

## Full-spectrum role-taking: A two-level role theoretical model

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**Abstract:**

The paper develops an interactionist role theory, integrating models of domestic role-taking with the process of taking a national foreign policy role. The model locates the role resources for a country's external role-taking in the domestic realm where the role-taking/making by the executive must coincide with commensurate counter-role taking by the legislature, citizenry and additional "significant others". The model suggests that the two role-taking processes are interactive: international role taking and making feeds back into domestic role taking (second image reversed) and domestic role taking enables and/or restrains external role taking. Through the "lens of this two-level-role taking model" one sees that relations between domestic contestation and international role-taking are better described as a rich and interrelated variety of corresponding role-taking and making patterns. After contrasting existing approaches of domestic role contestation, the paper identifies international roles and summarizes the commensurate domestic role-taking patterns. A plausibility probe of two interaction hypotheses of the "two-level game-role taking model" completes the analysis.

Keywords: International roles, identities, historical self, role taking, role contestation.

## **Introduction**

Role-taking is central to both domestic and international politics and thus, to most (foreign) policy behavior. Domestic institutional roles of executive and legislative branches help to account for the politics of foreign policy. Societal ideas and expectations shared by citizens shape the limits of their government. These limits, in turn, provide or constrain the material and immaterial capabilities of a state to interact in the international realm. As governments anticipate other nations' foreign policy trajectories before acting, it stands to reason that international order rests on the interaction of two parallel role-taking exercises which may - or may not - stabilize the domestic and international institutional order. Citizens, legislatures and executive branches form a role ensemble, which enables a government to take on or to remake a country's international role.

Thus, depending on the international distribution of norms and material resources, some political regimes face a congenial, i.e. friendly and trustworthy environment, allowing for a commensurate division of domestic roles by governments, legislatures, business and the broader public. Other regime types, situated in the same international environment, may face enmity and fear-inspiring behavior, thus requiring a concentration of decision-making on defensive capacities to safeguard a polity.

Role-taking may provide a social mechanism by which domestic and international order co-emerge without actors knowing beforehand that complementary counter-role taking will reinforce or restructure existing institutions. Foreign policy role theoreticians have rarely discussed this nexus. Many assumed (and still assume), that - as Holsti maintains - role-taking is a one-way street in which "the expectations of other governments, legal norms expressed through custom, general usage, or treaties, and available sanctions to enforce these are ill-defined, flexible, or weak compared to those that exist in an integrated society and particularly within formal organizations" (Holsti 1970: 243). In this view, domestic role-taking takes place "in integrat-

ed societies in nation-states, organizations and groups”, whereas international role-taking is situated in “the relatively unintegrated international milieu” (Holsti 1970: 247).

By contrast, this paper develops an interactionist theory of domestic and international role playing. It understands foreign policy role-taking to emerge from an internal process of self-identification as well as an external process of counter role-taking by others (significant or organized). International role-taking, in turn, embodies the consent to domestic rule in foreign policy decision-making. That is, when domestic actors take on specific roles to support the executive in pursuance of some international role, they come to identify with that domestic-international role nexus. Their support may hinge on both material and immaterial benefits (foreign and/or domestic), but complementary domestic role-taking does not necessarily represent normative consent between legislatures, citizens and executives on international roles. Rather, complementary role-taking may result from other, often ulterior, motives. However, normative agreement, common considerations of fairness and mutual trust facilitate stable social orders because they delimitate the expectations of actors towards one another.

The benefits of this conception of full-spectrum role-taking, I believe, can be best seen in the insights it yields on foreign policies where domestic role-taking corresponds with historical experiences, where complementary international role-taking does not occur and where complementary international role-taking occurs without creating social order, which is considered just. Most theoretical approaches to the international-domestic nexus rely on explanations that privilege either agency or structure, thus complicating how both change. An interactionist conception focuses on the co-emergence of agent and structure, or in the words on George Herbert Mead, the emergence of mind, self and society through the social process. Theoretically, situating roles as conceptual devices between the state order and international order, the interactionist approach highlights the interaction between distinct patterns of domestic and international role-taking, which then result in stable cooperative or conflictual relationships, i.e. enduring rivalries.

The paper first discusses traditional IR theory approaches to the nexus between domestic and international order (Section I). It then develops a theory of domestic role-taking through the social

process of self-identification, which is extended to the concept of the historical self (Section II). Section III draws plausibility probes from earlier projects, featuring domestic role contestations in the German decision not to participate in the NATO-Operation over Libya and China's policy vis-à-vis the emerging Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norm. Section IV summarizes the argument and outlines promising avenues for further research.

### **I. Conceptions of domestic-international nexus**

To the extent that theories of international relations have taken up the nexus of domestic and international order, they typically employ one of three conceptions: Realists claim, following Tocqueville, that “foreign politics demand scarcely any of those qualities which are peculiar to a democracy; they require (...) the perfect use of almost all those in which it is deficient (...)“ (Tocqueville 1838: 248). In their view, the permanent defense of the state in an anarchic international environment necessitates the centralization of the monopoly of force and strong extractive executive capacities vis-à-vis all other branches of government and its respective citizens. To preserve the state, the “national security executive has interests which transcend any class or sector, namely the national interest” (Taliaferro et al. 2009: 27).

This realist conception of the domestic-international role nexus implies that the executive legislative plays a dominant role vis-à-vis the legislature and public opinion in domestic role playing. In the words of Hans Morgenthau:

“It is for the President to reassert his historic role as both the initiator of policy and the awakener of public opinion” (Morgenthau 1949: 161).

