wrote that the Soviet presence on Chinese soil was a signal of "weakness – a lack of creativity and lack of ability to stand on our own feet" (Mao 1962, quoted by F. Wu 1981, 459).

The Chinese-Soviet split of 1958-60 was decisive to rearticulate self-reliance theoretically and practically. Firstly, the Soviet's peaceful coexistence policy towards the US triggered a deep reflection on international communism and the Third World struggle

³² The Pinyin expression *Zili gengsheng* shapes the broadly accepted signifier of self-reliance which means 'standing on one's own to change to a new life' (Keith 1983, 21)

against capitalist imperialism.³³ China questioned this policy because “it would seem that imperialism will automatically collapse in the course of this peaceful competition and that the only thing the oppressed peoples and nations have to do is to wait quietly for the advent of this day” (Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, 1963).

Secondly, the Chinese rearticulated self-reliance as a consequence of Moscow’s withdrawal of its technical assistance. Wang exemplifies this re-articulation with the establishment of a self-reliant defence system and a technological research program: “we must be self-reliant, doing our own research and establishing an independent modern defence system” (W. Wang 2014, 12). Two cases that represent the pinnacle of self-reliant practices were the Daqing oil field (Keith 1983)³⁴ and the Dazhai Commune (Zhao 2016; F. Wu 1981).³⁵

As we can see, dependency theory and self-reliance were two different ways to articulate economic development with the socialist revolution. While the former was signified concerning the international structure, the latter was with the Chinese people’s agency. Another counterpoint is that these signifiers’ meanings shed light on how Chile and China understood their relations with imperialism. On the one hand, imperialism takes its form as a capitalist structure that determines the underdevelopment of the Third World; on

³³ A Soviet letter sent to the Chinese Communist Party had stated that the peaceful coexistence policy “serves to strengthen the positions of socialism, to help the international influence of the socialist countries, and to increase the authority and influence of the Communists. Peaceful coexistence does not imply conciliation between socialist and bourgeois ideologies” (Central Committee 1963).

³⁴ Keith (1981, p. 25) explains that “Self-reliance became the story of Daqing (Great Celebration), the monolithic oil field which was almost built from scratch in the early 1960”. Similarly, the company’s website defines Daqing oilfield as a hard experience “of independent pioneering quests and struggles with nature.” Today the field is “a symbol of energy self-sufficiency.” See http://dqyt.cnpc.com.cn/dqen/HoDO/dqen_common.shtml, access date December 11th, 2019.

³⁵ Zhao (2016) explains that Dazhai’s “natural conditions were harsh with infertile land. After agricultural cooperation, under the leadership of Chen Yonggui, farmers in Dazhai turned the seven large ditches into fertile farmland in five years, creating the miracle of bumper harvests.”

the other, imperialism is signified as a subject that takes the form of capitalism and socialist revisionism. The next part addresses these points in more detail.

3.3. The USSR and imperialism

Among the Chilean diplomatic archive's files, it is also possible to find that imperialism is another signifier that Chile and China articulate within their relationship. However, if one reads the files carefully, it is possible to observe that while China and Chile coincided in defining the US as an imperialist power, they did not think the same way regarding the USSR.

Differences about the USSR were revealed on one of the several occasions that China addressed the issue of the 200 maritime miles. For example, a People's Daily editorial article stressed that "Chile has carried out a resolute fight against the plot of the two superpowers to divide and dominate the oceans" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971h). Then, ambassador Uribe explained in his report that such an expression of the two superpowers, "which we are supposed to share with China", does not represent Chile's position because it assumes in advance that Chile would be willing to retaliate somehow against both the US and the USSR (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971h).

Then, when Zhou warned Allende and Almeyda of the risks of their reliance on foreign aid, he also put into question what Chilean leaders had got from their previous visit to Moscow:

Zhou: Do the Soviet Union demand interest in giving credit?

Almeyda: Of 3% in the case of industrial; and financial projects, which are expensive, have an interest of 9%.

Zhou: What expensive! They act as merchants, as merchants of Venice [...] How can they say they are socialists! (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973g).³⁶

At the beginning of the seventies, the relationships between China and the USSR were seriously deteriorated by issues such as border conflicts (K. Yang 2000)³⁷ and the Soviet military occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Mao had declared that “whenever they [the USSR] can put something in their pockets, they will” (quoted by Yang 2000, 23). Jiang suggests that “when the USSR sent troops to occupy Czechoslovakia and created the Zhenbao Island incident, Mao clearly realized that the foreign acts of the Soviet Union were for its hegemonic interests” (A. Jiang 2013, 42). Besides, the Chinese Communist Party (1963) had characterised the peaceful coexistence as a revisionist policy and the adoption of “great-power chauvinism.” In this context, in 1969, a group of Chinese marshals put forward two reports which concluded that:

first, in the foreseeable period, it was a remote possibility that the U.S. imperialists and the Soviet revisionists either alone or jointly would launch a massive war of aggression against China. Second, in the struggle among the three forces [...], the contradiction between China and the Soviet Union was greater than that between China and the US (quoted by A. Jiang 2013, 41).

³⁶ The Chilean ambassador describes in his memoirs this moment more in detail. When Zhou asked about the conditions of the Soviet credits, Almeyda “let a few seconds pass [...] then he asked one of his delegation's members [...] who said to him whispering: Eleven percent. Then, the minister backed out in his seat and replied: Nine percent. Zhou Enlai raised his arms immediately and said some phrases that his interpreter did not understand [...] Zhou exclaimed in English: “the Merchant of Venice!” That is to say the usurer prototype” (Uribe, 2016, Kindle loc. 5968).

³⁷ For example, the crisis of the Zhenbao Island happened in March 1969. After analysing released Chinese official reports that describe this incident, Yang (2000, p. 27) concludes that, although it seems that China planned in detail its military actions, these took place due to “repeated Chinese concessions in face of Soviet provocation [that] had made the Chinese leaders feel that they had reached the limits of forbearance.”

According to Jiang, Mao's view about peaceful coexistence "was the gaming for world hegemony of two superpowers, rather than a struggle between two social systems" (A. Jiang 2013, 42). It was in this context that he formulated the three worlds theory. The first world was represented by the US and the USSR; the second world was integrated by intermediate elements such as Europe and Japan; and the third world was integrated by backward countries.³⁸

Immediately after having formalized diplomatic ties with China, minister Almeyda gave the order that the political level given to the PRC was all the same as the given to the USSR (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1971a). The initial intention was to avoid choosing one of the two sides of the Chinese-Soviet split because, for Chile, the imperialist power was only the US (understood as either the government or transnational companies with investments in Chile). A couple of months after assuming the presidency, Allende stated that "We are anti-imperialists not for merely ideological reasons; our attitude is because we have measured in precise terms the implications of the abusive presence of North American investment in Chile" (quoted by Latorre 1974, 159). He also denounced at the United Nations that the US was trying "to isolate us from the world, strangle our economy, paralyze our copper exports, and block our access to international funding sources" (Allende 1972a, 140-141).

It is worth noting that the USSR was neither Chile's closest ally nor its ideological paradigm (see Fontaine 1998). As Allende once stated: "Chile does not experience a full revolution, but a revolutionary process which is getting deeper. Chile is neither the Soviet

³⁸ Jiang (2013) explains that the theory originates in the post-Second World War years, in Mao's notion of 'the intermediate zone' between two super-powers.

Union, nor Cuba, nor the People's Republic of China" (quoted by Latorre 1974, 242). Instead, the USSR was a foreign partner to ask for economic aid.

In this context, three months before Almeyda's visit to Beijing, Chile manifested somehow its preferences when president Allende went personally to Moscow instead of Beijing asking for economic assistance in credits (See Chile-USSR Joint Statement in Punto Final 1972).³⁹ However, former ambassador Armando Uribe (2016) writes in his memoirs that for Chile, this trip was far from being a smooth encounter with an ally joined by the same ideology but a hard process of bargaining. In effect, minister Almeyda stated to the press: "Although paradoxical, relations between the Soviet Union and Chile were not entirely perfect [...] we did not know each other very much" (See Press Conference in Punto Final Díaz 1972). In this cold scenario, Allende, following the jargon of that time, characterized the USSR as "the big brother of socialist countries" (Allende 1972c, 113).

If a sort of Soviet influence in Allende's government existed, it took place through an indirect route from the Soviet Communist Party to the Chilean Communist Party. It has been well documented that the former was the latter's most crucial economic supporter (Ulianova and Fediakova 1998). During Allende's government, the Chilean Communist Party reached the fifth position in the Soviet Communist Party's international economic aid list to its "brothers" worldwide. The Soviet economic aid to the Chilean Communist Party could explain, for example, why the latter did not condemn the USSR's invasion of Czechoslovakia (Fernandois 1985a, 35). However, the Chilean Communist Party had no much influence in Chile's foreign policy, which was a field dominated by the Chilean

³⁹ The agreement was for the construction of industrial enterprises, the widening of the energy base, agriculture, and the training of Chilean technicians. These were the credits that led Zhou to cry "The Merchant of Venice!".

Socialist Party; in particular, Almeyda's line, which was known for its criticism towards the Soviet peaceful coexistence approach (Fermandois 1985a, 56, 371).

4. Logics of Chile-China relations in 1970

4.1. International logics of convergence: Anti-imperialism as the empty signifier

The establishment of diplomatic relationships occurs at the last phase of the PRC's struggle to achieve international recognition as the only and legitimate Chinese government. At the same time, Chile's socialist government is suffering from imperialist attempts of destabilization. In this context, this international practice was constituted through the articulation of discursive elements whose grammar can be comprised as a logic of mutual recognition and respect of sovereignty and self-determination.

In this international practice, we find the construction of 'anti-imperialism' as the empty signifier around which Chile and China articulate their political convergences, such as the identities of being sovereign and developing countries. This empty signifier positions both Chile and China as equal partners and excludes from this discourse the antagonistic element of US capitalist imperialism.

The agreements signed by Chile and China reflect how the relationship was constituted and normalized around this empty signifier and political convergences. The trade agreement in which both countries reciprocally grant the most-favoured-nation treatment is a clear example. Two socialist countries commit to following up one of the most prominent capitalist principles by detaching this element from its imperialist-capitalist meaning. In other words, the trade agreement would not necessarily constitute a paradox in

terms of being two socialist countries embracing capitalist values but rather two developing countries reinforcing their independence from imperialism by trading under fair conditions of mutual respect.

4.2. International logics of divergence: the socialist revolution as the floating signifier

This international practice reveals its radical contingency when, after having established diplomatic ties, both countries try to articulate the meaning of some elements unilaterally:

4.2.1. Chile's struggle for being recognized as a socialist revolution

This logic relies on Chile's desire of being recognized by China as a socialist revolution; however, the latter never did so totally but partially. Paraphrasing Mao, Chile experienced the earlier stage of a national-democratic revolution, which he defined in terms of overcoming feudalism and imperialism. According to this yardstick, Sun Yat-sen's revolution and the liberation from Japan were examples of national-democratic revolutions. In this sense, because US companies used to control the Chilean mining sector, China valued the copper industry's nationalization as a critical step forward to overthrow imperialism. Nevertheless, such an achievement did not necessarily mean either the success of a socialist revolution or a socialist state's construction.

This divergence appears when Zhou analyses the Chilean process in his meetings with Almeyda (January 1973) and Kissinger (November 1973). In these conversations, we see statements such as "you have taken steps faster than ours after ten years of war of liberation" or "they shouldn't do everything at one go." Furthermore, Zhou expresses his

concern about the means of violence to make the Chilean revolution (“Who controls the Army?”).

In these terms, the Chinese scepticism could have been driven by the hard contrast between Chile’s democratic-peaceful way and China’s wars of liberation. The pursuit of a socialist revolution by using non-revolutionary means was unimaginable (“a political heresy”) in the Chinese context, which was overdetermined by a constellation of enemies such as the Kuomintang, Japan, the US, Taiwan, reactionaries, and the USSR. Paraphrasing Althusser (2005), the Chinese had to think that not all the contradictions were overdetermined enough to make the socialist revolution the task of the day in Chile.

4.2.2. Antagonistic articulations of economic transformation with socialist revolution

These countries also reveal divergences when Chile articulates a discourse of dependency theory centred on a global economic structure, while China articulates a discourse of self-reliance focused on its people’s agency.

When interacting with their Chinese counterparts, Chilean representatives foreground the disadvantages of a structural dependency and stress that the national bourgeoisie was deeply committed to keeping such a structure. In this context, the UP was a project of alternative modernity (Pinedo 2000) that attempted, as Allende declared, to replace the bourgeois modernity which “has kept us in a [condition] of colonization and dependence” (Allende 1972a, 136). This structural emphasis does not mean that agency is excluded from the Chilean way towards socialism, but that Chile does not bring this category to the fore in its relations with China.

In contrast, when interacting with Chilean counterparts, Chinese representatives foreground the more agential-centred notion of self-reliance. Rather than representing an abstract academic approach designed by technocrats in international organizations' headquarters, self-reliance is the expression of unity between revolutionary action and theory or what Wang Weiguang (2014) calls Marxist Sinicization (see also Womack 1982; Katzenstein 2012). Hence, Zhou's words towards his Chilean counterparts represent the Chinese way to articulate modernization and action under revolutionary conditions and a political criticism towards Chile's process. Indeed, the Chilean experience represents what the Chinese Communist Party (1963) had defined as Left adventurism and Right opportunism.

4.2.3. Political divergence to signify the USSR's socialist identity

Although Chile and China converge in defining their identities in opposition to imperialism, they differ when defining the USSR's identity.

For China, the USSR not only represents a power threatening its territorial integrity but, more importantly, a revisionist socialist state that has fallen into the selfish struggle for global hegemony. If border disputes and military interventions are expressions of Soviet hegemonism, the peaceful coexistence policy is ideological revisionism. All these elements lead China to identify the USSR as a First World power competing against the US. It is in this context that Zhou exclaims in front of Almeyda "How can they say they are socialists!"

The agent against which Allende's government articulates its anti-imperialist discourse is not any superpower but the US. Regarding the USSR, beyond the plurality of meanings we find between the Chilean Communist Party, which has a strict pro-Soviet

discourse, and the Chilean Socialist Party, whose international referents are more heterodox, for the Chilean government, the USSR represents the big brother of socialism and a partner to rely on economic aid. Chile articulates this identity even though the USSR are neither its closest ally nor its ideological paradigm.

China's and Chile's different ways to signify the USSR's identity lead them to articulate this element into the syntagmatic pole of political divergences. For example, while Chile rejects China's intention to construct a convergence by articulating Soviet imperialism with the 200 nautical miles initiative, China resents that Allende went personally to the USSR, instead of China, to ask for credits at the expense of the user's interest rates.

Conclusions

This chapter has sought to understand how Chile and China established diplomatic relationships by showing the articulation of an international practice under the administrations of Salvador Allende and Zhou Enlai. This endeavour also aimed to explain the role of ideology in this international practice from a post-Marxist viewpoint. The ideological dimension of this international practice emerges when Chile and China try to objectivize a symbolic order constituted around the empty signifier of 'anti-imperialism' in antagonistic relation to US capitalism. In turn, these countries reveal the practice's precariousness when they cannot fix the surplus meaning of the floating signifier of 'the socialist revolution' into one moment of signification because of a proliferation of bilateral antagonistic identities.

Hence, it is possible to see that what conventional scholarly texts understand by ideology neither presupposes the causality of dogmatic beliefs nor an intersubjectivity (a *mentalité*, in Cassels's (1996) words) that shapes what Keohane and Goldstein (1993) call policymakers' road maps to formulate foreign policy and interact with other states. Instead, the ideological dimension of an international practice corresponds to any relational element whose meaning remains overdetermined up to the moment of hegemonic political closure. The lack of empirical studies of socialist ideology is a problem because this element is always overdetermined and cannot be fully satisfied by the positivist tradition.

This international practice entails logics of convergence and divergence that constitute a grammar of two developing countries that strive for defending their sovereignty from imperialism by different means of struggle (associative pole). While Chile is a country that looks for constructing a peaceful way towards socialism under democratic institutions, China is a country that looks for the accomplishment of the socialist revolution and construction after having achieved crucial military triumphs. While Chile's foreign policy relies on its notion of structural economics and foreign aid, China's brings to the fore the agential notion of self-reliance to prevent the country from relying on foreign aid. While Chile aims to develop international cooperation with the USSR, China considers the USSR as a revisionist socialist country with imperialist ambitions (syntagmatic pole).

CHAPTER 7

Chile and China in 1978: Logics of bilateral rapprochement

Introduction

This chapter tries to answer a crucial but unsolved question for Sino-Chilean studies: How and why communist China and Pinochet's anti-communist Chile engaged in a political rapprochement in 1978, after five years of almost inexistent interactions?

On September 11th, 1973, a coup d'état overthrew Chile's democratically elected president, the socialist Salvador Allende, whose government had been the first South American one to establish diplomatic ties with the PRC in 1970. China was one of a few communist republics which did not break out relationships with Chile after the coup; although, it reduced the interactions to almost zero. Five years later, Chile was ruled by a military Junta that purged whoever could be identified as a communist or socialist, which led several countries to condemn and isolate this regime because of human rights violations. In the meantime, a clique of Chilean technocrats working for the dictatorship started a reform process to neo-liberalise the national economy.

In China, new communist leaders took over the government after Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong passed away in 1976. In the middle of one of the most critical struggles to conquer the Communist Party's power ever seen since 1949, these leaders started to implement an opening-up policy to trade and learn from abroad; whereas, in the international arena, they

kept the long-standing anti-Soviet stance. In this context, these two countries decided to carry out a political rapprochement.

A good number of texts use these elements, in some way or another, to solve this question by appealing to pragmatism as follows: The Sino-Chilean rapprochement was the cause of a pragmatic relationship which, instead of pursuing political commitments and ideological identities, triggered de-politicized and de-ideologized economic interactions carried out by rational subjects whose technocracy freed them from a sort of naive idealism (e.g. Errázuriz 2006; Ross 2007a; Muñoz 1986; Rodríguez 2011). This way of signifying pragmatism by academic texts reminds us of those IR texts that define it in opposition to principled behaviour and universal morality and advocate instead for the same universal belief that structural anarchy compels states to act pragmatically (e.g. Claude 1993).

However, this explanation is unsatisfactory not only because it portrays a contestable image of de-politicised international practices but also because this literature shows little progress in developing methodological strategies to account for the articulation of these two countries' foreign policies to conceal the dislocated effects of the Chilean coup d'état. Hence, the main challenge faced by many researchers is to harmonize their search for intellectual tidiness and law-like generalizations with the spurious political origins of the Chilean-Chinese rapprochement.

This chapter aims to show the elements that Chile and China bring to the fore from their foreign policies when trying to articulate the political rapprochement, drawing attention to those elements Chilean and Chinese leaders converge politically and the empty signifier upon which these countries reveal the ideological attempt to objectivise the rapprochement. It also aims to disclose the ideological moment Chile and China articulate to justify the relationship between a communist country and an anti-communist country. I argue that the

rapprochement is an international practice articulated by two states through an equivalent chain of political demands, which constitutes a new but contingent discursive totality. I understand political demands as the international convergences that bring these countries together in a new bilateral discourse, such as getting rid of the permanent threat of social-imperialism, solidarizing as Third World allies and overcoming their economic backwardness.

Following my post-Marxist research strategy, I analyse declassified files of the Historical Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, the UN Historical Archive of the General Assembly, and other official documents from Chile's, China's and the US governments. Then, I identify the elements that constitute this international practice and characterize its logics of convergence and divergence. Regarding the convergences, the data shows that the 'non-intervention principle' is the practice's empty signifier and its arbitrary association to the element 'social-imperialism' (the USSR) represents the Sino-Chilean rapprochement's ideological operation.

The same data shows that Chile and China articulate some elements that are sources of discursive antagonism or elements that disrupt the relationship's cohesive structure, such as China's disapproval of the Chilean Junta's purge against civilians, the Taiwan issue, and Chile's misunderstanding regarding China's reforms and ideology. Although these points of divergence were not brought to the fore explicitly in the articulation of this international practice, their spectres haunt the rapprochement revealing its radical contingency.

This chapter aims to reconfigure our understanding of international politics and its role in the rapprochement between Pinochet's anti-communist Chile and communist China. Put differently, there are neither de-politicised and de-ideologized practices nor an objective variable that determines the degree of pragmatism in pursuing national interests but

articulations of political convergences and ideological attempts to objectivise the relationship in antagonism to a common enemy: the USSR.

The remaining part of the chapter proceeds as follows: I critically engage with positivist IRT to analyse the meaning of pragmatism given by the Sino-Chilean literature. Then, I move on to describe, firstly, the relationship after the coup d'état in 1973 and, secondly, Chile's and China's domestic political contexts under which the rapprochement took place in 1978. The next section identifies and describes the main elements that constitute the rapprochement discourse. The last section presents the findings of the research and characterises the international logics of the rapprochement.

1. Pragmatism and International Relations

In one of the most influential works about the Chilean dictatorship's foreign policy, which includes a chapter that is one of the first academic writings about Chile-China relations, Muñoz (1986) argues that Chile's international isolation, caused by its human rights violations, its bad relations with Western democracies and a fierce anti-Soviet stance, facilitated the Sino-Chilean rapprochement. He also argues that in the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs there was an uncomfortable relationship between the military's anti-communist ideology and Chicago Boys' pragmatic technocracy and that it was the latter variable that triggered Chile getting closer to China. Since then, a good number of texts have quoted Muñoz's thesis to claim that the rapprochement was indeed a de-politicised pragmatic phenomenon (Ross 2007b; Rodríguez 2011; Matta 1991; Domínguez 2006).

Jorge Domínguez (2006, 24), appeals to pragmatism when describing that China's relations with Latin American countries were set under right-wing military dictatorships in

the seventies, which leads him to claim that “ideological or regimist factors do not explain trends in Sino-Latin America relations.” As a matter of fact, there is the case of Cuba-China relations during the Cold War. Concerning Chile, he cites Muñoz (1986) to claim that since Pinochet took over power, “Sino-Chilean relations featured low ideological content. Chile’s foreign policy toward China has been pragmatic, and vice versa” (Domínguez 2006, 35).

In his paper about the historical stages of China-Latin America’s relations, Xu Shicheng (2006, 106) affirms that since the end of the seventies, China’s first priority was “to develop cooperative and friendly relationships regardless of ideological differences.” Describing the same period, Jiang Shixue (2006, 24) recognises some “mistakes” in China’s foreign policy during the cultural revolution, such as having focused it on the revolution theme, and contrasts such a dark moment with the one of opening-up reforms.

As it is possible to see in all these cases, ideology is present, haunting the academic attempt to objectivise a phenomenon that challenges common sense: Political relations between a communist regime and an anti-communist regime. As a response, scholars reduce this phenomenon to a question of pragmatism and attach it to the positivist belief in causal mechanisms. Namely, pragmatism is the cause of the Sino-Chilean political rapprochement.

In IRT, scholars use this understanding of pragmatism to differentiate it from principled behaviour, which is the rigid adherence to a settled principle (Cochran 2017; Claude 1993; Snyder and Vinjamuri 2003). For instance, Claude (1993, 216-218) stresses that “being principled is associated with adhering to values, having a moral basis for policy, and formulating a policy that is both idealistic and honourable.” Pragmatism, in contrast, is “a product not of faithfulness [...] but of wisdom, sound intuition, creative imagination, and

courageous improvisation.” It is worth noting that this meaning of pragmatism necessarily contains what antagonises it: ideology.

At first glance, this bold distinction between pragmatism and ideology can be overestimated and applied as a teleological principle guiding the entire history of a people’s interactions with the world. For instance, Ramanzani (2004) characterises the Iranian (Persian) foreign policy as a spiral that swings between these two extremes from Cicero to current times. In the case of Chile-China relations, Ross (2007b, 62) suggests that since neoliberal technocrats consolidated their power in Chile’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs by 1976, “the triumph of the pragmatic technocracy over traditional views was total.”

However, contrary to these claims, Claude (1993) argues that one does not need to get rid of principles but eradicate the fervent cultivation of a universal rule of law and set the ground for a new relationship between principle and strategy. Indeed, this argument reminds us what Fermandois (1985b) and Young (1981) had already theorised regarding Chile’s and China’s foreign policies, respectively, during the Cold War (see Chapter 6). Namely, Chile and China adjust their foreign policies’ ideological principles to selective and pragmatic choices.

Still, as I showed in Chapters 1 and 2, these explanations remain speculative. The studies presented thus far do not provide enough evidence to demonstrate that the relation between pragmatism and ideology is a relation between two transcendental and external ideas. Thereby, no study has demonstrated that the rapprochement resulted from rational decisions made by actors who adjusted their national interests to get profits better off. In contrast, there is enough empirical evidence to show that the rapprochement was a much more complex political phenomenon in which politics and ideology had a crucial role in a

post-Marxist sense. In the following sections, I will pay attention to the constitution of this political phenomenon.

2. The relationship after the coup d'état in Chile

2.1. Freezing bilateral contacts and the non-intervention principle

Contrary to what had happened with most socialist countries, China and Chile maintained their diplomatic ties after the coup d'état against President Allende.⁴⁰ The new government formed by the Chilean Military Junta had even dismissed a letter sent by Shen Chang-Huan, Taiwan's minister of Foreign Affairs, in which he proposed to resume their relationships on behalf of their shared anti-communist beliefs (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973e).

However, the continuation of Sino-Chilean relation did not mean continuing the same discursive structure constituted under Allende's and Zhou Enlai's administrations. We shall remember that, despite their political differences to fill up the floating signifier of socialist revolution, Chile and China had articulated a pioneering relationship around the identity of being developing countries seeking independent development from imperialism. Now, the situation had changed dramatically. Allende had died the day of the coup; Zhou's government had recognised the new Chile's anti-communist regime by keeping its Embassy in Santiago, while former minister of Foreign Affairs, Clodomiro Almeyda, and

⁴⁰ Romania was the other country that maintained diplomatic relationships with Chile.

the Chilean ambassador in Beijing, Armando Uribe, had fled to Europe as political refugees. A Chilean file describes the relationship after the coup as follows:

After the Military Junta took over power, the human and trade exchange between Chile and the People's Republic of China descended to minimum levels [...] giving the impression that [...] notwithstanding China had resolved to maintain its relations with Chile, it had preferred that such relationships were carried on a purely formal level (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978).

In this context, both countries appealed to the principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs to justify the continuation of their ties. One of the first appointments in which this principle was brought to the fore took place in Beijing, two months after the coup, between the Chilean *Chargé d'affaires* and the Deputy Director of the Department for America of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In that meeting, the Chinese representative expressed that his government, by following the principle of non-intervention as one of China's five principles, had the purpose of keeping and increasing relations with all the countries "without consideration of government regimes." In turn, the Chilean diplomat answered back by saying that his "government had just broken out relations with those countries whose intervention in our domestic affairs has been demonstrated" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973a).

This principle was crucially symbolical in Chile since the military regime's outset as an argument to justify the new rule. The military saw themselves as the nation's saviours from Marxist intervention. For instance, immediately after the coup, Chilean representatives at the 28th Session of the UN General Assembly had declared that "we shall never allow foreign intrusions in our internal affairs or the conduct of our international

policy. To comply with this fundamental principle, one of our first acts was to sever diplomatic and consular relations with the present government of Cuba” (Huerta 1973). Another intervention stated that Allende’s overthrow was not a coup but “an act of legitimate self-defence” against an international conspiracy (Bazán 1973).

It is worth noting that after the meeting, the *Chargé d'affaires* concluded that “we have a very positive impression in terms of the continuity of the relationships [...] we think that it is imperative not to delay the appointment of an ambassador” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1973a). In other words, it seems that, insofar as the Chilean Embassy had no ambassador, the *Chargé d'affaires* would have expected that the faster Chile appointed a new ambassador, the faster the relationship retook the good pace.

Nevertheless, for China, this possibility seemed quite unlikely. As the Chinese government had kept its mission in Santiago intact, they were updated about the Military regime’s slaughters against left-wingers and any person who opposed the new regime. In a meeting with Henry Kissinger, in November 1973, Zhou Enlai expressed that:

They shouldn’t go in for slaughtering that way. It was terrible [...] And just because our emissary is still there, that’s how we have been able to learn about many facts [...] we think it was indeed true that in Chile the government did engage in massacres in the capital, Santiago (US State Department 1973, 5-6, 8).

Regarding Zhou’s words, rather than continuing the good pace of the relationship with Chile, the most probable course was freezing it down and waiting for new favourable political conditions. This view is consistent with Jiang Shixue’s (2001, 19), who affirms that the Chinese government was “deeply sympathetic” with Allende’s government and was permanently updated about the Chilean humanitarian crisis after the coup. In fact,

Zhou believed that “massacres will give rise to revolution on the part of the people. It is inevitable that it will be so.” Zhou thought that the coup d’état meant a new opportunity for making a people’s revolution that Allende’s government was not able to accomplish:

Prime Minister Chou: But there is also a good point in that event in Chile [...]

Secretary Kissinger: It was good that there was a military coup?

Prime Minister Chou: It was good because it could show a bad thing could be turned into good account. That is our way of seeing this thing. We told them about this, but they didn’t believe us. That kind of phenomenon was caused by themselves (US State Department 1973, 10).

In the middle of a wave of Latin American revolutionary movements, the dialogue between Zhou and Kissinger shows that Chile was one of China’s most important Latin American issues by 1973. Zhou analysed Che Guevara’s naïve attempt to make a revolution in Bolivia and Allende’s failure. It was in this context that he hoped for a true Chilean revolution.

Five years after the Zhou-Kissinger meeting, a Chilean aerogramme reported that China’s respect to the non-intervention principle had not changed at all since the day of the coup: “There is no attitude in Chinese circles but the official one, which is the respect and careful refraining of giving judgment on the internal political process that our country is experiencing” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978a). Another file reporting the repercussions in China about the end of Chile’s curfew affirms that Chinese officials do not comment on Chile’s political events; this is so even when it was evident that they were taking note of the Chilean situation (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978m).

2.2. New political circumstances and the bilateral rapprochement

2.2.1. China's and Chile's political contexts

In 1978, the context was completely different because major changes were happening in China. Zhou and Mao Zedong had passed away in 1976, leaving with their departures a two-years interregnum of struggles to fill up the political vacuum.

After Zhou's death in January, there were massive protests at Tiananmen Square in April, prompting accusations against Deng Xiaoping for supposedly having encouraged the uprising. Hua Guofeng, Mao's designated successor, initially denounced Deng as follows: "Chairman Mao himself initiated and led the great proletarian cultural revolution, which smashed the schemes of Liu Shao-chi, Lin Piao and Teng Hsiao-p'ing for restoration, criticized their counter-revolutionary revisionist line and enable us to seize back that portion of leading power in the Party and the State they had usurped" (Hua 1976, 85).

When Mao passed away, a struggle to control the Party started between several factions, chiefly between the Gang of Four and Hua Guofeng. The latter resulted triumphant after the gang was rapidly arrested, although the political factionalism problem did not finish. Vogel (2011) explains that, despite having been Mao's designate, when comparing Hua with Deng and other alive party members, the former had no prestige in making the revolution, commanding the Red Army or constructing the socialist state. Consequently, Hua spent most of the time trying to legitimize his power within the Party and the military.

In this context, Hua and his advisors carried out a campaign to dictate the supposedly proper way to follow Mao's thought and political directives. However, Hua had to deal with the paradox of reversing Mao's verdict of declaring the Tiananmen incident as

counterrevolutionary without capitulating Mao's last commands straightaway. Deng's return was a crucial issue to sort out in this problem. Deng was finally absolved after the revelation that the Gang of Four had distorted the Tiananmen incidents' reports. A People's Daily editorial accounts for the Gang of Four's plot to fabricate Mao's last words in the following terms: "This was a telling blow to the political ambitions and conspiratorial activities of the 'gang of four' in desperately resisting and opposing Chairman Mao's principles and going their own way in the criticism of Teng Hsiao-p'ing in an attempt to overthrow Comrade Hua Kuofeng" (People Daily 1977, 91; see also Hua 1977a; Hua 1977b).

Although scholars who analysed factionalism within the CCP at that time had different methods to taxonomize it (e.g. Domes 1977; Fontana 1982; Mohanty 1977),⁴¹ they all have coincided in portraying Hua as a flexible, if not ambivalent, figure dealing with the factions as he purged the Gang of Four to take over the Party despite having forged his political career by making alliances with them. Then, he defended Mao's legacy, whereas he also tried to push forward the reforms that the so-called capitalist-roaders, such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng, had tried to accomplish some years earlier. Such a flexible character has led scholars nowadays to vindicate Hua's decisive role in China's economic reforms and his coincidental points of views with Deng in this regard (Teiwes and Sun 2011, 2019; Vogel 2011).

⁴¹ Despite the different views we find to characterise the Party's factions, the literature identifies two antagonistic forces. On the one hand, the Cultural Revolution Left, where we find the Gang of Four and Hua Guofeng's Secret Police Left. The Gang of Four was represented by Mao's wife Jiang Qin and other Politburo members. On the other hand, veteran civil cadres who had been purged during the Cultural Revolution and then rehabilitated, such as Deng Xiaoping's faction. In between, there existed a broad and complex number of leaders representing factions and sub-factions from either the military, other Party's cadres and regions.

With Deng's official return in July 1977⁴² and Hua as China's Chairman, it started a period of political stability characterised by the crucial consensus that Chinese leaders reached to develop an economic agenda by establishing an ambitious reform and opening up (改革开放).

In Chile, no people's revolution happened as Zhou expected; however, this situation did not mean that the country was free from experiencing revolutionary changes. After the coup, there followed a brief interval of political struggles within the Junta to decide who will control it. Moreover, there was the debate about whether its mission was to quickly restore political stability and give the power back to civilians or prolong its reign to exterminate the "Marxist cancer"⁴³ and, eventually, refund the rule of law. The Junta was inclined to the second option and, in December 1974, chose Army general Augusto Pinochet as Chile's president to accomplish such a mission (Cavallo, Salazar, and Sepúlveda 2008).

1978 was a crucial year for the consolidation of Pinochet's power within the Junta and the extension of his rule as Chile's dictator (Huneus 2016). In January, there was a national consultation to reaffirm the regime's legitimacy, which had been put into question after a UN's resolution about Chile's human rights violations. For instance, in his speech in Chacarillas, in July 1977, Pinochet portrayed this situation as follows: "Today we face an unequal struggle again, against a foreign action from diverse origins and types, which sometimes takes the shape of the enemy aggression, and sometimes the face of friendly

⁴² According to Vogel (2011, p. 199), Deng got back his positions as vice-premier, chief-of-staff of the People's Liberation Army, member of the Central Committee, member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, vice-chairman of the Party, and vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission. Thus, of the Standing Committee's five members, Deng ranked third after Hua Guofeng and minister of Defence Marshall Ye Jianying but ahead of Li Xiannian and Wang Dongxing.

⁴³ This expression was coined by the Air Force Commander in Chief Gustavo Leigh, who was one of the first members of the Military Junta (Huneus, 2016).

pressure” (Pinochet 1977a). In this context, the consultation’s aim was threefold: to reject foreign attempts to intervene in domestic affairs, assess the popular support to the regime and strengthen Pinochet’s leadership. The consultation was a success and worked out as the excuse to get rid of Commander in Chief of the Air Force, Gustavo Leigh, who had been Pinochet’s first detractor within the Junta since the coup.

In the Chacarillas speech, Pinochet (1977a) also stressed: “In the face of the already perceptible success of the economic plan [...] public attention has now focused on our legal and institutional future [...] we must shape a new democracy that is authoritarian, protected, inclusive, technically sound and of social participation.” Rather than representing Pinochet’s ideas, this passage reflects very well the ideas of the gremialistas, a right-wing civilian clique and the most influential of the Junta’s civil advisers. This group was crucial in mass mobilization for the consultation and writing Pinochet’s speeches as well. The gremialist leader, Jaime Guzmán, played a crucial role in writing down a new Constitution. Gremialist economists, most of them trained at the University of Chicago, had been appointed in strategic ministries to establish deep economic reforms at all social levels (Huneus 2000, 2016). These technocrats were known as the Chicago Boys.

2.2.2. The first signposts of the rapprochement

In these political contexts, Chile and China overcame five years of almost non-existent interactions and started to project, slowly and progressively, a promising future for their relationship.

In Beijing, the Chilean embassy started to note some changes since the second half of 1977, which, according to Chilean files, coincides with the Gang of Four’s downfall and

the rise of a new “moderate and pragmatic” leadership line (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978n). The Chilean ambassador points out that “Chinese authorities began to show a friendlier and more respectful attitude towards the Chilean embassy’s members in their interactions, which began to become more frequent” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978n). In September 1977, the Beijing military garrison played the two countries’ anthems during the Embassy’s celebration of Chile’s national day (18th September), symbolising that “a four-year period was over, in which there were practically no human contacts between the two countries” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978n). Besides, Chilean representatives noted that the Chinese press published news from Chile. According to the ambassador, something like this was unimaginable a few years ago because the Chinese press had kept “almost absolute silence” after Allende’s overthrow (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l).

Chile and China signed sales contracts for copper and increased their bilateral trade projections dramatically. The Chilean ambassador reported: “due to a suggestion I made to CODELCO’s⁴⁴ chief executive, at the end of 1977, a delegation of this company visited China in January 1978, who signed sales contracts for a total of 19,350 tonnes, increasing by 70% the sales of the previous year” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978d). This trip triggered more interactions at this level, such as the visit of a delegation of experts from China’s Metal Corporation to Chile, in September 1978, whose first aim was to learn from CODELCO’s professional expertise and exploitation techniques, together with signing new sales contracts (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978e, 1978f).

⁴⁴ CODELCO is the Spanish-Chilean acronym to abbreviate the name of the National Copper Corporation of Chile (*Corporación Nacional del Cobre de Chile*). This company is not only Chile’s largest state-owned company but the world’s single biggest copper producer.

In this context, Chile and China resumed, in October 1978, the Sino-Chilean Mixed Commission (the bilateral mechanism of economic dialogue, established in 1972). Chile and China used this mechanism to reconsider the agreements signed by Allende's government, as long as they did not want to put at stake the renewed economic ties by trying to enforce old compromises which were subscribed under different circumstances.⁴⁵ China's participation at the Santiago International Fair (FISA) in 1978 was also of symbolic importance (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978g). Thus, by resuming these economic cooperation mechanisms, Chile and China started to push forward their relationships.

The turning point that consolidated the rapprochement was China's invitation to Chilean minister of Foreign Affairs, Hernán Cubillos, to pay an official visit in October 1978. According to the Chilean ambassador, this trip represented "the culmination of a process of progressive strengthening of human and economic links between the two countries" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l). The official visit consisted of three days of meetings, being the most symbolic one between minister Cubillos and Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping.

In all these meetings, both countries reaffirmed the non-intervention principle in domestic affairs as the first element of their foreign policies. Minister Cubillos stated that such a principle "has led us to formulate a policy of ideological tolerance and maintain relationships with any state regardless of its political regime" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l). Despite regretting what had happened in 1973, Deng also stated that "China does not want a state's internal affairs to affect bilateral relationships." He also stressed that

⁴⁵ Among these commitments, there were Chinese credits to establish ball bearings and electric engines factories in Chile.

China and Chile share similar views on a good number of international issues and that “China always respects how other states take decisions according to their circumstances” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l).

The aforesaid antecedents shed light on some elements that brought Chile and China together to articulate a renewed relationship. In the following part, I address this issue more in detail.

3. The elements of the rapprochement

3.1. The Soviet Union

In 1978, the Sino-Soviet split was still going on (see Chapter 6). The new Chinese leaders kept Mao's criticism about what they understood as the USSR's betrayal of Marxist-Leninist principles materialized in the peaceful coexistence policy.⁴⁶ For instance, Huang Hua (1977), Minister of Foreign Affairs, commented to UN officials that the USSR was “a great war machine,” “more dangerous than the USA;” a country that has “betrayed Marxism-Leninism and turned towards capitalism and imperialism.”