Realists regularly conceptualize legislatures and publics as socializing objects of the executive. They are not subjects in an equal role-taking partnership in which they legitimate and control the executive to fulfil a societal mission. Rather, realism conceptualizes the state and society as distinct entities in an asymmetrical relationship in which the executive branch acts as a guardian of

the state's interests in the competitive international realm and protects them against negative societal influences (Kennan 1951: 93).

Three distinct lines of argument can be identified in the realist school on the domestic-international role nexus: On the one hand, Almond and Lippman have argued that public opinion is incapable of rational and informed decision-making, so that the executive has a right to neglect the 'mood' of the public (Almond 1956: 372, 1961: 84; Lippman 1961: 31). In this case, foreign policy as public policy is exempt from the public's influence and approval because the latter is not recognized as a trustworthy role player.

On the other hand, Morgenthau, Kennan and leading neoclassical realists have recognized the public as a player, but they tend to view it instrumentally, as a political resource which is helpful but on which the executive is not dependent for actual policymaking (Morgenthau 1952: 229; Brooks 1990: 518).<sup>1</sup> Executives shape domestic consent but they are not shaped by it.

In the realist perspective, international systemic imperatives necessitate the dominant guardian role of the executive in domestic role-playing during foreign policy decision-making. This imposition, in turn, leaves the legislature and public as recipients (pupils) of the executive's socializing efforts directed towards safeguarding the state's interests against societal aspirations. In addition, in the realist view, acting rationally means to empower the executive vis-à-vis other domestic actors to ensure survival in a competitive, if not cut-throat environment.

The reference group of domestic role taking in realism is thus international and international relationships are characterized by enmity. Fear and the quintessential goal of state survival legitimize the subordination of individual or collective domestic aspirations. As the intentions of others can never be trusted, domestic power maximization, and corresponding internal expropriations, are the only way to alleviate the dangers of international anarchy (Rathbun 2007: 538). Consequently, domestic role taking shifts in accordance with changes in the material distribution of power (Gourevitch 1978).

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<sup>1</sup> This executive-friendly interpretation of the U. S. constitution and the Federalist Papers in foreign affairs is widespread, cf. John Yoo, Deputy Assistant Attorney General im Office of the Legal Council, Dept. of Justice: "If we assume, (...) that the international system is governed by anarchy (...), then the demands of the international system promote vesting the management of foreign affairs in a unitary, rational actor" (Yoo 2005: 20).

Liberals turn this realist causal nexus upside down. Beginning with Immanuel Kant (1795), the liberal tradition has held that state and societal interests are not disconnected, but rather that the state represents the collective aspirations of its citizens (Kahler 1997). In their view, individual rationality about the consequences of international policies and the representation of risk-averse societal preferences imply that governments will pursue “security policies for the many” rather than “security for the state”.

“In any case, together with the extent of the external threats, numerous domestic factors such as national character, tradition, preferences and prejudices will influence the level of security which a nation chooses to make its target” (Wolfers 1952: 488).

The reference group for the liberal conceptualization of domestic role-taking is thus domestic, not international. Systemic anarchy does not necessitate domestic hierarchy. Rather, the nature of men (or bureaucratic organizations) and their resulting desire for power require separate institutions – a contractual base to minimize uncertainty through credible information (Rathbun 2007: 542) – to counter-balance institutions. In the words of James Madison:

“But the great security against a gradual concentration of the several powers in the same department, consists in giving to those who administer each department the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others” (Hamilton/Madison/Jay 2003: 316 (Federalist Papers 50)).

Liberals have challenged the realist account that domestic checks and balances have a detrimental effect on international role-taking: First, liberal institutionalists have argued that there is a lot less uncertainty in international politics due to international exchanges, international law and authority than realists admit (Keohane/Nye 2001: 28; Lake 2009). Second, liberals have shown empirically that democratic institutions – which provide credible information on the future behavior of others – do make democracies better decision makers because their deliberations lead to superior selections of means and ends, e.g. in questions of war and peace (Lake 1992; Stam/Reiter 2004: 107).

In this conception of domestic counter role-taking between executive and legislative branch, transparency and controversial deliberation are crucial mechanisms to achieve these superior, i.e.

legitimate and effective, decisions. To do so, the executive must share its information in advance with the legislature and the public:

“It is also important when war comes that the nation should be fully aware of the causes which led to the rupture of relations, and should be perfectly satisfied that the policy previously pursued was in all its bearings judicious and (...) just” (Ponsonby 1915: 25).

If it does not, foreign policy becomes the private good of the executive branch that may, or may not, pursue policies detrimental to the public good. Echoing Immanuel Kant in his classic work “on perpetual peace”, John Jay argued in Federalist Paper No. 4:

„(...) a variety of motives, which affect only the mind of the Sovereign, often lead him to engage in wars not sanctioned by justice, or the voice and interests of his people“ (Hamilton/Madison/Jay 2003: 17).

Similarly, Graham T. Allison suggested that bureaucratic self-interest might divert a foreign policy trajectory from what had become known as the “national interest” (Allison 1971). While Allison’s original account meant to explain mal-adaption - i.e. deviation from a unitary rational actor model as based on Realism - Max Weber argued in his classical account on bureaucracy that parliamentary control was the best antidote against “governance by bureaucracy” in foreign affairs (Weber 1988: 369).