In Chile, Marxism was defined as both a domestic and an external enemy; the latter was identified with the USSR and its subordinated Cuba, which were supposed to carry out international campaigns to spoil Chile's image. The USSR had broken out diplomatic ties after the coup and condemned the “intolerable situation” in Chile because of the military violence against Chilean people (Gromyko 1973, 13). Thenceforth, Chilean official

⁴⁶ The Soviet Union's views about China are expressed in its diplomats' interventions in the UN's General Assembly. For instance, ambassador Gromyko makes implicit reference to China, when he speaks out that “It is a secret to no one that détente has its *enemies* whose resistance must not be underestimated [...] If one views unsolved problems without reference to the positive results that have already been achieved, it is easy to take an extreme position and deny the very possibility of resolving acute. In our opinion, however, there is no place for this approach to international phenomena” (Gromyko 1973, 8-9).

statements were formulated to contest what was interpreted as an anti-Chilean campaign.

For instance, Pinochet's 1977 Address to the Nation declares that:

In a difficult situation, which is caused by the Soviet imperialism's tenacious campaign against us since September 11th, 1973, our country has gradually spread its truth, and by doing so, it has started to impose it in the middle of massive propaganda whose aim is to destroy us at the international level (Pinochet 1977b).

Even though Chilean files do not describe what the socialist or Soviet campaigns were all about, these ideas could have been shaped as a response to socialist countries' offensives against Chile at the UN General Assembly. A critical year in this regard was the 29th General Assembly of 1974, in which twelve socialist countries intervened to denounce the illegitimacy of the Chilean military government and human rights violations (See UNGA 2239th Plenary 1974).⁴⁷

In this context, when Ministers of Foreign Affairs Cubillos and Huang met in Beijing, it was not surprising that the latter made a detailed presentation about the two super-powers, focusing particularly on the USSR.

After his presentation, Huang complained that Chile used to declare that the USSR was a Marxist state, while for China, it was a country "that has reneged from Marxism and has become a social-imperialist country" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l). Far from being an unexpected situation,⁴⁸ Minister Cubillos was ready to hear such a complaint

⁴⁷ These countries were Cuba, the USSR, Yemen, Bulgaria, German Democratic Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Mongolia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Byelorussia

⁴⁸ In 1977, the Chilean Embassy in Beijing had already informed that the Director of the Department for America and Oceania, Lin Pin, had expressed to Chilean representatives its disconformity with Chile's use of the expressions of "communism" and "Marxism" as if they were dangerous and negative concepts. They

and answered back by explaining that the word “Marxist” was just “a semantic issue, rather than a substantive political problem.” More importantly, he informed that he had already instructed all Chilean official missions to adopt “the proper designation of Soviet social-imperialism” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l).

In effect, some months before the trip, a report written by the Chilean Ambassador in Beijing, Sergio Huidobro, had warned about this issue by suggesting that:

It is indispensable [...] not to attack and criticize indiscriminately international Marxism, but the Soviet Union and its satellites using Chinese terminology of social-imperialism. In this regard, we must express that our interests are similar to those of Beijing's, which are to see Kremlin's hegemonic actions frustrated (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

According to the report, Chile had to take advantage of the PRC-USSR conflict by introducing Chile as a country that has suffered from Soviet interventions:

Chile's anti-Soviet position and the attacks we suffer from the Kremlin and its satellites are factors that have a positive impact on the Sino-Chilean relations. Any significant rapprochement between Beijing and Moscow would negatively affect the chances of strengthening our relations with Beijing (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

It is worth noting that the first case of Soviet intervention in Chile that Huidobro pointed out was Soviet-Peruvian relations. As a Chilean Navy Admiral, he was perfectly aware of Peru's intentions to vindicate part of the vast territories lost in the Pacific War (1879-1884). The coup against Allende had already been a favourable scenario for Peru to progress military actions with the aims of invading and retaking the lost city of Arica

suggested instead the use of neutral concepts by remarking the differences between the PRC and the USSR. See (See Oficio Reservado. Memorandum, 1977, in Maria Montt 2005, 65)

(Cavallo, Salazar, and Sepúlveda 2008).⁴⁹ Peru's interests had been manifested in the context of a closed relationship with the USSR, from which it had received assistance to strengthen its military power to the extent that, in 1978, it had overcome Chile's (Berrios and Blasier 1991; CIA 1982).

Moreover, Chile and China also had to gainsay some fake news spread in the Peruvian press about China's sales of weapons to Chile. The Chilean *Chargé d'affaires* explained to the Deputy Director for Oceania and America, Shen Chih-wei, that such rumours were part of the Soviet campaign to harm Chile's international image and provoke a conflict between Chile and Peru (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978c). Regarding these antecedents, Huidobro advised that:

Regarding Peru, where, as it is known, there is a significant Soviet presence, the best card that we can present in our favour to the Chinese government is precisely such presence and the Russian interest in promoting a conflict between Chile and Peru (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

Cubillos took into consideration these suggestions not only in his meeting with minister Huang but also with Deng. As it was expected, Deng raised the USSR issue by asserting that "the Chinese-Soviet relationships could improve when the latter ceases its social-imperialist policy, but it is hard that that happens." Cubillos replied that, despite Chile and China having different political regimes, the USSR is an element that ties them together. "The social-imperialism criticises our relations, but we are used to dealing with

⁴⁹ Because of the Peruvian invasion hypothesis, Chile had withdrawn its defence system from the border city of Arica to Quebrada Camarones and the southern city of Iquique.

such criticism, and we are proud of our relations with China,” he asserted (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l).

3.2. The Third World Identity

Although for Pinochet's Chile, the identity of being a Third World country was not as important as it was for China before the rapprochement, these two countries also came together by articulating this identity.

Regarding Chile, Cubillos's predecessor, minister Patricio Carvajal, articulated other identities when characterising Chile on the international stage, such as proud and courageous people, heir to both the Spanish heroic conqueror and the Araucanian aborigine's indomitable courage fighting against foreign interventions. Another identity was a Christian Western country whose civilisation has been put into danger by Soviet imperialism (Carvajal 1975, 1976, 1977).

In this scenario, the point of departure to start articulating the Third World element was when Chile's authorities started to realise the political importance that this identity had for China. This situation can be traced back up to the first days of Huidobro as Chile's ambassador to China in May 1976. Huidobro observed that “in my contacts with Chinese officials since my arrival to Beijing, one of the concepts that they have emphasised the most is that both China and Chile belong to the Third World and, hence, have common problems and tasks.” The fact that China considers Chile as a Third World country is “one of the determinants in the maintenance of our relations” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

This kind of appreciation had to be kept in mind when minister Cubillos explained in Beijing that one of Chile's foreign policy aims was to broaden the scope of its diplomacy "by sending delegations and opening up new embassies" around the Third World; hence, Chile's intentions with China were not only to improve bilateral relationships but also to "support and learn from both China's domestic policy of four modernizations and China's foreign policy of the Three Worlds Theory" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978I).

In Chapter 6, I explained that the Third World question was not just mere demagoguery but an approach that Mao had developed to formulate a global-scope foreign policy. George Yu (1977) explains that when Mao passed away, the Chinese leadership kept this approach as the spearhead of China's foreign policy. This means that there are no major differences if one compares, for example, Hua Guofeng's speech at Mao's Memorial Service, in September 1976 (when he called to "deepen the struggle to criticise Teng Hsiao-p'ing")⁵⁰ with Deng's address to the UN Secretary General (UNGA) in 1982 (when Hua had just been removed from his chairmanship).⁵¹ In both cases, China looked for the construction of a broad international front against the First World. This approach had been officially ratified at the Eleventh National Congress of the Communist Party, representing the key instance of political stability among all the Party's factions and the beginning of a new cycle in China after Mao's and Zhou's deaths. On such an occasion, Hua Guofeng's political report stated that:

⁵⁰ Hua's words were: "we must [...] strengthen our unity with the people of the Third World countries and strengthen our unity with all the countries subjected to aggression, subversion, interference, control or bullying by imperialism and social-imperialism so as to form the broadest possible united front against imperialism (Hua 1976, 86-87).

⁵¹ Deng stated that "China's foreign policy [...] can be summed up in three sentences. First, we oppose hegemonism. Second, we safeguard world peace. Third, we are eager to strengthen unity and cooperation, or what might be termed 'union and cooperation,' with other Third World countries" (Deng 1982).

China is a developing socialist country belonging to the Third World. We stand firmly with the developing countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and other regions and staunchly support their just struggle to win and defend national independence, safeguard state sovereignty and develop the national economy (Hua 1977a, 72).

Hua reaffirmed the necessity to build up a broader front against imperialism and social-imperialism, which were conceived as “the biggest exploiters and oppressors” and “the common enemies of the people of the world” (Hua 1977a, 71). This front against the two super-powers entailed articulating a complex foreign policy that integrated communist comrades from around the world and the plural range of states from the Second and Third Worlds (Hua 1977a, 72).

In Chile, the Third World identity was articulated from the political necessity to supersede the international isolation that Pinochet’s regime was suffering from Jimmy Carter’s administration, which had imposed economic sanctions, and the permanent pressure of other countries in the UN. The main reason for such international animosity was human rights violations. This issue generated high levels of pressure in 1977, when the UNGA issued the Resolution A/RES/32/118 to deplore “the failure of the Chilean authorities to comply with their own repeated assurances to allow the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Situation on Human Rights in Chile to visit the country in accordance with its mandate” (UNGA 1977).

According to Chilean authorities, this Resolution had been an attempt of superpowers to impose their terms by exercising physical aggression, ideological hegemony, and economic sanctions. Chile claimed that “In spite of showing genuine

respect for human rights, the Chilean Government continues to be the victim of a singular attack in this field” (Carvajal 1977, 381).

As it was already explained, this Resolution triggered a national consultation to reject a supposedly concerted international intervention. On the international front, this situation pushed the Chilean regime to look for new horizons in Asia and Africa. In this context, ambassador Huidobro warned that “any weakening of our position in [the Third World] will adversely affect the rapprochement” between Chile and China. He also stressed that Chile has to insist on its Third World identity “by explaining how its foreign policy looks for broadening its diplomacy towards Asia and Africa and by highlighting the coincidences with China’s foreign policy concerns such as the condemnation of apartheid and the support to those Arab countries’ aspirations to get back the territories occupied by Israel” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

Thus, in his meeting with Chinese authorities, Cubillos explained that one of Chile’s foreign policy aims was to broaden the scope of its diplomacy towards the Third World. However, he continued, this effort was obstructed by “the Cuban-Soviet intervention in Africa as well as the manipulation of Soviet social-imperialism of Cuba within the Non-Alignment Movement” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978I).

According to the Chilean ambassador, other socialist countries, such as Poland⁵² and Albania, somehow interfered in the Chilean-Chinese rapprochement and criticised China’s Third World theory. For instance, Albania had been a traditional Chinese ally until Enver Hoxha (1979) became a prolific writer criticising China’s foreign policy, China-Chile relations and Pinochet’s dictatorship. According to Huidobro, communist comrades’

⁵² According to Huidobro, the Polish daily Trybuna Ludu criticised China’s Third World Theory.

criticisms would have constrained China from arranging a meeting between minister Cubillos and Hua Guofeng. These criticisms led China to maintain “its relationship with Chile within certain limits,” affirmed Huidobro (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

3.3. Economic reforms

The fact that Cubillos was not received by China’s Chairman but by the Vice Premier did not lessen the sense of importance given by Chilean representatives to Cubillos’s trip to Beijing. Despite their awareness that the Chinese Communist Party’s XI Congress had reaffirmed Hua Guofeng’s chairmanship (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978j), the meeting with Deng had the highest connotation since he represented “the real power in China and the first agent of China’s modernization and opening up” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l).

Deng explained to Cubillos that, after getting rid of the Gang of Four, “the Chinese people are united as one man to achieve the goal of four modernizations.” China was looking forward to importing technology from Europe and Japan. These goals, he added, were accompanied by China’s anti-hegemonic policy since his country “does not seek hegemony and will never look for it” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l). Rather than being specially prepared for Chilean officials, these words represented China’s view to be explained worldwide. For instance, similar expressions can be read in Deng’s Selected Works (Deng 1978).⁵³

⁵³ Deng’s (1978) text goes as follows: “The entire Chinese nation rejoiced over the downfall of the Gang of Four [...] First of all, the entire Party is united, as are the people of the whole nation. [...] we have clearly defined principles whereby we shall make use of all the advanced technologies and achievements from around

This discourse did represent a new national approach to Chinese economic development and international relations in the post-Cultural Revolution era. For example, in 1979, Luo Yuanzheng, Deputy Director of the Institute of World Economy, quoted Lenin to explain that the bourgeoisie had accumulated vast experience and skills in production techniques and economy management. Science and technology “belong to all as the common store of wealth created by man through the ages,” Luo stressed (1980, 68-70). In practice, China had to learn from Japan’s imports of industrial technology and the United States’ imports of agricultural techniques, among other countries (Luo 1980, 72-74). It had to learn from socialist experiences in engaging with foreign trade, foreign capital and technical assistance, such as Yugoslavia and Romania. It had to investigate state intervention experiences in the national economy from capitalist countries such as Japan and France (Luo 1980, 75-76).

In this context, Chile and China arranged a Chinese delegation of engineers to learn CODELCO’s exploitation techniques.

Interestingly, Luo attributed this view, not to Deng but to the Party’s Central Committee headed by Hua Guofeng. Indeed, certain western scholars (Vogel 2011; Teiwes and Sun 2011) have vindicated Hua’s role in encouraging economic reforms as well as his coincident views with Deng on these issues. This is so, regardless of their political differences on other important matters such as how to deal with Mao’s legacy (see Vogel 2011, 188-196) or the role of Intelligence agencies to get Chinese leaders informed about international issues (Bo 1996). For instance, Hua had already attempted to reshape China’s

the world [...] once we have accomplished the four modernizations and the national economy has expanded, our contributions to mankind, and especially to the Third World, will be greater. As a socialist country, China shall always belong to the Third World and shall never seek hegemony.”

economy before Deng's return in 1977, and, in doing so, he had put into practice some of the directives that Deng had proposed in 1975 before Mao removed the latter for having gone too far. Hua also pushed forward other policies that became critical for China's economic future, such as establishing the first Especial Economic Zone (EEZ) and the policy of learning from abroad. As a matter of fact, Hua went to Yugoslavia and Romania with these goals in mind in 1978 (Vogel 2011, 189-190).

On the other hand, Cubillos had flown to Beijing in a particular domestic context as well. Having assumed in 1977, he was the first non-military Minister of Foreign Affairs since September 1973. His appointment showed Pinochet's increasing inclination towards civilians to be in charge of relevant secretaries.

This situation was evident in economic affairs, where the Chicago Boys became the policymakers of Chile's neoliberal transformation. In his address to the nation after the plebiscite that approved the new Chilean Constitution in 1980, Pinochet attached this accomplishment to the economic reforms. Accordingly, not only a new Chile was emerging in institutional terms, but also "a free and realistic economic system shows us its benefits today" (see Pinochet 1981, 6-11).

Neoliberal economic reforms had started in 1975, with the appointment of Sergio de Castro as Minister of Economic Affairs. A few weeks before his designation, Chicago Boys had organised a seminar in Santiago in which the head-speakers were Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger, who expressed their support of the measures that the Chicago Boys were proposing to solve Chile's economic crisis (Cavallo, Salazar, and Sepúlveda 2008; Huneus 2000).

The first and most important of these measures was a shock treatment to control inflation, which initially generated a severe economic recession during the 1975-1976

period; but, then the economic situation recovered rapidly to the extent that, in 1978, the country had reached monetary stability, a stable balance of payments and a vigorous economic growth (Silva 1991, 92-95).

De Castro's designation was the outcome of a hard dispute between different right-wing civil factions (democrat Christians, nationalists, and *gremialistas*) who were collaborating with the military since the coup. Among them, gremialist technocrats won the race (Cavallo, et al., 2016). Chicago Boys' road towards taking over the economic agenda had started with retired Navy Officer Roberto Kelly's⁵⁴ appointment as the director of the Office of National Planning (ODEPLAN) in 1973. Kelly recruited gremialist economists, transforming ODEPLAN into the Chicago Boys' headquarters from which they started to ramify their influence by occupying high positions in other ministries (Huneus 2000).

Despite being ideologically biased, Chicago Boys put forward a sense of technocratic management and scientific criteria regarding the economy and public policy in general.⁵⁵ They introduced themselves as the source of a true revolution, the revolution of Chile's modernisation (e.g. Büchi 1993; Lavin 1987). Chicago Boys envisioned the so-called seven modernisations: new labour legislation, a new social pension system, the municipalisation and privatisation of education, the privatisation of health care, the promotion of free trade, the transformation of the judiciary and a new regional and local system of government administration (Silva, 1991).

⁵⁴ Kelly was a retired navy who had been class mate of one of the Junta's members, Admiral José Toribio Merino, and participated in the elaboration of a text known as "El Ladrillo" ("the brick", because of its size) together with some gremialist economists. El Ladrillo was a long text of political economy and directives elaborated by technocrats and businessmen to support the presidential campaign of the right-wing candidate Jorge Alessandri, in the elections of 1970.

⁵⁵ To deepen the ideological and political motivations of the gremialists and, within them, the Chicago Boys, see Carlos Huneus's (2000) "Technocrats and Politicians in an Authoritarian Regime. The 'ODEPLAN Boys' and the 'Gremialists' in Pinochet's Chile".

Under the increasing influence of these civilians, Cubillos headed the rapprochement to China. Although he was not a gremialist, he was a retired Navy Officer who had had business success, as did Kelly. Moreover, he was appointed as a minister when Chile's foreign policy was already being orientated towards foreign trade as one of its key areas. For instance, in 1978, the General Direction of International Economic Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was created (Muñoz 1986). This was a new administrative structure that increased the Ministry's capacity to respond to and encourage efficiently new trade compromises that the country was reaching with Asian countries (Ross 2007b).

Furthermore, Kelly was the second highest-ranked authority after Cubillos of the Chilean delegation that went to Beijing. While Cubillos met Huang Hua, Kelly headed parallel meetings with authorities from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Trade, in which the parties settled agreements to increase Chile's exports of raw materials and the visit of a delegation of Chinese engineers to learn from Chile's techniques of copper extraction (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l).

3.4. The de-Maoization question

In this Chilean context, it is not surprising that officials interpreted China's transformations as a de-Maoization process. Before Cubillos's trip to Beijing, many diplomatic reports⁵⁶ described that China was starting a transit from backwardness to modernization (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978h); "Hua's political line was giving priority to

⁵⁶ These documents contain analyses about the XI Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (1977) and the envisioning of a post-Cultural Revolution Constitution. The first session of the 5th National People's Congress and the so-called 'four modernizations.' Moreover, economic reports released by China's State Planning Commission.

professionals' scientific capacity over ideologies" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978k), "establishing contacts with the rest of the world to get technology" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978j). One file affirms that, in the pursuit of China's modernization, Chinese leaders were adopting "a progressive and slow abandonment of the total attachment to Mao's thought" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978i).

According to ambassador Huidobro, this phenomenon had its origin in the spread of Mao's address at the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, in which he had stated that "a number of things were done wrongly, mainly because most people had no experience to enable them to understand the problems" (Mao 1962). According to the ambassador, there was some acquaintance among Party's members with Mao's self-criticism and lack of expertise on economic issues concerning the Great Leap Forward (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978l). Hence, the acknowledgement of Mao's self-criticism in the post-Cultural Revolution context would have been the explanation of China's de-Maoization.

However, when analysing the literature about China's transformation, it is possible to realise that, rather than signifying de-Maoization, China's transformation entails a political struggle for hegemonizing the meaning of Mao's legacy. In concrete, Chilean reports were written when Deng was rehabilitated and started to criticise Hua's strategy that, according to Deng, deviated Mao's thought from its true meaning.

Deng was notably a critic of Hua's thesis of the two whatevers. Vogel (2011, 188-191) defines this approach as "whatever policies Mao supported, and whatever instructions Mao gave, should still be followed." This strategy became Hua's banner to declare his full commitment to Mao's legacy and settle the frontier between his followers and his opponents. "Hua sought to reinforce his interpretation of Mao's thought by controlling the

editing of Mao's writings to be included in volume 5 of Mao's *Selected Works*. On April 7 [1977], the Central Committee released Hua Guofeng's guide on how to read the volume, which approved a passage of Mao's urging the pursuit of revolution to the end. A week later, on April 15, under Hua Guofeng imprimatur, volume 5 of Mao's *Selected Works* was published. Neither the guide nor the publication of volume 5 itself, however, would stop the growing support for Deng's return to a high-level position" (Vogel 2011, 195).