When it comes to interaction between the domestic and the international levels, different strands of liberalism use either structures, i.e. domestic institutions, or agents, i.e. interests, to explain foreign policy output and international cooperation (Schulz 2013: 481). In one of the most powerful metaphors in IR theory, Robert Putnam has suggested the ‘two-level-game’, which helps to describe the process by which governments match the expectations of their negotiation partners with the expectations of domestic ‘winning coalitions’ needed to ratify cooperation agreements at home (Putnam 1988). Subsequent research by Evans et al. (1993) as well as game theoretical models by Milner (1997) found that some domestic configurations between executive and legislative branches are better for extracting concessions, while others increase the likelihood of cooper-

ation. But this focus on explaining action/interaction through structures has come at a high price, because very few liberal studies investigate how domestic structures themselves change as a result of international interaction (Gourevitch 2002: 322.)

Constructivism then, and the corresponding logics of appropriateness and argumentation, established that norms and identities, both global and domestic, matter for the emergence of domestic and global order. Early constructivists predicted that; “similarities in behavior are caused by a common global culture, where realism or liberalism would expect differences” (Finnemore 1996: 326). This includes the establishment of domestic institutions, i.e. ministries of education (Finnemore 1993), or the eradication thereof, i.e. apartheid (Klotz 1999). Later constructivists focused on the emergence of global norms, e.g. suggesting that the establishment of the International Criminal Court could be traced to arguments between states about the appropriate response to grave crimes against humanity (Risse 2000; Deitelhoff 2009). In these studies, the theory of communicative action starts with human agency and uses the potential of language as a means to construct new realities. And yet, through the Habermasian concept of the ‘shared life world’ it still relies on a thin version of a common culture, i.e. structure, to explain cooperation (Deitelhoff/Müller 2005). While third generation constructivists have started to investigate questions of ‘norm contestation’ (Hoffman 2010), constructivism still lacks a mechanism to understand how a ‘common life world’ evolves, or to use Wendt’s metaphor, how states move from a Hobbesian world to a Lockean world, and back again (McCourt 2012: 372).

An important exception to the constructivist tendency to assume stable ideational structures, which then explain (foreign) policy action, can be found in the securitization approach (Buzan et al. 1998; Balzacq 2011). Buzan and his colleagues argue that; “by labeling something a security issue, (...) it becomes one” (Wæver 2004: 13). During the securitization process, a securitizing agent, most often the executive, states that a particular ‘referent object’ (actor, condition) is threatened in its existence. In doing so, the securitizing actor also claims the right to employ extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object’s survival. Thus, the successful ‘securitization move’ not only moves the referent object out of the political sphere (politicization) into the securi-

ty sphere (securitization), it also establishes a ‘state of emergency’ that “changes the inter-unit relations by breaking free of the rules” (Buzan et al. 1998: 26).

This constructivist conception of the securitizing agent-audience relationship is somewhat ambivalent: On the one hand, Buzan et al. claim it is the actor [the securitizing agent, S.H.] who decides whether something is to be handled as an existential threat (Buzan et al. 1998: 31); on the other hand, they argue

“[A, S.H.] discourse that takes the form of presenting something as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization – this is a securitizing move, but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accepts it as such (Buzan et al. 1998: 25).”

In seeking to correct some of its deficits, several securitization scholars have started to address the ‘role’ one or several distinct audiences play in empowering the security agent to break the rules (Salter 2008; Léonard/Kaunert 2011). However, several crucial questions remain unsolved (Williams 2011): Does an audience already exist before the securitizing agent addresses it? If so, what does the audience know or not know so that it becomes receptive to the message that some of its core values are threatened? What exactly constitute ‘extraordinary measures’ in a specific policy context and how can it be verified that a ‘breaking of the rules’ has occurred?

Securitization scholars thus conceptualize audiences, i.e. legislatures or publics, as either socializing objects or co-equal securitizing agents who accept or do not accept the implications of the securitizing move. Securitization theory, because it shares the “transformative ontology of constructivism” (Dessler 1989), can only describe the process by which the indeterminacy of a situation – is the other a rival or a friend? – is resolved (Rathbun 2007: 550). So far, it has no mechanism to determine the direction of the securitization process: If securitization occurs, what kind of extraordinary measures will reconfigure the inter-unit relations in what way? In other words, will the construction of a deadly enemy always result in the rise of a ‘national security state’ or an authoritarian system, which subjugates the rights of its citizens?

Table 1: International-domestic nexus in Realism, Liberalism and Social Constructivism

	<b>Realism</b>	<b>Liberalism</b>	<b>Social constructivism</b>
<b>International environment</b>	enmity		Enmity/rivalry/ friendship
<b>State-society nexus</b>	raison d'état	Pluralistic interest	Soc. Constr. interests
<b>Role of public</b>	Irrational demos	Rational demos	manipulated demos
<b>Executive-Legislative nexus</b>	Executive prerogative	Legislative control	Changes in hierarchy depending on fit/mis- fit int.-dom. order
	Subordination of societal preferences	Safeguarding of societal preferences	Interpreting societal preferences

## II. An interactionist theory of domestic role taking

This section reformulates foreign policy role theory in an interactionist tradition (Harnisch 2011b; McCourt 2012). According to this perspective, role theory elaborates the insight that social interaction - both in the domestic and international realm – has both a constitutive and a causal impact upon actors and structures in world politics. Through international roles, ideas, practices and institutions shape actors' social identities within a group. In turn, roles constitute international social order by directing role behavior towards it. In interactionist role theory, the reciprocation of commensurate role behavior by the Other matters most; not the distribution of capabilities, as realists would have it, the distribution of benefits and information, as liberals and institutionalists would have it, or the distribution of norms and values, as constructivists would have it (Baumann forthcoming).

Focusing on the impact of roles on behavior and social structure, recent role scholarship has neglected international roles as social structures. International roles and emerging international social order cannot be explained *only* or even primarily by external expectations through processes of socialization, mimicking or imitation (Wendt 1999; Johnston 2007; Thies 2013). Rather, it is argued here that we need to bring self-identification as a root concept for interna-

tional role taking behavior back into the study of international structural change (Flockhart 2006, Pu 2012).

This interactionist turn implies that international role expectations not only shape behavior through material or immaterial benefits: It also implies that international cues - because they are anticipated in the alter part of national role conceptions - shape the identities of actors themselves (Harnisch 2012). A clearer understanding of the nexus between role taking/making and the process of self-identification thus lies at the heart of the interactionist role research program.

Coming to grips with the interaction between domestic and international order through roles may offer two important insights: First, there is now a wealth of research on the emergence of international norms and the compliance of state and non-state actors with those norms. And yet, there appears to be a dearth of studies on deviant and non-compliant behavior which may result from processes of domestic 'norm contestation' and/or 'revolutionary norm entrepreneurship' (Armstrong 1993; Wiener 2008; Wunderlich et al. 2013). As a result, a selection bias is detectable when it comes to the analysis of the stability and reification of the current international order. This selection bias causes a prioritization of stability over fluidity, ambivalence or anomy. Addressing the balance of domestic and foreign expectations through the process of self-identification, interactionist role theory may help to improve our understanding of paradox, non-conforming and anomic behavior.

Secondly, the emergence of new powers in world politics poses the question as to how they will fit into the present international order. All too often, this debate is dominated by a Manichean struggle between two schools of thought: On the one hand, scholars are predicting the socialization of powers, like China, into an existing, stable and somewhat fixed institutional setting (for China: Johnston 2007, Kent 2002). On the other hand, pundits suggest that the material or immaterial disposition of emerging powers, their growing wealth or their history-stricken past as victims of colonialism, put them onto a international trajectory to impose their

preferences or values upon others ( for China: Jacques 2009; Callahan 2010; Callahan/Barabantseva 2012).

Obviously, addressing the processes in which foreign and domestic role expectations meet may offer important insights, because scholars from both camps rely on analytical mechanisms, the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness of argumentation, which simplify do not apply here. More specifically, interactionist role theory offers an alternative account for coordinated action even if massive power asymmetries persist, no clear economic benefits are evident and no normative consensus or common 'life world' exists.

### *Roles and identities*

There is an important difference between the concepts of role and identity (McCourt 2012: 373). Roles are social positions in a group constituted by alter and ego expectations on the functions of the role holder for the achievement of the group's goals. As such, roles are specific in time and place and vary with a group's size (see above). Identities, in contrast, are self-descriptions referring to an 'Other' for demarcation (Abdelal et al. 2006).

As social phenomena, identities are not related to any particular social function or action in or for a group as such. They are also unspecific with regard to time and social context because their primary function is constitutive for the actor. According to this narrow definition, there is only one French identity for France, even if contested domestically within France. And yet, French policy makers (and citizens) could also identify with a 'European identity', overlapping the French identity, drawing on other important habitual cues from that identification. When doing so, however, only the membership role in the group of European or EU nations then provides specific expectations for action, which may or may not run counter to the national self-identification of 'being French'. Hence, identities ensure a consistent self-

perception over time by providing ‘ontological security’ for an agent through self-awareness (Kinnvall 2004: 746).

National identities shape the ‘personhood’ of their citizens by providing ‘ontological security’ to them, through the positive identification with a group. Yet, national identities do not establish “states as persons”, as Alexander Wendt seems to imply (Wendt 2004). Rather, interactionism conceptualizes states and their identities as social structures, too. As such structures, they must be upheld (or changed) through coercion, benefits, identification or commensurate role-playing by legislatures and citizens. Hence, the state’s capacity to act hinges upon the (discursive) competence of decision makers who act on behalf of the state to attract followership. Regularly, decision makers have to justify their actions before their legislatures, winning coalitions and/or citizens through tying certain action to accepted identity elements of a nation/state (Flockhart 2006: 92).

Taking on the domestic role of a follower in foreign affairs is not necessarily based on shared beliefs, benefits or the imposition of pain in the relationship between the executive and legislative branch. Oftentimes, commensurate role-playing in foreign policy decision-making has nothing to do with the issue at hand (or its policy or electoral pay-off matrix), but depends upon the shared expectation that a member of the governing party supports the executive in parliament. Whether these shared expectations originate from the same individual motive between the role sender and the role taker does not matter, as long as commensurate role-playing ensues (see below)

Therefore, as aptly described by Robert Putnam’s ‘two-level-game’ metaphor, decision makers (as negotiators or otherwise) in effect play two roles in two parallel social structuration processes (Putnam 1988). On the one hand, they represent the executive branch, trying to attract commensurate domestic role-playing by their electorate/legislature so that the role the government aims to play in the external realm is supported, e.g. to protect their citizens or facilitate commerce. In doing so, this othering process also reconstitutes the state’s structure

by legitimizing a distinct domestic role for the government vis-à-vis its citizens. In this sense, foreign policy is not only “the making of an ‘Other’” (Shapiro as quoted in Neumann 1996: 156), it is also the making of a state as a governing structure (see below the section on domestic contestation).

On the other hand, decision makers interact on behalf of the state with ‘Others’ in the international environment, thereby playing roles that (re-)constitute international social orders. In doing so, enduring rivalries emerge and diffuse - as between France and Germany over the last century - or international authority structures persist - such as the UN Security Council - because states, through their role-playing within them, empower these institution to exert regulatory pressures upon them.