Contrary to Hua, Deng's position consisted in defining Mao's thought as an integral system of ideas that must guide the Party by considering changing contexts (Deng 1977a; 1977b; see also Vogel 2011, 195-196). In a speech at the Third Plenary Session of the Tenth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Deng claimed that "what Comrade Mao Zedong said with regard to a specific question at a given time and under particular circumstances was correct [...] So we must acquire a correct understanding of Mao Zedong Thought as an integral system instead of just citing a few specific words or sentences." In this criticism, Deng pointed to the Gang of Four's ideologist Chunqiao Zhang and Hua's attempt to repeat so in Volume 5 of Mao's *Selected Works*. In a nutshell, Deng advocated for using Mao's ideas as a guidance that helps seeking truth from present facts (Deng 1977a).

Thus, Chinese reforms were far from the obliteration of Mao's thought, as Chilean representatives used to believe, but the struggle for hegemonizing its meaning. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing that the Chilean element "de-Maoization" was not articulated within the rapprochement.

3.5. The issue of Taiwan

Although this issue was not part of the rapprochement explicitly, it had to be considered as another element of the rapprochement. Before Cubillos's trip to Beijing, the Chilean Embassy had expressed that China's goal was to isolate Taiwan from the world by avoiding any official contact between any country and the island.

The Chilean ambassador recalled China's diplomatic protests against Chile when a Taiwanese delegation visited the country in 1975 to establish a trade office which, according to Chinese authorities, was a "Taiwanese propaganda agency" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1978b).

This office had been established during the visit of Taiwanese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, H. K. Yang, who went to Santiago under rare circumstances. A Taiwanese scholar reports: "not wishing to issue visas until they reached Santiago, Chilean officials went to receive the ROC delegation in the airport. As a consequence, it is said that the delegation made its visit under a pseudonym" (Lin Chou 1995, 21). Whether this story is totally true, the Chilean-Taiwanese agreement existed even though Chile avoided including an allusion to the word "Taiwan" in it. Hence, the Taiwanese office in Santiago was named the Commercial Office of the Far East.

To prevent any political interaction with Taiwan, the PRC used to appeal to the 1970 Chile-China joint communiqué by which Chile recognised the PRC as the only legal government of China. For instance, in 1974, Beijing advocated for the fulfilment of this arrangement when asked to expel a Taiwanese journalist from Chile (Lin Chou 1995).

Regarding these antecedents, the Chilean ambassador recommended that, if Chile wants to improve its ties with the PRC, it must restrain any contact with Taiwan.

4. Logics of Chile-China relations in 1978

4.1. International logics of convergence: the empty signifier of non-intervention

In this period, Chile and China articulate an international practice which can be characterised as a logic of convergence articulated around the empty signifier of non-intervention in domestic affairs.

The coup d'état against the Chilean socialist government and the establishment of an anti-communist regime in Chile revealed the international practice's radical contingency that had been articulated by Allende's and Zhou Enlai's administrations in the early seventies, changing subjects' and the rest of the elements' positions of the bilateral discourse. The coup is the dislocation that Chile and China face when deciding to maintain their diplomatic ties on behalf of the non-intervention principle because they see themselves as the USSR's victims.

Non-intervention works as a particular way to respond to dislocation inauthentically; paraphrasing Glynos and Howarth, states "are rendered complicit in concealing or covering over the radical contingency of [international] relations" (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 133). This inauthentic response absorbs the coup's dislocatory effect and makes the rapprochement possible by articulating a chain of other international convergences that bring to the fore either new signifiers or new meanings for old signifiers.

4.1.1. The Soviet Union and the ideological closure

In this international logic of convergence, the signification given to the USSR as social-imperialism represents the catachrestical operation or the rapprochement's ideological

dimension. If social-imperialism is the antagonistic other that is excluded from this international practice, non-intervention acquires its discursive centrality when it is articulated in antagonism to social-imperialism.

The convergence upon social-imperialism derives from the national ways Chile and China articulate the meaning of the USSR. This signifier is firstly signified by Chinese leaders and then incorporated by Chilean authorities. Following Glynos (2008, 283), social-imperialism represents, in this domestic level of analysis, the obstacle that prevents the realisation of Chile's and China's desire for non-intervention, respectively. In this sense, it is possible to characterise these domestic political phenomena as fantasmatic logics as long as the first and foremost obstacle that prevents the realisation of Chile's and China's desires of non-intervention is the threat that represents the USSR to their respective sovereignties.

4.1.2. Third World as a common identity

The Third World identity is intrinsically related to the demand for struggling against social-imperialism. Social-imperialism is part of the First World. China's Third World theory and Chile's diplomatic opening towards African and Asian countries represent foreign policies to engage with different types of regimes dealing with the First World's harassment. On the one hand, Chinese leaders articulate this identity within a logic that tears up the Soviet-Chinese comradeship and joins China and Chile politically as members of the same front against the First World. On the other hand, as its traditional American-European space of international interactions was no longer a place to rely on, Chilean leaders foreground this identity to expand its international horizons towards non-traditional international spaces such as East Asia. Although being a Third World country is not originally part of anti-

communist Chile's identity, Chilean leaders realise that this element enhances the rapprochement as long as it is possible to associate it to their anti-Soviet stance.

4.1.3. Economic backwardness and domestic demands for reform

It is worth noting that the Sino-Chilean rapprochement takes place in periods of political stability and regime transformation which proceed years of crisis in both China and Chile. By 1978, both countries were experiencing the rise of new hegemonic blocks able to establish new regimes. While in China, the political articulation of a front represented by Hua Guofeng's and Deng Xiaoping's factions stands over pro-Cultural Revolution factions and sets up economic reforms; in Chile, Pinochet steps over the rest of the Junta's generals and allows the rise of the gremialists, who lead the establishment of new constitutional and economic regimes.

The Cinderella of this international convergence is economic modernization or the so-called parallel reforms. Let us remember that Deng tells Cubillos that "the Chinese people are united as one man to achieve the goal of four modernizations," while the latter stresses that Chile desires to "support and learn from China's domestic policy of four modernizations." Chile and China resume their bilateral mechanisms of economic dialogue in this context.

4.2. International logics of divergence: Spectres threaten the rapprochement

The analysis shows that Chile and China did not engage directly in antagonistic relations that prevented them from converging around essential elements to their respective foreign policies. There is no floating signifier with a surplus of meaning either.

However, it is possible to observe that some spectres make themselves present, haunting each side of the international practice. These spectres are Chile's belief in China's de-Maoization, China's political constraint for Chile's human rights violations, and Chile's hidden desire to engage with its anti-communist fellow Taiwan. Although these spectres do not appear bilaterally, their presence at each side of the international practice puts the bilateral discursive closure at stake, revealing its radical contingency. In other words, bilateral antagonism would manifest if one side tries to articulate one of these elements within the international practice.

For instance, in Chile, there is an idea that Chinese economic reforms represent Chinese leaders' de-ideologization or de-Maoization. This interpretation can be called "Chinese pragmatism" in the same way the academic literature brings this term to the fore when characterising either China's foreign policy or China-Chile relations (see Chapter 1). However, it is possible to see that economic reforms are far from representing the obliteration of Mao's thought, as Chilean diplomats use to believe. In other words, Chinese leaders do not turn into de-ideologized, pragmatic and transparent agents, but they start a political struggle to define the new ideological horizons and the role of Mao's legacy in China's post-Mao era.

For China, Chile's human rights violations were an issue of deep concern. Due to the reports sent by China's Embassy in Santiago, there was the undeniable conviction that the Chilean military Junta slaughtered innocent people. This concern prevented China from engaging closer with Chile politically. Besides, because Chile had a bad international reputation, China's relations with this international pariah put its reputation at stake internationally, especially among Third World and socialist countries.

Taiwan is not explicitly present in Chinese and Chilean interactions during the rapprochement; however, the antecedents show that Taiwan is a tacit divergent element because of Chile's hidden desire to increasing relationships with this anti-communist fellow. Taiwanese attempts to persuade Chile to resume diplomatic ties, and the Chilean temptation to do so leads China to recall the Sino-Chilean joint communiqué that formalized diplomatic ties in 1970. In this context, the Chilean ambassador believes that, to consolidate the rapprochement, "it is necessary to restrict as much as possible, if not completely, our ties" with Taiwan since this issue is a matter of political contestation with the PRC.

Conclusions

This chapter explained how an anti-communist Chile and communist China articulated a political rapprochement in 1978 and how they absorbed the dislocatory effects of the Chilean coup d'état in 1973. Chile and China articulated an international practice around the empty signifier of 'non-intervention,' articulated in antagonism to the USSR. This international practice's ideological dimension is represented by the bilateral operation of signifying the USSR as social-imperialism. Social-imperialism is the antagonistic Other

upon which Chile and China articulate other convergences such as the shared identities of being Third World countries and backward economies.

Although Chile and China do not manifest explicitly political divergences in the articulation of their international practice, it is possible to see that China keeps a distant attitude towards Chile because the latter is an element identified as a perpetrator of crimes against Chilean people and a source of criticisms by other communist and Third World countries. In Chile, it is possible to see that the rapprochement is possible despite having attempted to establish some interactions with anti-communist Taiwan and assumed that China's reforms entailed a de-Maoization process.

Thus, this international practice entails political logics of divergence and convergence whose grammar consists of a communist country and an anti-communist military regime (syntagmatic pole) who are joined by their defence of the universal applicability of the principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs, their common efforts in denouncing social-imperialism as the first perpetrator of this principle and a major threat against the Third World that pursues to overcome its backward economic conditions (associative pole).

CHAPTER 8

Chile and China in 2005: Logics of free trade

Introduction

The main challenge faced by many researchers is to explain why Chile became the first country in the world to sign a bilateral FTA with China. The research to date has tended to focus on the economic complementarities, defining the agreement in terms of the result of China's demand for Chile's raw materials (Errázuriz 2006; Heine 2006; Labarca 2012; Zhang 2006), rather than drawing attention to the relationship's political and ideological elements. Some texts even assemble concepts from economics with others from conventional IRT to portray an image of two countries pursuing their respective economic interests as if they were two de-politicised and de-ideologized black boxes looking for the most efficient means to reach a specific outcome (Artaza 2007; Ross 2007b).

However, the economic complementarities efficacy to generate this kind of international outcome has not been closely examined. Most Latin American countries are China's raw materials suppliers and complementary economies, but just three have signed FTAs with China.

In this chapter, I contest the claim that the FTA resulted from economic complementarities and argue that Chile and China articulated politically a unique symbolic order that comprises a broad range of elements. Drawing on my post-Marxist strategy, I show that Chile and China constituted an international practice through a chain of political

convergences that can be defined as demands against unilateralism, protectionism, and their expected positions within world politics struggle to determine what a market economy is.

Free trade is the practice's empty signifier that makes possible both the articulation of these convergences and the concealment of bilateral divergences. The bilateral operation to associate free trade with China's market economy status (MES) represents the international practice's ideological dimension, making the FTA not only conceivable but also symbolically unique. Regarding the divergences, the data show that this international practice represents a precarious and unstable bilateral discourse whose radical contingency is revealed when Chile and China face antagonisms around the floating signifier of human rights. This element challenges the hegemonic formation that Chile and China articulate around free trade and market economy.

The research data is drawn from six primary sources: The Historical Archive of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Presidential Archive of Patricio Aylwin, official documents of the WTO and the UN, and the official websites of Chile's and the PRC's governments. The analysis of these sources should make an important contribution to reformulating our understanding of economic complementarities and natural resources from being elements with exclusively causal efficacy to elements whose significance is subordinated to the symbolic order constituted by Chile-China's articulatory practice.

In the first section, I critically engage with the concept of economic complementarity and analyse it in the context of China's and Chile's free trade agreements. Then, I describe Chile's post-dictatorship years lasting from 1989 to the early 2000s, which is the context in which the idea of a bilateral FTA started to become conceivable. The third section is concerned with the elements that constitute the Chilean-Chinese discourse, and

the fourth section presents the findings of the research characterising the practice's international logics of convergence and divergence.

1. Economic complementarities and political decisions

Economic complementarities are defined in opposition to competitiveness (Panchamukhi 1983; Andreosso-O'Callaghan 2009). For instance, Panchamukhi (1983, 133) defines that two countries are complementary “when a) the activity cannot be performed unless both the entities are present; b) the level of the activity cannot be maintained when the level of one of the entities is changed; and c) any increase/decrease in one entity necessarily implies some increase/decrease in other entity, when the level of the activity is also increased/decreased.”

Many scholars use this kind of definition to explain the FTA (Heine 2006; Labarca 2012; Zhang 2006; Errázuriz 2006; Gachúz 2012). For instance, Zhang (2006, 115) highlights that Chile has vast amounts of copper and other raw materials “which are highly demanded by China; which in turn demonstrates the economic-commercial complementarity.” Difficulties arise, however, when an attempt is made to apply this definition to other Chile's and China's agreements.

In 2002, China signed a collective FTA with ASEAN despite being competitive economies. When this agreement was signed, ASEAN's share of manufactured goods exported to China, such as machinery and electrical equipment, had grown from 12.4% to 48.3% during the last ten years before signing the agreement (Wong and Chan 2003, 514). Hence, Wong and Chang (2003, 517) observe that “mutually competitive, rather than complementary, structures of China and ASEAN prevented significant growth in trade, with the possible exception of China and Singapore.”

One year before Chile-China's FTA was signed, Chile-US's FTA entered into force (2004). However, as I will explain in the following sections, rather than being the natural expression of economic complementarity, this FTA must be understood in the context of Chile's policy to global markets. For instance, Chile firstly attempted to become the North American Free Trade Agreement's (NAFTA) fourth member and then was one of a few countries that supported all along with the failed negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (ALCA) proposed by the US (1994-2005). The latter initiative failed due to the majority of American countries' opposition, especially those that had experienced acute economic crises in the nineties and had seen the rise of left-wing governments. In this context, one shall understand that Chile's political decisions determined its inclination towards the accomplishment of FTAs rather than pure technocratic criteria. As Domínguez (2006, 3) stresses, "the Chilean government behaved as a trading state."

There are also economic complementarities between China and the rest of the Latin American countries. According to an ECLAC's report (2015, 37-38), Latin America-China trade of goods grew 27%, at an annual rate of 9% during the 2000-2013 period. China's share in Latin America's imports, especially manufactured goods, increased from 2% to 16%. China's share of Latin American exports, mainly raw materials, increased as well from 1% to 9%. At that pace, China quickly became Latin America's second trade partner. In this scenario, just three countries had trade balance surpluses with China: Chile, Venezuela and Brazil: "In all these cases, these surpluses are generated by the sales of a small number of primary products" ECLAC (2015, 41) observes. Thus, the report shows that, for example, China's demand for Venezuelan oil and Venezuela's demand for Chinese goods jumped up when Chile and China signed the FTA.

However, Chavez's Venezuela and the PRC did not conceive the FTA as a possible cooperation mechanism. Moreover, Chile, Peru and Costa Rica are the only ones that signed this kind of agreement with China. According to China's Ministry of Commerce official website, a fourth country started to negotiate an FTA in 2012, but the process has been at a complete standstill in the joint feasibility study, with no foreseeable progress in the future. This country is Colombia, the US's closest ally in Latin America.

As we can see, the appeal to the causality of economic complementarities to generate FTAs is unsatisfactory. The key problem with this explanation is that existing accounts fail to resolve the politics/technocracy dilemma of decision making inasmuch as many scholars assume that these domains are two separate spheres of social reality.

A good number of texts have tried to solve this problem on the grounds that Chile-China relations are not political but purely pragmatic. For instance, Pérez Le-Fort suggests that Chile is a serious and reliable country different from a populist Latin American region contaminated with the waters of the so-called 21st century's socialism (Pérez Le-Fort 2006, 124). Others scholars affirm that the relationship with China is eminently quantitative (Ross 2007b), with no space for political identities (Errázuriz 2006), taking place in an era where there were no ideological options other than globalization liberal principles (Rodríguez 2011). Collectively, these studies rely on mainstream IR scholars, such as Morgenthau, Gilpin and Nye (Artaza 2007; Ross 2007b; Rodríguez and Leiva 2013), to portray the transcendental image of two countries pursuing their rational interests shaped by economic complementarities (Zhang 2006; Gachúz 2012; Artaza 2007).

However, very little is known about the political moment in which Chile and China decided to arrange an agreement out of an indeterminate number of other possible arrangements. Following Laclau (1996), I claim that the deconstruction of the hegemonic

moment upon which one arrangement prevails over other possibilities shows the undecidability of the international practice and reveals its contingent objectivity.

Hence, a much more systematic approach to international practices would identify how economic criteria interact with political elements to explain the Sino-Chilean FTA. In the following sections, I will identify the elements that pertain to such political terrain and constitute the Sino-Chilean discourse.

2. The relationship before signing the FTA

2.1. Human Rights and democracy issues

In 1989, Chile-China relationships were distant again because significant events dislocated the bilateral rapprochement that had started a decade ago. In China, a political crisis took place having as the corollary the Tiananmen incident; whereas in Chile, there were democratic elections for first time after 17 years of military dictatorship. In this context, for Chile, the Chinese crisis was the result of Chinese dissident groups “whose political goal is to democratize the country as the only solution to achieving development.” The Chilean embassy was also keen on informing about Western democracies’ measures to condemn the Chinese government’s oppression (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1989a). In January, the Chilean Embassy submitted a *démarche* expressing its “deep dissatisfaction” because Chinese military authorities had closed the gateway to *Jianguomenwai* diplomatic residence (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1989b). Then, in June, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested “to strictly abide by the decree on enforcing martial law [...] and refrain from getting involved in China’s internal affairs” (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989).

With the re-establishment of a democratic regime in Chile (March 1990), Patricio Aylwin's administration (1990 - 1994) aimed to reinsert the country into the Western international community by foregrounding the promotion of human rights and democratic values. In practice, this policy strived to distance Chile from non-democratic countries (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1990c).

In contrast, China wanted to accelerate the pace of interactions with the new Chilean government as a measure to diminish the international effects of the Tiananmen incident and contain Taiwan's diplomatic contacts with Aylwin's administration. The Chinese leader who led these interactions was president Yang Shangkun, who visited Santiago in May 1990. Yang sent a letter to Aylwin stating that "I am convinced that the ties of Chinese-Chilean cooperation and friendship based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence entail broad development prospects" (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1990a)

However, despite having been the first official visit of either a Chinese or Chilean top leader ever, Yang's trip to Santiago was overshadowed by Chile's priorities as mentioned previously. Indeed, the Chinese ambassador in Santiago indicated several times his concerns about Chile's new political approach to China. China's main apprehensions were how Chile was dealing with Taiwan and Tibet.

The ambassador was aware of Taiwan's vice-minister of foreign trade's visit to Santiago in 1991. More importantly, Chile had not objected to the new name of the Commercial Office of the Far East, which now was named Taipei Commercial and Cultural Office. This office worked on behalf of Taiwan, and its highest agent was recognised as Taiwan's ambassador. For instance, in October 1993, president Aylwin sent a letter to the

“ambassador” apologising for not attending the reception that inaugurated Taipei Office’s new building (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1993d).

In the Chilean government there was an influential group, chiefly Christian Democrats (Aylwin’s political party), who sympathised with the Taiwanese cause. Their contacts with Taiwan were not canalised necessarily through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (headed by a member of the Social Democrat Radical Party) but the Secretary-General of the Presidency and the Senate, two critical spheres of influence of the ruling Christian Democratic Party. For instance, in September 1992, Taiwan sent a missive to Edgardo Boeninger, Secretary-General of the Presidency, attaching a letter signed by Taiwan’s president, Lee Teng-hui, to President Aylwin congratulating for Chile’s national day (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1992a). Christian Democrats’ line of thought was expressed by senator Andrés Zaldívar, who sent a letter to the so-called Taiwanese ambassador, in July 1993, affirming that:

I believe that all political actions that the Government of the Republic of China seeks to be recognized by the international community are fair. Given the fact of the new realities of the world, where bipolarity has ended [...] States are recognized regardless of their ideological features [...] and it is recognized by all that in Taiwan it operates a State with a constituted government, and with an economic, social and political reality that no one can ignore (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1993b).

As far as the situation in Tibet is concerned, China asked for the Dalai Lama’s visit to Chile in 1992 to be called off (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1991). Despite this request, Aylwin met him privately in June. In a letter sent after this encounter, the Dalai Lama stated that he was “grateful for giving me a patient hearing when I explained to you

about the tragedy of my people and my country. Above all, I am deeply encouraged by your assurance to support us regarding the violation of human rights in Tibet” (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1992b).