### *The process of self-identification*

Interactionism’ fundamental premise – that mind, self and society emerge from a social process of taking the role of the Other – can be restated in terms of domestic role-playing in foreign policy decision-making. In Mead’s original social actor model, the ‘Self’ comprises two parts, ‘I’ and ‘Me’. The ‘I’ represents the impulsive, biologically irreducible and creative part of the self (Mead 1934: 352f.), whereas the ‘Me’ pertains to the actor’s self-image when he/she looks at him/herself through the eyes of the ‘other’.

### FIGURE 1.1 NEAR HERE

Taking up this reasoning, the individual citizens, the business group and legislature become aware of themselves as political actors only by looking at themselves through the eyes of the government, because the government, and especially the limits thereof, constitutes the roles of these actors by regularly performing certain functions for the polity.

In Mead's concept of the self, the 'Me' does not contain the 'expectations of Others' proper. Rather, it represents the internalization of others' expectations as perceived and memorized by the self. Therefore, the anticipation of others' expectations - the 'Me' - provides the crucial link to the social environment, without which the self cannot become self-aware (Dodds et al. 1997: 491).

In turn, actors engaged in domestic decision-making on foreign policy (i.e. citizens, legislatures, courts etc.) anticipate governmental behavioral patterns, i.e. roles, and adjust their behavior accordingly. The political process of self-identification may thus be conceived as a continuous phenomenon of casting the self's constitutive parts into a stable but flexible form. When indeterminacy is low in routine situations, the 'Me' part of the self is reconciled with perceptions of social norms (Mead 1934: 199). To ensure 'ontological security' as a balanced sense of self, no major reversal of behavioral adjustment is necessary. However, in problematic situations, when indeterminacy is high, the 'I' part becomes dominant, because routines no longer offer a stable sense of self. In this situation, the 'I' part takes over and the self acts 'as if' it were performing a new role and practicing a new self-identification (Mead 1934: 209–12, 214–18).

For interactionists, the evolutionary and social character of both agent and structure is central. Interactionism rejects the utopian notion of fixed interests and preferences and the concept that coordinated action is only possible when expected utilities converge and always happens if they do. Experience - former stages in the self-identification process - introduces an inevitable and growing yardstick against which a stable sense of self is developed. Where positive recollections of mutual trust and friendship exist, e.g. towards significant others, other-regarding role-playing is more likely. The longer these recollections reach back and the more institutionalized they are, e.g. in constitutions or treaties, the stronger the incentive to comply is.

To illustrate the case of domestic role-taking, the following matrix positions the US Congress along two dimensions towards the executive branch; the domestic political order as foreseen in the US constitution and the international political order as foreseen in the policy proposed by the executive branch.

*Table 2: Idealtypic domestic role taking: US congress vis-à-vis executive branch*

	<b>International Order Policy Opposition</b>	<b>International Order Policy Support</b>
<b>Domestic Order Self-assertiveness</b>	Self assertive Congress pro-active leader	Cooperative Congress supporter
<b>Domestic Order Subordination</b>	Ambivalent Congress laggard	Compliant Congress Groupie

### **The historical self in the process of self-identification**

Interactionist role theory conceives a social role as consisting of corresponding ego and alter parts of a role. The ego part contains an actor's evolving 'self-identity' (see above). For our purpose here, I focus on the conceptualization of a "stable self-identification" through the concept of "ontological security" (Mitzen 2006; Steele 2008; Zarakol 2010). Mitzen and others assume that states, as actors, constantly seek "routinized social relationships", even if they are conflictual, "to realize a sense of agency" (Mitzen 2006: 342). Accordingly, ontological security can be defined as the situation in which "an actor has a consistent sense of 'self' by performing actions in order to underwrite his/her notion of 'who they are'" (Zarakol 2010: 3). Building on social psychology (Laing) and sociology (Giddens), theoreticians have identified two sources of ontological insecurity; interaction with international society (Mitzen 2006: 354), or the state's sense of self that helps process the "relevant elements" of the environment (Steele 2008: 59). Underlying these two sources is an analytical view in which either agent or structure initiates purposeful social action.

In contrast, I argue here that the interaction between the self - including the historical self as an important point of reference for the current self - and the Other is the source of meaningful social action (see also Kinnvall 2004: 748-49; Zarakol 2010: 7).

From this evolutionary interactionist perspective, the current self does not stabilize itself *only* by relating to a current other. Any actor has also to relate himself/herself to his/her historical self to reach a “stable sense of self”, i.e. ‘ontological security’ (Beneš/Harnisch 2014).

Historical self-relationships stretch along two dimensions: First, as we have seen above, the historical self-relationship relates to the domestic order in which either the “I” or “Me”-part is prevalent, i.e. there is either executive- or legislative- societal dominance. This historical experience can be positive or negative; on the one hand, the current self may be viewed as the unbroken extension of the historical domestic self-composition, implying that traditions, institutions and social relationships are maintained. This is the case in the United States, which is positively associated with its liberal democratic domestic setting or in Brunei, which is positively associated with its monarchic past; on the other hand, the current self may be interpreted as the antidote of the historical experience. This is the case in Germany, where society has shed its totalitarian past and in Iran, where most of society still despise the authoritarian Shah experience. These positive or negative historical self-relationships are not always related to negative/positive international interactions, but they often are, as in the case of China, where foreign penetration went hand-in-hand with internal divisions and domestic unrest.

Second, historical self-relationships also contain international interactions. These may be negative and full of rivalry, as realism contends, but may also include positive experiences of shared role-taking and trust, as in special relationships where nations have collectively defended themselves against external predatory behavior, e.g. in the Anglo-Saxon alliance.

Table 3: Idealtypic historical self-relationships: domestic and international

	<b>International Order Negative association</b>	<b>International Order Positive association</b>
<b>Domestic Order Positive self-association</b>	Emancipatory Power China	Leadership US
<b>Domestic Order Negative self-association</b>	(Colonial) victim Ruanda	Supporter Germany

When considering the possible combinations of negative and positive self- and other associations, under the condition that role-bearing nations seek ontological security all the time, the following types can be identified: Among nations which have had a negative international role interaction, two distinct classes of contemporary roles can be identified, when considering the variance along the domestic role association. One class of nations which have overcome their historical victimhood, e.g. former colonies, and which now identify positively with that self-achievement, e.g. through propagating de-colonization as a foreign policy goal (the United States). A second class of historical victimhood is detectable in states which do not have a positive contemporary self-association because of domestic divisions or war (several African and Arabic states). In this case, the demarcation between the historical and current self may also be ambivalent or spurious. Many colonies in Africa and the Middle-East, or quasi-colonies such as China come to mind, where the historical victimhood role still shapes current conduct, thereby putting specific others, the historical perpetrators, or the whole international community into the position of having the historical responsibility to ‘right historical wrongs’. By ‘altercasting historical perpetrators’ into contemporary ‘responsibility holders’, historical victims, such as Rwanda or the Jewish nation, not only cast the international community into a group which is (and will remain) outside the current self-identification process. When doing so their ‘foreign policy victim syndrome’ may also hamper their role-taking and making in the international community, because these nations claim special rights for themselves and special obligations for contemporary others. Their role-taking is thus not only trapped in history,

their specific historical role-taking experience will keep them from integrating into today's international community.

In contrast, domestic historical self-associations may serve as a negative point of reference. Again, two kinds of constellations can be distinguished; in the first case, the historical self is a 'perpetrator' and the 'historical external other' is the victim.<sup>2</sup> In this constellation, the current self may demarcate itself from the negative historical experience through remorse and 'emerges' as a 'born-again' self in the current international community (German case). However, when no apology and/or remorse is forthcoming because the current self continues to identify with the 'negative historical self', the interaction with the historical victims may pose considerable problems (Japanese and Turkish case) for integration in today's international community (Zarakol 2010).

In turn, historical victimization also often shapes the domestic process of self-identification. Groups and institutions which do (or claim to) rescue a nation-state from being continuously exploited by external others may use a 'foreign policy victim syndrome' to legitimize their domestic rule. As Mead suggests in his work on nationalism and the League of Nations, this is a tempting social constellation for rulers because historical underachievement and under appreciation may be compensated by 'superimposing the ego-part upon the alter-part' of a role (see Harnisch 2011: 49). Nationalism, when tied to a historical victim syndrome, so the argument goes, interferes with constructive role taking in a current relationship in which the Other is (still) treated as a perpetrator.

It follows that in any interactionist role synthesis, the need for a stable sense of self, i.e. ontological security, enjoys analytical priority over utility expectations, logics of appropriateness or argumentation. This conclusion should hardly be surprising to role theoreticians, since

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<sup>2</sup> These are idealtypes and they refer to national self-conceptions. Of course, some governments of nations that experienced great national losses because of foreign aggression, i.e. the Soviet Union or China, victimized their own society or large parts of it, and the experiences were often suppressed for the sake of ontological security and/or regime-stability.

roles are social positions that contain expectations about the functions the role holder performs for the group. Groups, e.g. political parties, nation states or the international community do change their purpose, and so a change in the relative position of a group member vis-à-vis that purpose is hardly astonishing. The implication for role theory is clear; not only do we need to know what the preferred domestic roles are and how they relate to the expectations towards national role conceptions, but unless we know how these ‘as-if’ roles interact with the role taking behavior of Others, role theory is as limited in explaining the domestic-international nexus as other IR theories are.

### *International roles and domestic contestation*

While rationalist role theories and institutionalist supplements to role theory, respectively, emphasize demands from particular patterns of utility maximization or appropriateness, interactionist role theory emphasizes the emergence of an ego-role through continuous interaction between the ‘I-‘ and a ‘Me-part’. Both components of the ego-part of a foreign policy role are open to domestic contestation; an oppositional party/legislature/court may challenge the government with not having the competence to take a role in a foreign policy situation at all, or it may challenge the international role conception of that government on policy grounds. The two types of domestic role contestations are not the same, but they often interact.

Note that not every domestic role contestation is policy relevant; a government’s role conception may be challenged rhetorically, but the executives’ interpretation (often with the support of an attentive public and policy community) may prevail and then garner sufficient societal or legislative support through output legitimacy.<sup>3</sup> A more sophisticated role theoretical exten-

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<sup>3</sup> In addition, executives increasingly use foreign policy instruments that do not require explicit legislative approval. These include executive agreements instead of international treaties, which would require ratification by legislatures or the outsourcing of sensitive operations, such as torture practices or cyberespionage by commercial Internet Services Providers (ISP).

sion of this reasoning focuses on ‘issue saliency’; the relative prioritization of foreign policy matters for the role-taking of voters vis-à-vis their representatives/government. This does not, of course, imply the existence of a one-to-one correspondence between an oppositional role-taking by the public or a legislature and governmental foreign policy role taking, for two reasons. First, governments may judge that voters do not care enough about the issue, although voters do, thus governmental failure to take up commensurate policy roles results in elections losses.<sup>4</sup> Second, governments are not office-seeking but policy-seeking because they know that public role-taking demands would result in international conflict, or worse, war that may result in loss of territory, blood, treasure or rule. In effect, governments determine their counter-role taking vis-à-vis clear societal and legislative role by positioning themselves towards both the domestic and international consequences of that role-taking.