It was in this context that Aylwin accepted China's invitation and visited Beijing in November 1992. Reading a report elaborated to prepare for this trip, it is possible to see Chile's apprehensions regarding China:

While our country considers that the defence and promotion of the universal rights of man have a supranational value, China postulates that such rights correspond to internal affairs of each country, limiting the competence of international organizations (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1992c).

Although these issues were sources of political divergences, both countries found a way to put them aside to progress in other areas such as bilateral trade, especially since Eduardo Frei's administration (1994 – 2000). For example, in 1996, the minister of foreign affairs, Qian Qichen, sent a letter to his Chilean counterpart, José Insulza, to thank Chile for not supporting “the anti-Chinese project at the present session of the Commission on Human Rights” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1996d).

Former president Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006) tells in his memoirs that, in April 1998, just before launching his presidential campaign, he was invited to Beijing by the Chinese government. Lagos had prepared his interventions focused on transmitting the message of Chile's interests in strengthening trade. The agenda was going on as programmed up to he met Li Peng, then president of the National Assembly: “I made my pitch about trade between our two countries to his welcoming nods,” Lagos describes, when “he changed the tone a bit” to enquire whether Chile will keep abstaining at the UN if

the Human Rights Commission issues its annual condemnation against China. Lagos's answer was as follows:

Mr. President, we learned our own lessons [...] during our years under Augusto Pinochet," I told him. "But in all those years, we were always very disappointed that China never voted for the restoration of human rights in our country (Lagos 2012, 143).

After realising that his words would have caused the end of the trip, which included a meeting with President Jiang Zemin, Lagos explains that to everyone's surprise, the visit continued as planned, and the next day he was received by Jiang, who, nonetheless, rose the same issue once again by commenting his last visit to the US:

I asked Bill Clinton: Why don't you take 10 percent of China's population into America? It would be no more than 120 or 130 million people. And it would be in the name of freedom. 'Impossible!' he told me. I replied to him, 'So you are also a dictator, because you have put limits on where people can go. How can I run China if I let everyone that wants to move to Shanghai do so? (Lagos 2012, 143-144).

It is worth noting that in Chile, the concern over the human rights issue in China does not disappear. In one of Chile's 2006-presidential debates, then-candidate Michelle Bachelet (Chilean president between 2006 and 2010) was asked, if she were president, bearing in mind that she was a victim of human rights violations, and that China is a country "recognized by its flagrant violations of human rights, would she ratify the FTA with China?" Bachelet's answer was:

Bachelet: if there are reports of human rights violations, these must be done in the appropriate institution. I will support any investigation [...] If there are specific complaints today about China, which exist, I will support all these initiatives.

Journalist: Mrs Bachelet, I regret to inform you that the complaints have been registered for the last 30 years [...] It is in the newspapers.

Bachelet: That is what I say, if there are specific complaints and are investigated and demonstrated in relevant institutions, not only in the press [...] if that is true, the right measure will be taken, and I will decide whether or not a treaty is signed (Emol 2005).

2.2. Increasing bilateral contacts and the FTA signature

1996 marked the starting point of the relationship's new course. In fact, this change had started in November 1995 with the visit of President Frei to China. Then, in January, vice-Premier, Zhu Rongji, visited Santiago; in October, vice-minister of foreign affairs, Mariano Fernández, visited Beijing; in November, a delegation of the Chilean Congress, led by the president of the Senate, Sergio Diez, visited China while the same month the Chinese Premier, Li Peng, visited Chile with a delegation of representatives of Chinese companies. Moreover, the XVI meeting of the Joint Economic-Commercial Committee took place in Santiago, in April (Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1996).

The backdrop of all these meetings were economic issues. China wanted a reliable source of copper. It proposed establishing direct and long-term contracts with CODELCO to guarantee imports of copper without intermediaries. On the Chilean side, the priority was to open up Chinese markets to its agricultural products and wine. The other two crucial issues were China's complaint about Chile's anti-dumping measures, such as the use of third party markets to determine Chinese prices, and Chile's compromise to support China's membership in the WTO (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1996c, 1996a).

This new course was triggered by Chile's and China's participation in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which led them to arrange bilateral appointments

yearly since Chile became a member in 1994. Besides, as the APEC organises seats by country alphabetically, Chile and China are always sat together. According to former president Michelle Bachelet, APEC encouraged a fluid bilateral dialogue between them (Bachelet 2017).

In the 8th APEC summit in Brunei (November 2000), presidents Lagos and Jiang celebrated 30 years of diplomatic relations. For China, the meeting had a double meaning. First, it was the first time a president from the PRC met a Chilean socialist president; an event like this one was exceptional regarding Chile established diplomatic relations under the presidency of Salvador Allende. China's position regarding Lagos's election had already been stated in a previous visit of Chinese foreign affairs minister Tang Jiaxuan, to Santiago, in September of the same year. Tang congratulated president Lagos by stressing that China will "never forget the effort made by the old generation of leaders from the two countries in the establishment of diplomatic relations" (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2000a). Second, the bilateral meeting represented the opportunity to thank Chile for being the first Latin American country to support China's accession to the WTO a year earlier (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2000b).

A few months later, in April 2001, Jiang made a state visit to Chile in the context of a regional trip to Latin America. Jiang's arrival to Santiago was the first leg of his first trip abroad in the 21st century, which demonstrated "that China attaches great importance to relations with Latin America and China-Chile relations" (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001b). Lagos and Jiang met again a few months later in the APEC summit, in Shanghai.

At the 2003 APEC summit, in Thailand, Chilean foreign minister Soledad Alvear compromised Chile's recognition of China's market economy status, according to the

WTO's norms. The next year, Chile fulfilled this promise by signing a Memorandum of Understanding when President Hu Jintao attended the APEC summit in Chile. During this visit, Hu and Lagos also announced the launch of negotiations of the FTA and upgraded the relationship to the status of Bilateral Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004).

In 2005, during the APEC summit of South Korea, presidents Lagos and Hu signed the FTA and celebrated the 35th anniversary of the relationship. Hu stressed that the agreement represented an example “for pushing forward South-South cooperation” (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005a). Lagos pointed out that the agreement was “very significant for this APEC summit because it was the first agreement that China signs with a non-Asian country”, as well as marking a contrast with the obstacles to achieve other initiatives such as the failed ALCA (Lagos 2005, quoted by Ansa).

All these antecedents provide us with the main elements that Chile and China articulated to constitute their international practice. In the next section, I will identify and describe them in more depth.

3. The elements of the FTA

3.1. Free trade and multilateralism

3.1.1. China's market economy status and the anti-dumping issue

In this period, the most significant bilateral agreement in political terms was the Memorandum of Understanding signed during Hu's visit to Santiago in 2004. In this decisive document, Chile relinquished anti-dumping Articles N°15 and N°16 of the Protocol of Accession of the PRC to the WTO. It also relinquished Paragraph 242 of the

Working Party's Report on China's Accession, referring to anti-dumping in agricultural products trade (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 2004b).

The most important obligation of these norms was subparagraph (a)(ii) of the Article N°15, which allowed WTO members to maintain anti-dumping measures when Chinese “producers under investigation cannot clearly show that market economy conditions prevail in the industry producing the like product with regard to manufacture, production and sale of that product” (WTO 2001).

On its official website, the WTO defines anti-dumping measures as a series “of complex analytical steps.” However, China regularly complained about comparability price investigations by using a third country price as an average value because it seemed an arbitrary and discretionary methodology. China claimed that the US and the EU mostly applied this norm to protect their markets from Chinese products. In this sense, Rui (2015, 752) shows that in the same kind of trade disputes against China, the importers may choose different surrogate countries. “For example, the EU selected Singapore as a surrogate country in its anti-dumping investigations on Chinese colour televisions in 1998, but the US chose Indian prices as the basis of reference in a similar anti-dumping case against Chinese colour TVs in 2004.”

For China, these arbitrary procedures revealed political barriers in becoming a WTO member. The first and foremost obstacle was the US, which first was unwilling to accept the very idea of a WTO with China as a member and secondly, it endeavoured to include these anti-dumping measures in the Protocol of Accession. President William Clinton made the US position clear in 1999, after a failed round of negotiations with Premier Zhu Ronji. Clinton stated that “we want to support China in its efforts to strengthen its legal system, impose stronger labour and environmental protections, improve accountability, give

citizens greater freedom and increase their access to information. We disagree, of course, on the meaning and reach of human rights, because I am convinced that greater freedom, debate and openness are vital to improving China's citizens' lives as well as China's economy over the long run" (The White House Office 1999a).

In turn, president Jiang Zemin commented on the failure of these negotiations stating that "the reasons for the failure to reach an agreement reportedly lay with the Congress" of the US, which permanently received pressures from, among others, the agricultural sector to get protected from Chinese imports (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1999a).

In 2005, Bo Xilai, then minister of commerce, expressed China's position concerning anti-dumping measures in the Doha Round negotiations:

As the biggest victim of abused anti-dumping measures, China supports further clarification and improvement of the existing disciplines for rules covering anti-dumping and other relevant areas [...] It had taken China 15 years to complete the negotiations of its accession to the WTO, which entailed extensive commitments and significant contributions to the multilateral trading system. As a result, our average tariff level for industrial products has dropped to 9 per cent this year from the pre-accession level of 42.9 per cent, whereas our average tariff level for agricultural products now stands at only 15.3 per cent as compared to the pre-accession level of 54 per cent. However, the world average tariff for farm products now is as high as 62 per cent. Throughout the history of the WTO, no other Members have made such huge cuts during such a short period of time, not even any developed Member! (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005b).

Besides the US, the Chinese government also faced another important challenge: political factions within the CCP, which opposed WTO membership. Feng Hui (2017)

studies the cleavages since China submitted its application to the GATT in 1986. Two of these factions were the nationalist line and the conservative left, whose main argument was that China's participation in the WTO would harm its self-reliance. Another faction was the new left, whose concern was that the obedience to WTO's norms would increase China's social inequalities. After framing this political scenario, Feng shows how Jiang Zemin's core line prevailed over the rest of the political factions.

When China's Protocol of Accession was approved in 2001, it included a norm in subparagraph (d)(ii) of Article N°15 that gave China 15 years to expire these anti-dumping provisions since its accession in 2001. The same Article also included a shortcut:

Once China has established, under the national law of the importing WTO Member, that it is a market economy, the provisions of subparagraph (a) shall be terminated providing that the importing Member's national law contains market economy criteria as of the date of accession (WTO 2001).

In other words, China had the possibility that WTO members recognise its MES individually. By 2005, China had already persuaded around fifty countries to do so (Rui 2015; Urdinez and Masiero 2015). In this regard, Hu's visit to Chile in 2004 was part of a South American tour that had included Brazil and Argentina as well, where he also signed memorandums of understanding of the same kind. In this context, when presidents Lagos and Hu signed the memorandum, the latter expressed that:

It should be noted that since the beginning of President Ricardo Lagos's mandate, the two countries have carried out fruitful and multifaceted cooperation based on mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit [...] and maintained active coordination and reciprocal support on the international stage (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 2004c).

For Lagos, the memorandum demonstrated that Asian and Latin American countries are willing to cooperate and strengthen political dialogue in issues such as peace and international development:

That is why we have announced today that Chile formally grants recognition to China as a market economy. We know what this means, and we also know what your country has done in terms of economic openness after its accession to the World Trade Organization (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 2004a).

China's MES is also articulated with the Chilean-Chinese FTA as long as it includes a bilateral trade dispute settlement mechanism. According to president Lagos, the FTA nurtures the bilateral regimen of practices by incorporating "a more civilised or direct way to resolve commercial conflicts" (Lagos 2011). This point is crucial because Brazil and Argentina, despite having been the other two South American countries to recognise China's MES in 2004, today list as countries with the highest number of anti-dumping demands in the WTO against China, alongside the US and the EU (Urdinez and Masiero 2015). In this context, Lagos also stresses that, in contrast to Brazil and Argentina, Chile is not afraid of China's invasion of Chinese products because Chile has the vision and the tools to take advantage of it (Lagos 2004, quoted by El País).

3.1.2. Chile's policy towards Asia Pacific

As I already mentioned above, APEC represents an advantage point to strengthening bilateral relations. When Lagos and Hu signed the Memorandum of Understanding, the latter highlighted Chile's and China's common condition of being APEC members as a way

to stress that “the Chinese government attaches great importance to its links with Chile, taking it as a reliable friend and an important partner for economic and commercial cooperation in Latin America” (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 2004c).

Chile had become an APEC economy in 1994, after an intense diplomatic campaign that Aylwin's administration had carried out to chiefly persuade the Australian government, which had vetoed its application. In a letter sent to president Aylwin, the Australian Prime Minister, Paul Keating, explained that his government aimed to strengthen the new-born organization created in 1989 by firstly developing “a common sense of purpose and direction. This is why for the time being Australia is very cautious about expanding APEC's membership” (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1993e).

APEC was the third and most crucial step of Chile's policy towards Asia Pacific. In the eighties, it had increasingly encouraged Chilean businesspeople to become part of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC), a non-governmental organisation for business networking. In 1991, it took part in the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), which are rounds of workings committees constituted by policymakers and businesspeople to promote free trade across the basin. Hence, APEC represented the most critical forum as it relies on the participation of the heads of state of its members.

In his effort to persuade Keating, Aylwin introduced Chile's position by stating that his government had taken note of the necessity of consolidating this new-born organisation; however, considerable support had been given by several members (among them ASEAN countries and China), which also had seen Chile as a contribution to that aim. As a consequence, Aylwin's affirmed that:

while the multilateral trading system is threatened by a growing neo-protectionist wave and many are tempted to build economic blocks, Chile and Australia are - as firm supporters of

open markets - true guarantors of global, regional and bilateral trade liberalization (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1993a).

Aylwin's ideas were elements of a broader discourse that Chile had started to articulate in its democratic regime's foreign policy. Contrary to what was the trend in the rest of Latin America, Chile firmly supported the US' initiative of creating the ALCA, affirming that the country "has taken significant steps in the field of modern economic reforms and has made free trade an essential and priority position of its international economic policy" (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive 1990b).

In the context of this new policy, Aylwin's administration had decided not to accept the invitation of being a Southern Common Market's (Mercosur) member as long as it was seen as an organisation "with a strong political-decision component, but very weak in terms of minimal technical-economic commitments to guarantee its functioning" (Patricio Aylwin's Presidential Archive n/y).

Entry to APEC was finally achieved at the beginning of Frei's administration in 1994 and paved the road towards China. This achievement was part of a strategy called *open regionalism* formulated by a group of scholars who, to a great extent, jumped from the Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and private organizations that promoted doing business in the Asia Pacific. These people participated in the design of Chile's foreign policy during the presidential campaigns of Frei and Lagos in the nineties, such as Alberto van Klaveren, Pilar Armanet, and Manfred Wilhelmy (see, for instance, Armanet 1992).

Open regionalism was formulated upon the premise that emerging regional blocks, such as the EU, ASEAN and NAFTA, could promote protectionist policies (Armanet,

1992). In contrast, Chile pushed for free trade by reducing its tariffs unilaterally while encouraging active participation in different multilateral forums to access new markets. Second, the concept was equivalent to the principles of non-discrimination that APEC applied to promote economic integration between a broad range of political regimes⁵⁷ (Wilhelmy and Lazo 1997; Armanet 1992; van Klaveren 1997, 2006).

Another characteristic was the participation of an exceptionally cohesive Chilean elite constituted by these scholars, people in business, diplomats and politicians, who created a private organization, the Chilean Pacific Foundation, to keep them gathered and coordinated with Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1985, in the context of Chile's campaign for accession to the PECC, it created the Chilean Pacific Cooperation Committee (CHILPEC). Since 1995, this public organization was replaced by the Chilean Pacific Foundation (Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008).⁵⁸

These elements were well reflected in a presentation that Chile's ambassador in Beijing, Eduardo Arriagada, prepared for a seminar, in Hainan, in 1996. Arriagada quoted a piece of Frei's speech to remark that "one of the axes of our foreign policy is what we have called diplomacy of open regionalism, to increase the ties of cooperation and the level of commercial and cultural trade between Chile and the rest of the world." In this context, "Chile gives China a particular importance, convinced that soon China will become one of the great economic powers in the world" (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1996b, 7).

Arriagada adds another element to describe Chile's strategy towards the Pacific: Chile's reliability and its international prestige over the rest of Latin American countries.

⁵⁷ As a matter of fact, APEC does not recognise states but economies, which leads to the participation of Taiwan and Hong Kong.

⁵⁸ For instance, Alberto van Klaveren and Manfred Wilhelmy are members of Foundation's board of directors. See <http://funpacifico.cl>.

Arriagada (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 1996b, 2) cites several international reports and rankings to highlight “the remarkable development underway in Chile.” This kind of statement was not randomly articulated but a new Chilean international identity that both the press and the academia came to define as *the South American jaguar*; that is, an in-fashion zoomorphic style to identify Chile’s economic performance with the East Asian tigers - South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong (e.g. Sznajder 1996; Oppenheim 2018).⁵⁹

This identity contributes to the shaping of Chile’s approach towards China when negotiating the FTA. For instance, when the negotiations started, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ignacio Walker, sent a letter to minister Bo Xilai stating that:

Chile, based on the prestige conferred by the stability of its political system and its continuing search for regional and global regimes to ensure the protection of the interests of developing nations, has become a reliable and innovative Latin American partner. The Free Trade Agreement, by strengthening trade and cooperation links with China, which in turn is the most dynamic economy in the world, represents a new force that incentives dialogue and regional integration (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 2005).

Interestingly, China also incorporated this element as a part of the bilateral discourse. For example, former Chairman of the Standing Committee of the People’s National Assembly, Wu Bangguo, defined Chile as a country “rank[ed] among the best of Latin American countries” in competitiveness, economic liberalization, market openness and international credit (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006b).

⁵⁹ In this fashion of Zoomorphic expressions, let us remember that Shashi Tharoor depicts India as a heavy and slow elephant to make the comparison with fast and agile tigers from Asia Pacific. It is also worth noting that Ricardo Lagos’s memoirs are entitled “The Southern Tiger.”

3.2. Advocating for multilateralism to counterbalance developed countries

Chilean and Chinese presidents used to stress that their countries have similar views about international issues. For instance, a Chinese press release stresses Lagos's commitment "to strengthen coordination and cooperation with China in the UN, APEC and the WTO" (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001b). Although this kind of intersubjectivity is considered crucial, it is, at the same time, expressed in a pretty imprecise way (e.g. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004, 2001b). The question that arises then is: What were these instances of political cooperation that dwell alongside China's campaign in the WTO and Chile's APEC participation? In the following part, I account for the Doha Round and the UN Security Council (SC).

3.2.1. The Doha Round Negotiations

The Doha Round's fate was determined to a considerable extent by antagonisms between developing and developed countries. Concerning Chile and China, a crucial issue was their joint position in favour of developing agricultural countries against protectionist measures adopted by the US and the EU. For example, the 2003 Cancun Summit failed in reaching an agreement of this sort regarding agricultural goods, in part because of the constitution of the Group of 20 (G20), which coordinated the opposition of the same number of countries against protectionist measures to safeguard developed countries' agricultural sectors. Chile and China were G20 members alongside Argentina, Brazil, India and South Africa. The WTO defines the G20 as "one voice using a single coordinator or negotiating team", whose

first goal was to advocate for “ambitious reforms of agriculture in developed countries” as well as measures of “flexibility for developing countries” (WTO 2017).

In this context, China’s position was clearly expressed by Bo Xilai who defined agriculture as the Doha Round’s centrepiece:

Even if some developing countries were willing to embark on the road of trade liberalization, they would have to [consider] the basic livelihood of millions or even billions of their farmers. To expose those poor farmers to further external shocks could trigger disastrous consequences [...] Hence the necessity of providing meaningful special and differential treatment to all developing countries (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005b).

On the Chilean side, it is worth noting that Chile’s ambassador to India, Jorge Heine, in a presentation entitled *China, Chile and free trade agreements*, articulated the Doha Round’s failure and Chile’s participation in the G20 with the necessity of opening the national economy towards Asia:

To push for continuous trade liberalization, the best alternative would seem to be to do so simultaneously on all fronts—multilateral and bilateral. This is exactly what Chile has done. While participating actively in the Doha Round (as a member of the G-20+, led by Brazil and India), it has persisted in its bilateral efforts, especially in Asia (Heine 2006).

The articulation of this demand against protectionism is expressed in bilateral documents such as a joint press release of 2008, in which the two sides “reiterated their support for multilateralism in international affairs and readiness to work together for progress in the Doha round negotiation in the interest of common development of mankind” (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008).

3.2.2. The Security Council

Since Ricardo Lagos took power, multilateralism was attached to peace and security, becoming a new element within the Sino-Chilean practice. Firstly, the two sides declare their commitment to establish a “fair and reasonable new international and economic order” (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001b). Then, they relate such a commitment to tackling terrorism in the context of the 9/11 attacks. For instance, in one of their meetings, Lagos stated that terrorism “requires the comprehensive participation of the whole world.” Jiang declared that “comprehensive international cooperation at various levels should be strengthened and the UN and its Security Council should play a leading role” (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001a).

The event that sedimented multilateralism as a critical bilateral element was the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, which coincided with Chile's non-permanent seat in the SC. China and Chile did not approve military intervention in Iraq without conclusive evidence and specific targets, and by respecting the mandate of the SC, in particular, Resolution 1441 (see Jiang Zemin, in R.L. Kuhn 2004, 471; Lagos 2012).

At first glance, this position could have been aligned with one of the “two visions of the world” portrayed by the French minister of foreign affairs, Galouzeau de Villepin. However, the roles played by China and Chile within this political game were far more complex than de Villepin's dichotomy between preventive war and a multidimensional long-term approach (de Villepin 2003, 5).

The 9/11 attacks and the Iraq question took place following a good number of tense situations between China and the US, such as the US-led NATO bombing of the Chinese

embassy in Belgrade, in March 1999; coinciding with the release the same year of the report of the Select Committee on US National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with China (1999b), which claimed that China had stolen US military secrets. Another critical moment was the collision of a US spy plane with a Chinese fighter jet near China's sovereign airspace in April 2001.

Equally important was the interplay between the US preventive war doctrine and North Korea's nuclear diplomacy reactivation and rising concerns about the hypothetical links between terrorist groups and the Xinjiang province (R.L. Kuhn 2004). Hence, behind the US preventive war, there was apprehension about US interference in Chinese domestic affairs. Additionally, a hypothetical US success in Iraq put at risk regional stability if Washington decided to invade North Korea (Kuhn 2004, 472, see also 531-532).

Chile's interests were radically different. According to President Lagos, to be sat at the SC was a matter of showcasing Chile's exemplar transition from an isolated dictatorship to a country fully integrated into the international community. So, rather than being an issue of national security concern, the Iraq issue was framed by the belief that the 9/11 attacks represented "a visceral attack on what it meant to be free" (Lagos 2012, 258). In this regard, Chile would have been willing to support a resolution authorizing military actions and participate in military deployment. However, Chile's essential requirement to do so was convincing evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

However, as long as the only unmistakable antecedent was the US intention to attack Iraq, Chile started to play an active role "to buy more time for diplomacy" (Lagos 2012, 224). Lagos worked together with British prime minister, Anthony Blair, to propose a new resolution based on what Hans Blix (2004), chief of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, had designated as the benchmark approach, in which military

actions were considered if they were subordinated to previous strict attainment of benchmarks. As this initiative did not prosper, Chile became a leading voice of a group of non-permanent members known as the “Uncommitted Six” (U-6),⁶⁰ representing the swing votes. In the end, the circumstances overwhelmed any attempt to prevent a war, and Chile’s position at this threshold was not to participate in any coalition working against the SC’s approval.

In this context, when Collin Powell made the call to intervene in Iraq by delivering doubtful antecedents, in February 2003, Chilean minister of foreign affairs, Soledad Alvear, stressed that:

It is Chile’s understanding that the Security Council, in exercising its responsibilities with regard to collective security, must use and promote the mechanisms of cooperation and multilateral consultation. For this reason, we support maintaining multilateral control of this crisis in the framework of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions (Alvear 2003, 30).

Similarly, Chinese minister Tang Jiaxuan stated that the US evidence should be evaluated by the two UN’ agencies, which should report their findings to the SC:

the Security Council has a common stand on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. This is fully reflected in the relevant Council resolutions, particularly 1441 (2002), which was adopted unanimously. The most important aspect at present remains the full implementation of this resolution. As for the next step to be taken, the Council should decide this through discussions among all members, based on the results of the inspections (Tang 2003, 18).

⁶⁰ Angola, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan and Chile.

Lagos and Hu brought to the fore these issues when they signed the Memorandum of Understanding that recognised China's MES and announced the FTA negotiations (Historical Archive of Chile's MOFA 2004c, 2004a).

4. Logics of Chile-China relations in 2005

4.1. International logics of convergence: Free trade as the empty signifier

Chile and China articulate an international practice whose grammar can be characterized as an international logic of convergence articulated around the empty signifier of free trade. Free trade represents Chile's and China's inauthentic response by which to conceal their political divergences over the issue of human rights and democracy.

For instance, in the story about his trip to China, Lagos affirms that, despite the differences in human rights, China is today "part of Chile's reality, and for the better" as long as both countries have now an FTA and investment projects in the mining and winery sectors (Lagos 2012, 144). According to foreign minister Wang Yi (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018), "although the two countries are far away from each other, the concept of openness and the free trade agreement have tightly connected us" (see also China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006b, 2006a).

This empty signifier places China and Chile as two WTO members and market economies interacting in the Pacific Basin to promote trade liberalisation. The arbitrary operation of linking free trade to China's market economy status represents the relationship's ideological dimension. Namely, recognising China as a market economy and attaching it to an FTA that establishes a dumping resolution mechanism is a hegemonic

political decision that differentiates this international practice from others, such as the US-China relationship in which the US attaches China's WTO membership to the idea of democracy and the Protocol of Accession's anti-dumping dispositions.

To understand this ideological operation, let us remember that the case of China's entrance into the WTO shows us that the language of anti-dumping is built upon political discretion. So, Chile and China articulate a discourse in which being a market economy means strengthening bilateral cooperation based on mutual benefit and proper ("civilised," in Lagos's words) dumping resolution mechanisms (the FTA).

It is worth noting that when Chile and China signed the Memorandum of Understanding, they articulated the meaning of MES with the necessity of strengthening cooperation not only in the WTO but also in a broader range of international issues. Hence, the empty signifier of free trade also nurtures the other convergent demands that Chile and China articulate, in antagonist relation to protectionism and unilateralism.

4.1.1. The convergent demand against protectionism

This logic is reflected in Chile's recognition of China's MES and their common cause favouring underdeveloped agricultural countries in the Doha Round negotiations; two elements that Chile and China articulate in their discourse when signing the FTA. While participation in the G20 places Chile's and China's identities in antagonism to developed agricultural countries' protectionist practices, the FTA symbolises a bilateral effort to find a settlement mechanism of trade disputes that both the Doha Round and China's Protocol of Access to the WTO had failed to guarantee because of other countries' protectionist policies.

This international logic of convergence can also be seen the other way around. Its possibility of being is given by the hegemonic discourse of open regionalism articulated by Chile's academic, economic and political elites and Jiang Zemin's core line's imposition over the rest of the CCP's factions that opposed to China's WTO membership.

4.1.2. The convergent demand against unilateralism

Chile and China articulate this convergence in the context of the US attempt to invade Iraq. Although this issue is not straightforwardly related to China-Chile's bilateral trade, it is an element that these countries articulate within their international practice to stress their commitment to world peace, a multipolar world and international cooperation. In this sense, Chile's and China's demand for multilateralism in the SC against the US' unilateralism is equivalent to their bilateral demand for fair trade practices in opposition to unilateral measures adopted by developed protectionist countries in the Doha Round.

Regarding all these political convergences together, one can affirm that recognising China's MES and signing an FTA is a political moment of hegemonic decision-making and, therefore, contingent and unstable, rather than a depoliticised-technocratic choice.

4.2. International logics of divergence: Human rights as a floating signifier

Human rights are a floating signifier whose meaning takes different forms such as universal values; an element that shall be subordinated to either the circumstances of China's domestic affairs and population size or Chile's democracy transition.

As Chile's priority is to bring to light the unlawful circumstances under which thousands of people were tortured and disappeared by the repressive forces of Pinochet's regime, human rights and political freedom are the most sensitive values to be promoted through its foreign policy. Although Chilean leaders do not raise any formal claim against China for human rights violations, Chile and China antagonise the ideas of human rights as a universal value and human rights as a sovereign domestic issue.

Let us recall that an antagonistic relation differs from conceptual contradiction and physical opposition because the former is not the clash of two objective elements but the articulation of an unstable identity whose radical contingency is marked by what is excluded (the antagonistic Other) from such articulation. I bring this definition to the fore because this antagonism is chiefly articulated by Chile and the way it does so is worth taking into consideration.

The report written to prepare Aylwin's trip to China claims that Chinese leaders signify human rights as a domestic issue by quoting a speech delivered by Chinese Premier, Li Peng, at the UN. However, in this speech, Li also advocates for the universality of human rights in a pretty similar way Chile does it:

The human rights and fundamental freedoms of all mankind should be universally respected. Human rights cover many aspects. They include not only civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights [...]. In essence, the issue of human rights falls within the sovereignty of each country. A country's human rights situation should not be judged in total disregard of its history and national conditions. It is neither appropriate nor workable to demand that all countries measure up to the human rights criteria or models of one country or a small number of countries. China values human rights and stands ready to engage in discussion and cooperation with other countries [...]

However, it is opposed to interference in the internal affairs of other countries using the human rights issue as an excuse (P. Li 1992, 92).

Li's statement contains two core ideas. First, human rights are universal and, second, the situation of human rights in a particular country shall not be detached from its national conditions and, because of this, be an excuse for foreign interference. It is hitherto clear that both Chile and China embrace the same principle of universality of human rights. Hence, the unresolved point is whether human rights are a matter of sovereignty and national conditions.

Six months after Jiang Zemin and Li Peng met Ricardo Lagos in 1998, Pinochet was detained in London under an international arrest warrant issued for tortures and the assassination of Spanish citizens. Frei's government (Aylwin's and Lagos's same political coalition) carried out a political campaign to prevent the former dictator from facing any trial abroad and getting him back to Chile, where he had immunity. Pinochet was back in Santiago in March 2000, a week before Lagos took over the presidency. For Chile, the reason to bring Pinochet back had not been so much different than the one China used to advocate for the consideration of its national conditions: Pinochet was a matter of sovereign domestic affairs. José Insulza, Frei's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Lagos's Minister of the Interior stated that "[w]e proceeded primarily in defence of national sovereignty, the right of countries to establish their laws and to develop their justice" (Cooperativa 2018).

Pinochet's detention in London dislocated Chile's domestic discourse of human rights because Pinochet was an issue of national sovereignty. In this sense, it is possible to see that the radical contingency of Chile's national discourse of human rights is disguised by articulating a self-image of moral tidiness in antagonism to the Chilean elite's self-

interpretation of China as a state that violates human rights. From this Chilean fantasy, it appears as the spectre of human rights haunting the Sino-Chilean international practice.

This spectre never disappears; it is always present, threatening the relationship's stability. Notwithstanding, it is temporarily concealed by Chilean and Chinese leaders when they foreground the promised land of free trade that triggers a smooth and sound bilateral cooperation.

4.2.1. The issue of Taiwan

Despite Chile's public support for the One China Policy, Chile and China diverge about Taiwan. An influential group of politicians close to president Aylwin, and perhaps himself, embrace the idea that the international community shall recognise Taiwan based on the argument that there is no space for ideological divisions in the post-Cold War world. In this sense, we could say that as Chile had suffered from the Cold War ideological divisions and the tyranny of a dictatorship, Chilean leaders foreground the issue of Taiwan, a democratic state, as another way to articulate Chile's identity in antagonism to China.

It is worth considering that Chile's practices towards Taiwan takes place in the context of the latter's elastic diplomacy carried out in the late eighties and early nineties, with the purpose to get any international recognition by those states that had diplomatic relationships with Taiwan in the past (Dreyer 1990). In this sense, Chile had answered satisfactorily to this Taiwanese strategy.

In this context, China is persistently asking for the reaffirmation of Chile's respect for the One China policy by recalling that Chile is China's Latin American country of "the

firsts” because it primarily was the first South American country to establish diplomatic ties in 1970.

Conclusions

This chapter has shown how Chile and China articulated an international practice centred on the empty signifier of ‘free trade’ to explain why these two countries signed an FTA in 2005. The practice’s ideological dimension appears with the arbitrary operation of signifying Chile and China as two market economies that champion trade liberalisation. Chile and China objectivise this symbolic order by excluding from their discourse those countries that carry out unilateral and protectionist policies in world affairs. The international practice’s radical contingency is revealed when these two countries antagonise views about human rights and democratic values. This discursive incompleteness is evident when, for instance, China manifests its concerns about Chile’s participation in the UN’s human rights commission and Chile’s relations with Tibet and Taiwan. In Chile, leaders have apprehensions about the human rights situation in Tibet and disguise their desire to strengthen relations with Taiwan’s democratic regime. Among these political divergences, human rights represent the relationship’s floating signifier because Chile and China are incapable of articulating a convergent meaning for this element.

This practice entails international logics of convergence and divergence whose grammar can be characterised as two market economies that, by signing a ground-breaking Free Trade Agreement, strive for the promotion of free trade and cooperation, in antagonism to protectionism and unilateralism in world affairs (associative pole). Although Chile and China appeal to human rights and their universal character, they diverge in how

they must coexist with domestic circumstances. While China struggles against the cosmopolitan meaning of human rights and advocates for the respect of national circumstances, Chile embraces the cosmopolitan character of human rights in articulation with its historical experience of human rights violations perpetrated by Pinochet's regime. At the same time, Chilean leaders believe in the possibility of the end of Cold War conflicts and pending political issues, such as Taiwan, on behalf of the global spread of democratic values. In contrast, China advocates respect for the inalienable principle of the One China policy (syntagmatic pole).

PART IV

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

CHAPTER 9

Towards a post-Western approach to international practices

1. Restating the questions

As mentioned in the literature review, many texts explain the relationship's primary outcomes by pointing out taken-for-granted elements that are incommensurable. Firstly, I challenged the assumption that there exist independent variables, or external elements, that explain those outcomes and a neutral observer who looks forward to discovering law-like regularities. Chiefly, these elements would be ideology, pragmatism, economic complementarities and natural resources. Secondly, I challenged the assumption that, at least from 1973 onwards, de-politicised and de-ideologized practices constitute a relationship between two rational actors interacting strategically according to their national interests.

Moreover, these assumptions coexist with methodological gaps. So far, no study has accounted for the articulation of Chile's and China's foreign policies when these two countries first established diplomatic ties, then relaunched their relationship after the Chilean coup d'état and signed the FTA. No study has accounted either for the concealment of bilateral antagonisms and events that dislocate Sino-Chilean practices.

An initial objective of this project was to explain, from a post-Marxist perspective, the constitution and transformation of Chile-China relations as well as reveal the relationship's ideological dimension. In this sense, the study sought to determine how Chile and China

articulate their international practices in different historical moments. Secondly, it aimed to explain how these international practices are legitimized and transformed. The third objective was to identify the empty signifiers through which Chile and China articulate their political convergences and the floating signifiers that reveal political antagonisms. In doing so, I identified three historical moments: the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1970, the political rapprochement of 1978 and the FTA signature in 2005.

2. Restating the findings

On the specific question of how and why Chile and China established diplomatic ties and the role of ideology in this international practice, this study found that these two countries articulated an international practice around the empty signifier of anti-imperialism. The discursive totality that this empty signifier generates can be characterised as two anti-imperialist, sovereign and developing countries struggling against US capitalist imperialism and struggling for recognition and respect. The international practice's ideological dimension can be explained by Chile and China's arbitrary operation that signifies the US as the imperialist power that threatens their sovereignty and the bilateral relationship.

It is somewhat surprising that socialist Chile and socialist China cannot fix the surplus meaning of the socialist revolution. Instead, this element represents the discursive antagonism that destabilises this hegemonic formation articulated around anti-imperialism. Thus, the study shows the antagonism between China's ideas of revolution and socialist construction and Chile's institutional and pacific way towards socialism. Second, China's notion of self-reliance and Chile's embracement of dependency theory as

two antagonistic ways to articulate the socialist revolution with economic transformation. Third, China's identification of the USSR as a socialist revisionist country and Chile's identification of the USSR as the big brother of socialism.

Figure 7. Chile-China's international practice in 1970

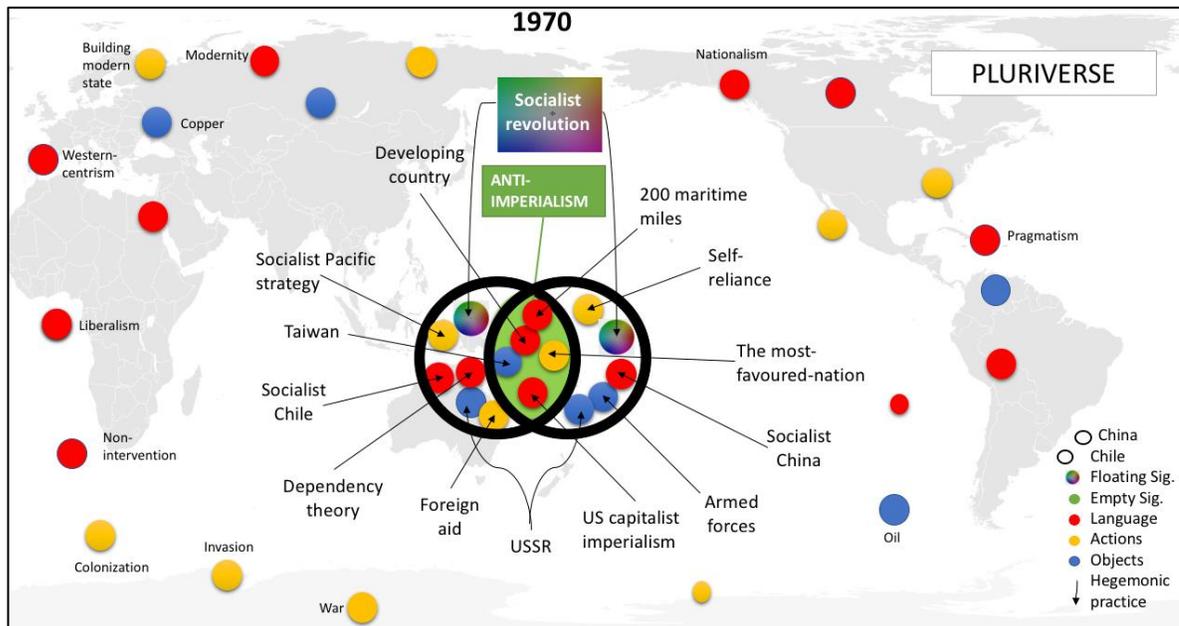


Figure 8 shows Chile (left ring) and China (right ring) articulating international practice (intersection area), which is coloured green, indicating the empty signifier of anti-imperialism. In this area, it is possible to see the international logics of convergence characterised by the shared identity developing country, Taiwan, the most-favoured-nation principle and the defence of maritime sovereignty. The element of US imperialism represents the antagonistic Other upon which Chile and China objectivise the meaning of anti-imperialism, articulate the chain of convergences and fix the international practice's horizon.

In the area corresponding to Chile, we see those elements that expand the relationship's syntagmatic pole. These elements are the USSR's big brother of socialism identity, the economic discourse of dependency theory, the pacific strategy towards socialism, and the acceptance of economic aid from third countries. In China's area, foreign policy's crucial elements of political divergence with Chile are shown, such as the economic discourse of self-reliance, the USSR as a revisionist socialist, and armed forces to carry out the socialist revolution. In these two areas of divergence, the multicolour dots represent the floating signifier of the socialist revolution.

As for the specific question of how and why Chile and China articulated their political rapprochement and whether it is possible or not to find an ideological moment, this study showed that Pinochet's anti-communist Chile and communist China constituted an international practice around the empty signifier of non-intervention. Following Mao's jargon, the discursive totality that this empty signifier generates can be characterized as two Third World countries and backward economies struggling against the First World, particularly the USSR's interventionism. The arbitrary association of the USSR as interventionist social-imperialism represents the excluded Other that threatens Chile's and China's sovereignty and the bilateral relationship. This bilateral operation indicates the international practice's ideological dimension.