The interactionist distinction between ‘I’ and the ‘Me’ is not just conceptual, but also consequential when it comes to typologizing the processes of domestic role contestation. In a first cut, both the ‘I’ and the ‘Me’ of an ego-part may be conceptualized as homogenous or heterogeneous.

*Table 4: Types of domestic role contestation: ‘I’ and ‘me’ dimensions*

Homogenous/ Heterogeneous	The ‘I’ (homogenous)	The ‘I’ (heterogeneous)
The ‘Me’ (homogenous)	No domestic contestation	Domestic contestation of government’s role taking competences
The ‘Me’ (heterogeneous)	Intra-role conflict due to divergent anticipated international role cues	<b>Domestic contestation: role mass split; intra-elite split: consequential</b>

<sup>4</sup> While this may happen, as in the US mid-term election 2006 after the Iraq debacle, domestic crises clearly impact much more on voting patterns than foreign policy crises.

In a second cut, the link between the two types of domestic contestations implies that the *capacity* to take up an international role and the *means* to engage in that role hinges upon the type and degree of contestedness.

In the democratic peace literature, this phenomenon is taken up and turned into the argument that the credibility of the decisions taken and the broader representation of interests in democratic states are responsible for the higher likelihood of democracies to join or initiate international institutions (Schultz 2013: 493). The literature suggests that authoritarian leaders regularly encounter less audience costs, as their rule relies more on the support of smaller groups than of the electorate (a single-party, the military, etc.). Nonetheless, they may use nationalist sentiments or vocal domestic opposition to signal resolve (Weeks 2008). In this vein, Weiss has recently shown how the Chinese Communist leadership was able to resolve two important diplomatic crises with the United States (the 1999 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade and the 2001 EP-3 incident) on its terms. It was able to display resolve by not reigning in popular nationalist protests and using anti-American sentiments to signal steadfastness (Weiss 2013).

International roles, then, are not static social positions, but variables. In turn, sources of domestic contestation also result from the interaction of the role-holder with the counter role-taker, resulting in a change in domestic role composition. As the roles of a state in international society expands, so does the (re-distributive) impact of that international role-taking on the domestic position of executives, legislatures, courts, corporations, non-governmental groups, political parties, and even the judiciary.

The ‘domestication approach’ captures some of these effects on the vertical dimension of the ‘I’ (Harnisch/Maull 2001: 145; Harnisch 2006, 2009). It posits that executives, particularly in democracies, increase their policymaking autonomy, i.e. role, by engaging in international cooperation and integration to the detriment of legislatures and judiciaries. As policy authority

is ceded to international bodies – in which only executives interact – the role of the sovereign of the people, as represented by legislatures and judiciaries, contracts.

Domestic institutions contesting executive autonomy-seeking impose two sets of constraints on executive role-taking: On the one hand, legislatures and judiciaries have bound executive branches procedurally; they demand expanded prior information procedures, stronger control mechanisms and they insert so-called ‘constitutive mandating’, which ties executive action to prior legislative consent. On the other hand, legislatures and courts have bound the executives normatively; they have either stopped or limited cooperation in scope or kind or they have tied further international cooperation to the transfer of domestic norms into international organizations (Harnisch 2009).

For constitutional governments, these redistributive effects pose bigger problems than for autocratic regimes, because they enlarge the number of potential veto-players and the probability of involuntary defection. For autocratic regimes, growing public or legislative concern about autonomous executive policymaking, especially in a hostile international environment, creates less of a problem because to persevere internationally may even bolster the domestic legitimacy of a regime, e.g. North Korea.

Enlarging our focus to include the interaction between domestic role-taking and international role-taking allows us to identify and understand greater ranges of relationships between external and domestic role-taking and their impact on domestic role contestation.

### **III. Cases: probing the plausibility of full-spectrum interactionist role theory**

Recent conflicts in Sudan, Libya and Syria have sparked international and domestic debates on whether the international community has an obligation to prevent massive attacks on civilians. These debates focus on the role of governments vis-à-vis their citizens, as well as the role of the international community towards the governments of their members. The adoption

of Security Council resolution 1973, with China and Germany abstaining, has led supporters of the Responsibility to Protect norm to claim that the norm had not only motivated Security Council members to support the resolution, but also that subsequent behavior was guided by a logic of appropriateness. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, for example, asserted; “By now it should be clear to all that the Responsibility to Protect has arrived” (cited in Hehir 2013: 137).

An interactionist account of China and Germany’s stance on Libya and the R2P norm - as well as those of most other Security Council members- suggests otherwise.<sup>5</sup> A careful analysis attests that abstentions, and even support for resolution 1973, must not be misunderstood as being motivated by compliance with the R2P norm or any successful socialization by R2P protagonists (Hehir 2013, Morris 2013). Rather, the abstentions, which facilitated later military actions, were based on intricate role taking patterns, which the bear marks of both domestic role-taking and historical self-identification. Therefore, the focus of the following case studies lies on the interaction between historical and current role-taking, as well as domestic contestation.