This international practice is the only one in which the study does not identify a floating signifier. The contribution of this finding is that one must not always expect to find floating signifiers that make international antagonisms between agents explicit. Nonetheless, this study showed that, despite the absence of floating signifiers, it is possible to identify spectres that threaten to reveal the practice's radical contingency. These spectres are elements that each side articulates within its foreign policy without trying to re-articulate

them bilaterally, such as Chile's belief in China's de-Maoization, Chile's attempts to interact with anti-communist Taiwan and China's criticism about the Chilean human rights situation. Altogether, these elements have the potential to disrupt the international practice's cohesive structure and therefore reflect the presence of an antagonistic relation between Chile and China at this historical period.

Figure 8. Chile-China's international practice in 1978

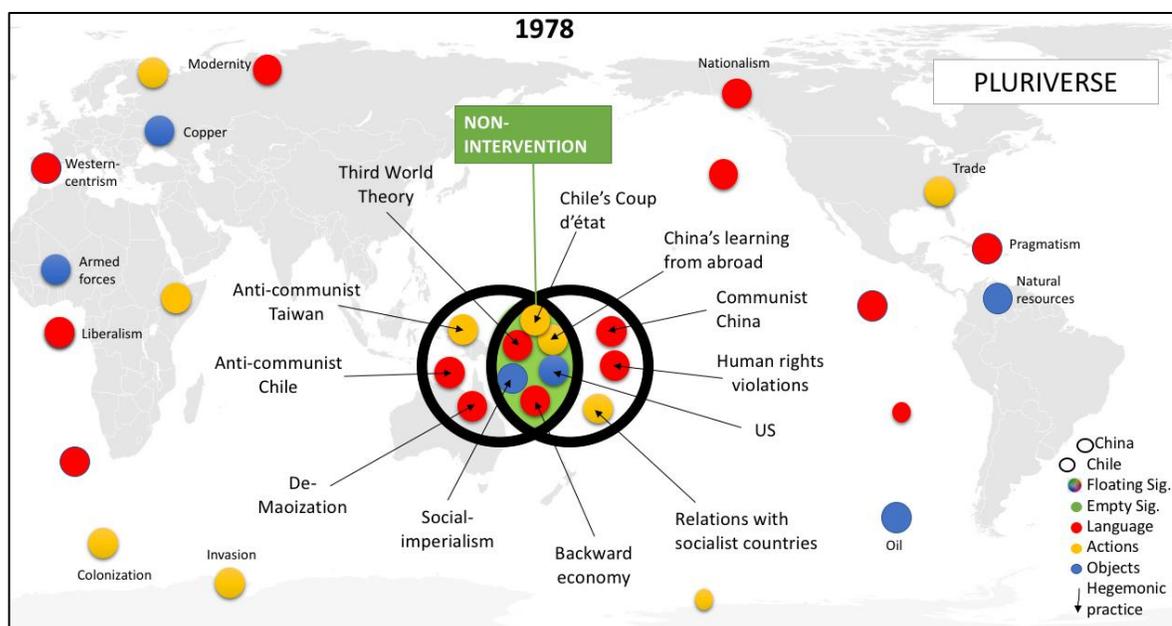


Figure 9 shows the empty signifier of non-intervention as the element that signifies the international practice and places Chile and China as two backward economies that follow the Third World theory's premises. The element of social-imperialism also appears, which represents the practice's ideological dimension insofar as it is the antagonistic Other that Chile and China exclude from their discourse in order to objectivise the meaning of the non-intervention principle. Another convergence that appears is Chile-China copper deals, which are not centred on trade but on China's policy of learning from Chile's exploitation

techniques. This area also shows the Chilean coup d'état, an element that, whilst revealing the 1970-practice's radical contingency, has its disruptive effects disguised through the foregrounding of the non-intervention principle.

In the area corresponding to Chile's foreign policy, we see the spectre of Chile's anti-communism and their intentions to interact with Taiwan, as well as Chile's interpretation of Chinese reforms as de-Maoization. In the area corresponding to China's foreign policy, there is condemnation of the Chilean regime's human rights violations. This issue prevented China from engaging more decisively with Chile because it diminished its international prestige among the rest of socialist and Third World countries.

On the specific question of how and why Chile and China signed their free trade agreement and whether it is possible to find an ideological moment, this study showed how democratic Chile and the PRC articulated an international discourse around the empty signifier of free trade. This empty signifier generates a discursive totality characterised by two market economies that champion liberalizing trade barriers and struggle against global protectionist and unilateral trends. The arbitrary operation that Chile and China perform to signify the latter as a market economy represents the ideological dimension of the international practice, which is articulated in antagonism to those countries, such as the US and the EU, that perform protectionist practices within the Doha Round and reject the recognition of China's market economy status. The ideological role performed by the practice's empty signifier is also evident when it disguises bilateral antagonisms around the human rights issue by reaffirming the promised land of a smooth and sound relationship centred on free trade.

Democratic Chile and communist China cannot fix the surplus meaning of the floating signifier of human rights. These two countries antagonise with respect to the universal

status of human rights and its application to particular domestic circumstances. For instance, Chilean leaders sympathise with the Tibetan cause, although not officially. Furthermore, although Chile officially keeps its commitment to respect the One China policy, it shows a non-official (unconscious) inclination to establish relationships with Taiwan as long as it is a democratic regime worthy of international recognition in the post-Cold War context.

Figure 9. Chile-China's international practice in 2005

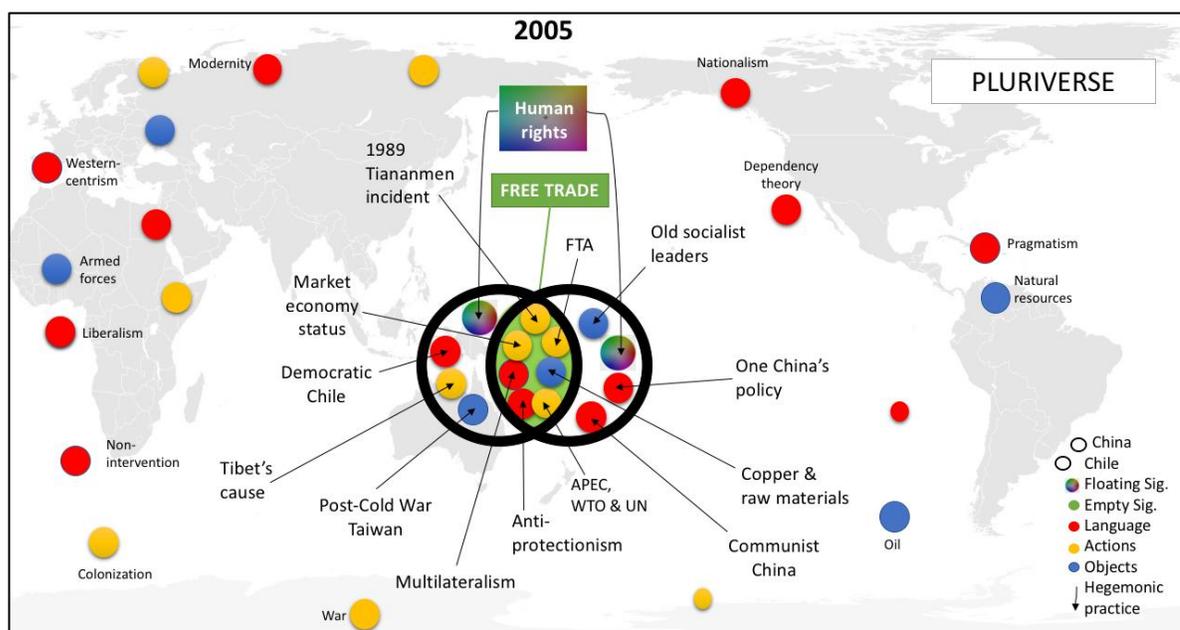


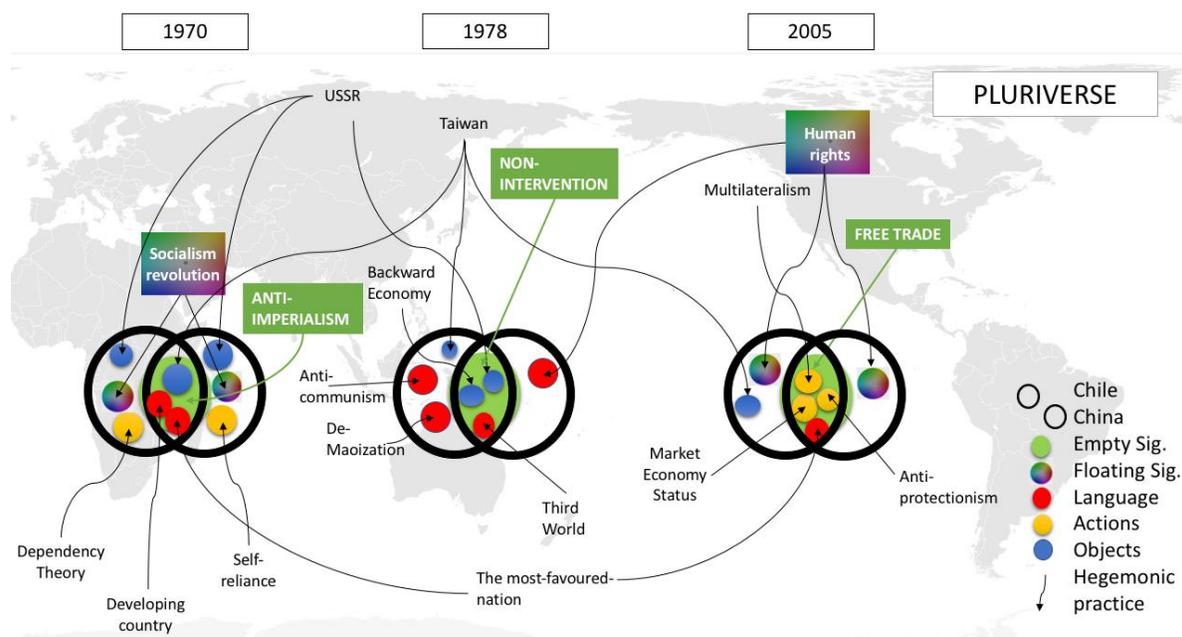
Figure 10 shows the empty signifier of free trade irradiating the rest of the international practice's elements such as the economic complementarities around copper and other raw materials, common pledges for enhancing multilateralism in international organisations such as the Security Council, coordination within the WTO and APEC to counterbalance protectionist trends and, of course, the FTA. It also shows the element of Market Economy Status, representing the ideological operation that Chile and China articulate to objectivise

their relationship as two countries committed to liberalising global trade and implementing what former President Lagos called “civilised” dumping resolution mechanisms through the FTA in antagonism to the Doha Round failure.

In Chile’s foreign policy area, we see divergence issues that expand the syntagmatic pole, such as Chile’s unofficial solidarity with Tibet’s and Taiwan’s causes. In China’s foreign policy area, we see the One China policy, whose recognition is the *prima facie* condition to establish diplomatic ties with other countries. Although Chile respects this principle, its hidden sympathy towards the causes mentioned above and the human rights issue represents the bilateral relationship’s spectres that reveal the practice’s radical contingency. In this context, China congratulates socialist Ricardo Lagos for being elected Chile’s president and brings old socialist leaders to the fore to remind him that Allende and Zhou made ground-breaking achievements. Bilateral antagonisms are framed by the floating signifier of human rights represented by the multicolour dots in the two divergence areas.

Figure 10 represents the articulation of international relations logics of Chile-China relations concerning the 1970, 1978 and 2005 periods. The left and right rings correspond to Chile and China, respectively. The green areas of bilateral convergence represent the three international practices articulated around the empty signifiers of anti-imperialism, non-intervention and free trade. The multicolour dots represent the floating signifiers. These practices occur in the pluriversal discursive field, which means that other countries can also articulate these elements (and an unlimited number of other ones that I do not include here).

Figure 10. *The articulation of Chile-China's logics of international relations*



The most prominent finding to emerge from the analysis of the three empirical chapters that I represent in Figure 10 is that the same signifier can be articulated in different international practices, acquiring a different meaning insofar as each discursive formation is a particular symbolic order. It can be seen, for instance, that the USSR is the 1970-practice's floating signifier, while in 1978, it is placed within the area of bilateral convergence, nurturing the floating signifier of non-intervention. In 1970, the most-favoured-nation principle appeared within the convergence, hegemonized by the empty signifier of anti-imperialism. This principle is brought to the fore to carry out commercial relations under fair conditions respecting national independence. In 2005, the same element appeared in the context of the FTA signature and the Sino-Chilean commitment to enhancing global free markets. Human rights are the 2005-practice's floating signifier,

while in 1978, it is an element placed in China's foreign policy area haunting the rapprochement's radical contingency.

Particular attention must be drawn to Taiwan, which appears as an element of convergence in 1970, and then it is placed in the rest of international practices' divergence areas. The study shows that, although Chile has always declared its respect for the One China policy, Allende's government has been the only one adhering to it without ambiguities. The rest of the Chilean governments have somehow manifested intentions of having relations with Taiwan for different reasons. In Pinochet's anti-communist Chile, Taiwan represented another anti-communist fellow. In democratic Chile, Taiwan represented a democratic state worthy of recognition in the post-Cold War context. Hence, it is evident that China nowadays, when it articulates the identity of Chile as the country of "the firsts" and recalls again and again that Chile was the first one in South America to establish diplomatic ties with the PRC, is because of the spectre of Taiwan.

3. Research findings and International Relations Theory

3.1. Post-Marxist IR and the Copenhagen School

Recalling my discussion with Wæver's discourse analysis strategy (see Chapter 5), the findings of signifiers that appear in more than one international practice are contrary to Wæver's assumption of identity sedimented layers. This study confirms that there are not layers of sedimentation but signifiers with overdetermined meanings whose sedimentation is permanently destabilized by their radical contingency. Thus, although both the Copenhagen School and the Essex School are poststructuralist, they differ in accounting for identities constitution and social change.

For instance, according to the layered model, national identity is the most sedimented identity in a country's foreign policy. However, this study shows how Chile's national identity changes several times. Chile starts being identified as a socialist and anti-imperialist country; then, this identity is dislocated by the military coup d'état and re-articulated as a people heir to the Spanish colonizer and the aboriginal Araucanian bravery. In between, the military government re-articulates Chile's national identity as a Third World country when reproaching China. Finally, these identities are again dislocated by Chile's return to democracy. In the '90s and 2000s, Chile's identity is conceived in terms of an example of democratic transition and the Latin American jaguar championing trade liberalization.

The meaning of Taiwan as an inalienable part of China's sovereignty shall be highly sedimented in Chile-China relations. In 1970, Chile and China articulated this element convergently. However, the findings show that Chile has permanently destabilised such meaning since 1973. For instance, in 1978, Taiwan means an anti-communist fellow, and, in 2005, it represents a democratic state that must be recognised in the post-Cold War context.

China changes the meaning of the USSR in its relations with Chile regarding the context. It associates the USSR with socialist revisionism in 1970 and with social-imperialism in 1978. While the former is an element of antagonism with Allende's Chile, the latter represents the ideological horizon with Pinochet's Chile that objectivises the necessity of the bilateral rapprochement. This change is critical in understanding the Sino-Chilean rapprochement because Pinochet's Chile did not have relations with the USSR because of different interpretations about how to be a socialist. On the contrary, Chile considered it an imperialist power that threatened its security.

3.2. Post-Marxist IR and neo-Gramscian IR

As far as my discussion with the neo-Gramscian IR approach is concerned (see Chapter 4), these findings show that international relations logics are much more complex than the vertical logic of world hegemony. Cox criticises the realist approach's horizontality insofar as such a logic only considers international relations between world powers. For Cox, international relations are simultaneously vertical because world powers also interact with weaker states, constituting a historical structure. He argues that hegemonic classes that occupy leading positions within powerful countries project their hegemony on a world scale leading to the shape of the international order militarily, culturally, politically, ideologically, and economically. Thus, he aims to include Third World countries in international analysis to make the discipline more inclusive and dynamic by introducing historical materialism and division of labour.

Li Xing applies neo-Gramscian approach to China-Latin America relations suggesting that China will hegemonize the economic and soft-power domains. Areas such as “norm-negotiating, agenda-setting and policy-institutionalizing will eventually become systematized,” he says. Appealing to structuralist views such as Wallerstein's and dependency theory, Li claims that “when China is successfully moving toward the core, it still needs periphery” such as Latin America and its growing commodity dependency on China (X. Li 2016, 7-10). In this context, he portrays Latin America uniformly as the US backyard that has to deal with China after the failure of the Washington Consensus.

In contrast, in post-Marxist IR, *hegemony* is not an external and vertical force materialized in a superpower having consequences worldwide but the political logic that

makes the articulation of international practices possible between countries by fixing a horizon through the construction of empty signifiers. In this framework, a *world power* is a country's element articulated and signified within its foreign policy and then re-defined when articulating international practices. Moreover, if there exists a projection of national hegemonic classes' power towards the international sphere, it is through their capacity to influence the articulation of a country's foreign policy.

For instance, when Chile recognised China's MES and signed the FTA, China was already a rising power. According to Cox's approach, the signature of these agreements would have been explained by the vertical logic of China's hegemony over Chile. However, Chile articulated China's rise within its foreign policy, assigning it a particular meaning (a market economy) and placing it within its foreign policy hegemonized by a neoliberal elite. From this viewpoint, it is undeniable that Chilean agents have an active political role in deciding how to engage with China and dismissing other possible arrangements. As former President Lagos explained (Chapter 8), contrary to Argentina and Brazil, if Chile can export copper and wine to China, we are not afraid of Chinese imports.

3.3. Post-Marxist IR and middle ground constructivism

These findings are also contrary to Wendt's premise of the distribution of knowledge, which encloses a logic of Eurocentric cosmopolitanism (see Chapter 2). According to Wendt, shared ideas determine cooperation and conflict; therefore, anarchy is a social construction shaped by ideas rather than material forces. Secondly, shared ideas constitute three different cultures of anarchy, each one with its own logic: Hobbesian, Lockean and

Kantian. Thirdly, each of these anarchical structures determines agents' roles: enemy, adversary and friend, respectively.

Following this argument, Chile-China's FTA would have been the social expression of the Kantian culture of anarchy. Similarly, one could suggest that cooperation under the socialist regimes of Allende and Zhou Enlai would have been the social expression of a Marxist culture. In both cases, it would have prevailed as a friendship logic.

However, these findings show that ideas do not constitute an international structure that organizes all nation-states' behaviours according to shared beliefs. Countries articulate ideas with actions and objects constituting autonomous international practices in particular historical circumstances. For instance, Chile and China converge in giving particular meanings to ideas, differing from what constructivism suggests. In 1970, these two countries articulated the most-favoured-nation principle with anti-imperialism and mutual respect, detaching this principle from the Kantian imaginary of structural capitalism. Then, in 2005, the same principle was re-articulated in antagonism to protectionist policies carried out by Western-liberal countries.

Besides, international agents can simultaneously articulate limitless international practices worldwide, being each of these practices a unique discursive structure with its international logics.

From a philosophical perspective, although constructivism and post-Marxism coincide in criticising the empiricist logic of inductive reasoning and propose ontologies that break out with naïve idealisms, they diverge when approaching the last residual meaning of the object (see Chapter 3). According to Bhaskar, there are intransitive objects with a structure on their own; phenomena and trans-factual laws govern the world before being discursively grasped by human beings, such as global warming, cancer or COVID-19.

In the constructivist approach, Bhaskar's definition is applied to the notion of social facts such as the nation-state and the underlying causal forces that either affect or are generated by the nation-state (Wendt, 1998; Kurki, 2007). According to Wendt, the process by which a social fact becomes graspable starts with its baptism and continues with its socialization (distribution of knowledge). Similarly, Chris Reus-Smit (1999) formulates the category of structural values, which are higher-order values that define and legitimize agency and action when states construct international institutions.

Post-Marxism is as realist as critical realism because both assume a world out of consciousness. However, it asserts that new phenomena can only be graspable when it enters into what Wittgenstein (2009, 25-28) calls the language game. In other words, the meaning of discovery will vary with respect to its place within a symbolic order (Laclau and Bhaskar 1998). For instance, in Europe, global warming could mean a threat to human security that needs to be tackled globally. In contrast, in China, it could mean the West's hypocrisy after having caused unmeasurable damages worldwide since the industrial revolution and utilise this as an excuse to constrain China's economic development. These language games are what the instability of objects is all about.

Concerning Chile-China relations, this study showed that cooperation is different from the regular patterns of facts that positivist-empiricist IR induces to explain conflict prevention. Nevertheless, the meaning of cooperation changes insofar as Chile and China rearticulate their international practices. For instance, Allende's and Zhou's governments signed a trade agreement that functioned as a mechanism of anti-imperialist solidarity. Chile put it into force to import Chinese food when the US intervention destabilised its national economy. The FTA signed in 2005 acts as an anti-protectionist mechanism that

both Chile and China make possible in order to antagonise protectionist trends within the Doha Round.

3.4. Post-Marxist IR and the rational approach

Finally, these findings show that the IRT mainstream's security logics of conflict and cooperation do not apply to Chile-China relations (see Chapter 2). The logic of conflict chiefly characterises a rigid and reductionist form of international practice articulated around competition, the balance of power and the security dilemma. The logic of cooperation reduces the grammar of international practices to preferences, institutions and mutual gains to prevent conflict. Likewise, the findings show that a given anarchical international structure does not determine Sino-Chilean international practices but a plural discursive field from which states pick and signify elements to articulate foreign policies and international practices.

Mainstream IR assumptions lead us to depict China as a rising power competing against the US and challenging the world order. In contrast, Latin America and any other peripheral region are depicted as a piece of land to be disputed between these two powers. For instance, according to Evan Ellis (2005), China's presence in the US backyard entails a paradox: China is both a potential partner and a powerful competitor. On the one hand, given its dependence on raw material flows from Latin America, China will be "interested in reducing political instability, armed groups, and criminal activity in the region, rather than fuelling radical populism and insurgency. On the other hand, the United States needs to consider to what degree it is willing to accept a China that has increasing leverage in Latin America" (Ellis, 2005, Kindle Loc. 52). Similarly, Michael Mastanduno (2014)

suggests that two variables determine the course of security relations in Asia. The first one is the presence of the US to maintain regional stability and the balance of power, while the second one is the assertiveness of China's foreign policy.

These kinds of assumptions frame studies about Chile-China relations. Many texts claim that the relationship is pragmatic because it relies on economic complementarities and de-politicised interests. If they behave otherwise by appealing to politics and ideological identities, they would put US interests at stake and affect bilateral outcomes.

However, as I have explained all along, multiple logics characterise Chile and China's international practices at different historical circumstances, comprising a plural range of elements articulated around empty signifiers. The findings also show that the US is not an external variable, as Ellis and Mastanduno suggest, but an element whose meaning depends on its place within the Sino-Chilean practices. For instance, in 1970, they signified the US as capitalist imperialism. Then, in 2005, the US was associated with protectionism and unilateralism.

4. Post-Marxism's contributions to International Relations

Historians differentiate the Southern Cone's recent history – made up by Latin American scholars - from Cold War studies accounting for the Latin American region - made up by US scholars mostly. Namely, two narratives of the same region and historical period. While the former focuses on national dynamics that countries experienced in the political, economic, social and ideological fields (the micro-level of analysis), the latter draws attention to the US foreign policy and imperialist struggles with the USSR (the macro-level of analysis) (Joseph 2020, Marchesi 2017, Vanni 2018). This is a problem that,

in a nutshell, means the lack of Latin American approaches to account for international relations during such a critical period. As Joseph correctly observes, the history of the Latin American Cold War and international relations are like two distant cousins speaking different languages (Gilbert 2020).

Such a disciplinary emptiness persisted after the Cold War, a period when Latin America has kept being rarely incorporated into the great international debates. As a result, little is known about international politics between Latin American countries and countries from regions other than North America and Western Europe. Besides, new studies did not get detached from the US perspective and the re-articulation of the US's new threats in the post-Cold War era (Marchesi 2017). Following Browning, it seems that once the USSR was defeated, Latin American scholarship did not formulate international problems different from the critical question of "what the West's purpose, role, and identity was in the new context" (Browning 2013, 22). The image of China's presence in the US backyard criticised in this study is an example of the narrow way we have in the region to comprehend the international relations field. It seems that Latin American scholarship does not account for, is not interested in or is unable to think from a macro-level of analysis. In this context, contribute to the conformation of a Latin American school of international relations is still a pending enterprise.

This dissertation is a first step to filling this gap by proposing new terms for international relations. First, based on the ontology of the instability of objects, this study develops a research strategy that reframes how international relations theory understands the roles of ideas and material factors in international relations. These elements are no longer the expressions of causal factors explaining war and peace, but their identities have multiple dynamic possibilities. Second, drawing attention to China-Chile relations during

the Cold War and the post-Cold War years, the dissertation develops the notion of international practice. This notion helps me locate different moments of ideological objectivation between these two countries that we do not see in the ideological contradiction described by Cold War studies. In this account, observed political convergences and divergences embody logics of international relations, which help characterise agents' capacity to signify and antagonise elements they articulate from an undefinable international symbolic field that I call pluriverse.

The thesis thus aims to shift our perspective away from dominant interpretations. It de-Westernises the political analysis on Chile-China relations during the Cold War and the post-Cold War years, drawing attention to how these two non-Western/European countries' articulate international practices and signify the world politics sphere autonomously. By considering the ontological premises of radical contingency, pluriverse and antagonism, this study shows that, regardless of their geographical position and material power, all countries have the political agency to structure and re-structure international discourses. These "international" structures' grammars indicate the unstable and contingent meaning of elements that conventional IRT attempt to universalise and de-temporalise, such as the international system, world powers, socialist ideology, the most-favoured-nation principle, the non-intervention principle, etc. Regarding the theoretical discussion of international relations I carried out in Chapter 2 and the above subsection (in which I discuss different international theories), my approach to international practice plants the seeds to formulate a tentative strategy to account for structural change in international politics. I argue that the world is not formed by one static global hierarchical system determining big, medium and small states' behaviours. On the contrary, all states articulate bilateral and multilateral discursive structures at different historical conjunctures. The world, in this sense, is a

symbolic field in permanent dispute to be signified by an undeterminable number of structures.

Consequently, this post-Marxist approach, which starts from ontological premises that destabilise (de-securitise) Western literature's traditional assumptions, can also be called a post-Western international approach. For example, Browning stresses that critical studies argue that the security dilemma exists as a state of mind of US political and military elites' perceptions shaped by the normalisation of realist tenets rather than by a natural condition of human beings or the structure of the international system (Browning 2013, 21). In this sense, my approach aims to characterise the "state of mind" and "elites' perceptions," normalised by different types of regimes, and understand how they carry out political relationships and signify international issues in ways that Cold War studies and International Relations are used to ignore.

The contributions of this study to international relations can be seen in how it shows that a powerful world country is not an external force having consequences on a peripheral country's foreign policy decisions but a signifying element of each peripheral country's foreign policy. Ideology is not a rigid set of ideas affecting countries' foreign policies and decisions but any political attempt to objectivise the meaning of international practice. Similarly, there is no one international structure of the international system having inevitable consequences but as many structures as countries articulate with other countries constituting bilateral and multilateral international practices. States participate in different international structures by exercising their agency to signify and contest the meaning of the elements (including themselves) that constitute those structures.

In this post-Western approach, de-Westernise international relations does not mean the exclusion of the West in terms of philosophical and intellectual sources. On the contrary, it

takes an Argentinian political theorist's ontological and theoretical framework and his intellectual circle as a starting point to think about international relations differently. The Essex School has proposed a new language to account for political phenomena without discriminating the geographical origins of their academic and cultural influences. Moreover, this post-Western approach does not exclusively account for non-Western/European international relations. As I exemplified with US-Iran relations (see Chapter 5), this approach is perfectly suitable for reassessing and bringing new interpretations to the Western IR mainstream issues.

5. Research limits and main implications

5.1. Data collection

These findings may be somewhat limited by the data collection carried out chiefly in the Historical Archive of Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A note of caution is due here because although the Historical Archive provides a high number of Chilean and Chinese sources, Chilean sources outnumber Chinese ones. More Chinese sources, or even better sources from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs equivalent archive, would have nurtured this study with more elements to characterise Chile-China's international practices.

Further analysis of more Chinese data is worth doing because it would contribute to checking the meaning of particular elements, the presence of new elements, and new convergences and divergences.

5.1.1. The Transparency Law request

Data collection was also limited by the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs' restriction to sources corresponding to the 2005 period. I want to make a special mention to the documents corresponding to Chile's support of China's entrance into the WTO (1999) and Chile's recognition of China's market economy status (2004). In the first case, the Undersecretary denied access (20 years after the event occurred!) to the three documents found in the archive, which contain details of Chile-China negotiations to support China's WTO membership; alongside references to the United States, North Korea, and a host of other Pacific basin countries, such as Australia and Canada (Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2019a). In the second case, the Undersecretary denied access to 14 out of 25 files containing Chile-China negotiations for China's market economy recognition and makes reference to three other countries: Haiti, Iraq, and South Korea (Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2019b).

Although the exclusion of these antecedents generates a necessity to carry out further research on this period and wait for the declassification of corresponding documents (a decision which is not possible to foresee at the time of writing), these research's findings should not be interpreted with an excess of caution when analysing the Undersecretary's responses. After all, the Undersecretary's denial is also a political practice that articulates a range of elements that provide crucial information to flesh out our understanding of the political context of the period under investigation.

Regarding the Undersecretary's decision about 1999-documents, this study showed that, in 1999, China failed to get US support to become a WTO member for two reasons: the US agriculture sector's lobby to frustrate the negotiations and the US demand for

democracy in China. Besides, by 1999, China-US relations were seriously deteriorated because NATO bombed China's embassy in Belgrade.

In 1996, Chile and China had already settled down a dumping conflict by avoiding the WTO's third-country price as an average value mechanism. So, by 1999, these two countries had already engaged in a commercial and political relationship which was quite contrasting with the one that China had with the US and many other countries at that time.

In 1997, the US Congress denied the fast track that would have enabled Clinton's government to negotiate Chile's accession to NAFTA. The lobby deployed by California's agricultural sector was crucial for such a decision. Since then, Chile was eagerly trying to re-orientate its relations with the US to sign a bilateral FTA, whose negotiations started in 2000.

Finally, Chile's support for China's WTO membership was decided regardless of the Chilean public opinion's criticism of human rights and political freedom in China. In this context, Chile's decision to support China's entrance into the WTO was taken in a presidential election year (1999) which Ricardo Lagos won; Lagos was the leader of President Frei's same political coalition.

Hence, if the Undersecretary denied access to 1999-files because they contain statements about the US, it is possible to conclude that those statements relate somehow to US agriculture sectors, China's embassy in Belgrade, NAFTA and Chile's political context.

Regarding the Undersecretary's decision about 2004-documents, this study showed that, when Chile and China signed the Memorandum of Understanding to recognise China's MES, these two countries highlighted their political convergences on international security issues such as the war in Iraq. An issue which could have been addressed regarding

their participation in the Security Council and their rejection to the US endeavour to invade Iraq.

The study also showed that the Chinese human rights issue was still a cause of domestic concern in Chile and, hence, a political divergence with China. In this regard, it is worth noting that one of the documents that the Undersecretary attached in its answer was a Chilean newspaper's text that starts by stating that "After a long-lasting debate within the government, Chile will recognise China as a market economy, giving a crucial step forward in China's effort to getting a new ally in its struggle to increase its world commercial power" (Chile's Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2019b, 18).

Although not official, these words must be pondered over by considering, on the one hand, that they are part of the Undersecretary's official response to my Transparency Law requirement and, on the other, the international relations logics that characterise this international practice. As a Chilean scholar suggested when explaining Chile-China relations after the FTA signature: "there is a certain contradiction between the commercial optimism and the scepticism concerning political commitments [with China], perhaps, we must acknowledge that we are closer to the US than what we use to declare" (Pérez Le-Fort 2006, 124).

In sum, if the Undersecretary denied access to 2004-files because they contain statements about Iraq, it is possible to conclude that those statements relate to Chile's and China's opinions regarding the US invasion of Iraq. Another reason would have been Chile's domestic biases concerning China's human rights.

5.2. The necessity to broaden the analysis

These findings cannot be extrapolated to China's relations with other Latin American countries. As was explained, each international practice is a unique symbolic order with its own international relations logics. The international practice's uniqueness occurs even though other countries articulate international practices using the same elements.

In this sense, some of the issues emerging from this study relate specifically to the possibility of applying this research strategy to account for unlimited possible international discourses.

Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that another limitation of the present study is that it does not cover the Sino-Chilean relationship during the late 2000s and the entire 2010s. During this time, there are new elements, agents and events that Chile and China must have articulated to constitute new international practices. A good number of elements easily come across when thinking about this 15-year period, such as the 2008-09 global economic crisis, the democratic election of President Sebastián Piñera in 2010, the rise and consolidation of President Xi Jinping's power since 2012, the signature of the Sino-Chilean FTA Upgrade in 2017, the Belt and Road Initiative, the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States, China-US trade war, and Chile's institutional crisis that started in October 2019. All these elements are worth being considered in further studies.

5.3. Contributions

Overall, the present results are significant in at least two major respects. First, one of the issues that emerges from these findings is a novel approach to the role of politics and ideology in Chile-China relations. This approach is an alternative to the ontic assumption of

de-ideologized and de-politicised pragmatism. In this sense, the study reconfigured our understanding of ideology in the constitution of Chile-China relations through the analysis of those elements that signify international practices' horizons.

Second, these findings have important implications for developing international relations studies regarding objects, actions and speeches of the plurality of international agents that interact with China. In this sense, these findings get the reader out of the box of both positivist-rationalism and Eurocentric biases that inform the assumptions of mainstream IR approaches represented by the in-fashion question of the so-called "rise of China."

Regarding Chile and Latin America, the present study raises the possibility of formulating a research strategy that inquiries about the spurious and diverse political origins that constitute, legitimize and transform China's relations with Latin American countries while breaking out of the epistemological straitjacket that the language of the 'US backyard' confers.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In the present research, I explained the politics of the Chile-China relationship accounting for its constitution, legitimation and transformation at different historical periods from 1970 onwards. This project was also set out with the aim of revealing Chile's and China's ideological operations that conceal their relationships' radical contingency under different historical contexts.

I developed a post-Marxist research strategy to examine the history of diplomatic ties and make intelligible the main problems that scholarly literature has dealt with unsuccessfully. In doing so, I proposed the categories of international practice (and its four elements: radical contingency, pluriverse, agents and dislocation) and logics of international relations (logics of convergence and divergence). They helped me to demonstrate that Chile-China relationships have no foundational moment that constitutes a transcendental object of study. Neither are Chile-China relations a given international phenomenon that the analyst grasps by observing passively the international reality. In contrast, this approach explains that Chilean and Chinese agents articulate politically different practices and signify different elements in particular historical circumstances and shows that the analyst defines and characterises the units of analysis by engaging subjectively with the available data.

The empirical chapters show that each of Chile-China's international practices represents a unique symbolic order, in which these two countries come to signify together empty signifiers that provide meaningful horizons to their relationship at specific historical moments. In the 1970 period, these two countries articulated an international practice around the empty signifier of 'anti-imperialism.' In 1978, the international practice was

articulated around the ‘non-intervention principle.’ The empty signifier of ‘free trade’ then became the element that centralized the international practice’s symbolic order in 2005.

Each international practice has an ideological moment. *Ideological moments* are the operations by which Chile and China signify the empty signifiers’ meaning in an antagonistic relation to an excluded ‘other’ that threatens the international practice’s realization. In the first case, the excluded other that signifies the empty signifier of anti-imperialism is ‘US capitalist imperialism.’ In the second case, Chile and China articulate an antagonistic relationship between the non-intervention principle and ‘social-imperialism’ (the USSR). In the third case, the international practice’s ideological dimension is given by signifying China and Chile as two market economies that promote free trade, in antagonism to ‘protectionism and unilateralism.’

On the question of how international practices’ radical contingency is revealed, this study demonstrated that this situation happens when Chile and China cannot fix together the surplus meaning of certain elements that are vital for their respective foreign policies; in other words, when these two countries experience situations of political antagonism concerning particular floating signifiers.

Surprisingly, ‘socialist revolution’ was the floating signifier that explains political antagonisms between two socialist countries in 1970. Another important finding was that, for the 1978 period, Chile and China did not bring to the fore explicitly issues of political antagonism even though it was evident that some spectres on each side threatened the realisation of political rapprochement. These elements were China’s condemnation of Chile’s human rights violations, the Taiwan issue and Chile’s interpretation of Chinese economic reforms as a de-ideologization phenomenon. As far as the 2005 period is

concerned, the floating signifier of ‘human rights’ explains the political divergences between Chile and China associated with Taiwan, Tibet and China’s political regime.

Radical contingency is also revealed when an event dislocates the international practice. Examples of dislocations were the Chilean coup d’état in 1973, China’s Tiananmen crisis in 1989 and Chile’s re-democratisation in 1990. Each dislocation is articulated within China’s and Chile’s foreign policies autonomously. Then, these two countries re-articulate their international practices by including these dislocations as if they were new elements to be placed within the bilateral discourse. This way, these two countries disguise the disruptive effects of the coup d’état by bringing to the fore the non-intervention principle as the political convergence that unites them through a common antagonistic relation to social-imperialism. They also disguise the disruptive effects of the Tiananmen incident and Chile’s re-democratisation by articulating the international practice around the promised land of free trade that unites them in antagonistic relation to protectionism and unilateralism.

These findings may help us understand that signifiers appear within more than one articulatory formation even though their signification changes according to how agents construct empty signifiers to fix the relationship’s horizon in particular historical circumstances. A paradigmatic example is the USSR, which, in 1970, was an element of political divergence, while, in 1978, it was an element of political convergence.

Something similar occurs with Taiwan. In 1970, this element signified the Sino-Chilean convergence against the imperial absurdity of legitimising the Chiang Kai-shek’s regime. After the Chilean coup d’état, Taiwan became an element of bilateral divergence because Chile signified it as an anti-communist regime. Simultaneously, Chilean-Taiwanese interactions prevented China from breaking down the political coolness towards

Chile's Junta regime. When Chile re-established its democracy in 1990, Taiwan signified a democratic regime that deserved to be internationally recognised in the context of the post-Cold War years. For China, in contrast, it was a disruptive element that spoiled its interactions with the new Chilean regime.

A third example is the most-favoured-nation principle, which is present in the 1970 and 2005 periods. Allende's Chile and Zhou's China detached this element from its imperialist-capitalist symbolism and reinvested its meaning as a principle that guided trade between two sovereign countries under fair and mutual respect conditions. Lagos's Chile and Hu's China articulated this principle within the FTA to expand global trade in the context of the Doha Round failure and to contribute to the liberalization of markets in the Pacific basin.

Other contributions of the thesis can be formulated as follow. First, this is the first study that carries out a research strategy to account for the articulation of China's and Chile's foreign policies in different historical moments. Second, these findings have significant implications for the understanding of China's presence in Latin America. It is true that China can articulate a foreign policy towards Latin America; however, such policy changes according to the historical moment and the Latin American country it is engaging with. Third, this study shows that evidence of pragmatism and de-politicised practices were purely anecdotal or based upon taken-for-granted beliefs that do not correspond to the international logics that characterise the unlimited number of possible practices that China can articulate with each Latin American country. In this sense, this project is also the first comprehensive investigation of the political constitution and transformation of relationships between China and a Latin American country.

Although the current study is based on a limited range of empirical data and accounts for China's relations with just one Latin American country, the findings suggest that the phenomenon of China's presence in Latin America is much more complex than the rise of a world power that attempts to take over the US backyard. For instance, if we look at the particularities of Chile's foreign policies as articulated at different times, it is possible to see that China's presence cannot be reduced to the dichotomy between technocratic pragmatism and left-wing ideologies. Instead, the political meaning of this phenomenon depends on how this particular Latin American country articulates China as an element of its foreign policy (and vice versa) and how China and this Latin American country articulate international practices in different historical circumstances. In this regard, further research should be carried out to characterize China's international practices with other Latin American countries.

Finally, this post-Marxist approach to international practices would be a fruitful area for further work in the field of international relations, in particular China's relations with non-Western/European countries.

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