The case studies use process-tracing methodology broadly understood and provide some first illustrations of the theoretical arguments outlined above. In both national decisions, the roles were contested either externally, through different expectations from significant others, or internally. These decisions were also critical decisions for both countries because, in the case of China, they touched upon critical questions of sovereignty, secession and minority rights, and in the case of Germany, they tackle central questions of alliance solidarity and the commitment to human rights. The primary focus of the case studies is on the roles expressed by governments and the subsequent role behavior as it was shaped by historical and domestic role-taking concerns.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hehir 2013, Morris 2013, de Waal 2013, Chesterman 2011; for an opposing view: Adler-Nissen/Pouillot 2014.

*Germany, the Responsibility to Protect and non-intervention in Libya*<sup>6</sup>

The German government's decision to abstain from voting in favor of the Security Council resolution followed a period of German activism in the UN. During this period, until early March 2011, the Merkel government sought a politically crafted regime change in Libya, using a strategy of economic and political sanctions and benefits for defectors. After the Day of Rage (February 17), when the Gaddafi regime had rapidly escalated its anti-riot campaign and started to openly threaten protesters with annihilation, the German government denounced the measures as "regime's war against its citizens" (DW 2011). It also co-sponsored the suspension of Libya's membership in the UN Human Rights Council and pushed for Security Council resolution 1970. Resolution 1970, which referred to the obligation of a government to protect its citizens, but explicitly did not include an obligation of the international community to intervene (Morris 2013: 1272), was very much in line with Germany's strategy of politically induced regime change by tilting the cost-benefit calculation of the regime and its supporters. It called for economic sanctions, a freeze in assets, travel restrictions, an arms embargo to dry up the military conflict and a call upon the International Criminal Court to investigate the situation (Brockmeier 2012: 14).

However, despite this political approach, German armed forces undertook two evacuation missions (on February 22-23 and 26) to bring some 300 German and EU citizens home from Libya. The air force operations, which included armed soldiers for self-protection and which had not been formally accepted by Libyan authorities, drew heavy criticism in the German Bundestag, because the government had not asked for prior legislative approval, as necessary under German law (Wiefelspütz 2012). In a written statement to the Foreign Affairs Committee, Minister Westerwelle claimed that it was within the executive's competence to assess

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<sup>6</sup> This section draws on Harnisch 2014.

whether the mission would meet hostility, and because it assessed that this was not the case, it went ahead without prior “constitutive mandate” by the legislature (Wiefelspütz 2012: 57).

Focusing on the interaction with France, Britain and the US, however, it became clear in early March that Germany’s political approach was rapidly losing support. After French Foreign Minister Aillot Marie had left the government on February 26 because of her close relationship with several North African regimes, President Sarkozy and Prime minister Filion declared, right after Resolution 1970, that all options were on the table to persuade the Gaddafi regime to leave. On March 3, the British government announced that it would send military advisers to Libya to assist the National Transitional Council (NTC, established Feb. 26) logistically, without compromising the arms embargo (Erlanger 2011; Wintour/Norton-Taylor 2011). On March 10, the French government recognized the NTC ‘as the legitimate representative of Libyan people’, thereby legalizing its humanitarian and military assistance, which had already started the week before. In mid-March, US President Obama signed a secret decision to send Special Forces and Intelligence operatives into Libya to assist the rebels, while the Obama administration openly demanded the authority to arm the rebels to make Gaddafi’s withdrawal from power (Hosenball 2011).

When the rebels started losing, city by city, to the regime in the first weeks of March, more and more reports appeared that several Arab and Gulf states were secretly arming and training various groups. While neighboring African states had started a political mediation mission coordinated by the African Union, by the end of the second week of March the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council had already called for the establishment of a no-fly-zone.

The German government, puzzled by the radical shift in France’s position, dug in its heels and argued that a no-fly zone would not be sufficient to end the military conflict. Consequently, at a European Council meeting on March 11, Germany prevented an unconditional reference to a no-fly zone in the closing statement, but changed its position slightly after the Arab League, as a regional organization, had supported such zone. The German Foreign Ministry then ques-

tioned the consistency of the Arab League's decision, which had also called for the recognition of Libyan sovereignty and territorial integrity, and called for active support from Arab countries (Brockmeier 2012: 17). At the same time, Germany supported an "initiating directive" in the North Atlantic Council, which started the military planning process for the necessary air operations (Rinke 2011: 49).

The Merkel government, however, insisted in the days before the Security Council meeting on March 17 that meeting the humanitarian ends of a no-fly zone would ultimately require more robust military action, possibly including German boots on the ground. For Germany, the key significant others were the civilian population in Libya, as well as the peaceful democratic protesters in Northern Africa. Foreign Minister Westerwelle argued in the Bundestag on March 16 that a no-fly zone was not just putting up traffic signs, but constituted a military operation with unknown consequences. Western troops could easily have become enmeshed in a "civil war in Libya" which may then have turned the tide against the peaceful movements in other Northern African states (Westerwelle 2011: 10815).

Considerate German role-taking was hampered by inaccurate knowledge of the Obama administration's re-positioning on March 15. From an interactionist perspective, however, better intelligence on Washington's shift towards a more robust military posture is unlikely to have changed the Merkel government's abstention and subsequent withdrawal of German soldiers from ongoing NATO operations. As Ambassador to the UN Peter Wittig explained right after the vote and Foreign Minister Westerwelle confirmed a day later while justifying the abstention in parliament, it was exactly the expansion of military means in operational paragraph of the resolution that led to the abstention:

We have carefully considered the options of using military force, its implications as well as its limitations. We see great risks. The likelihood of large-scale loss of life should not be underestimated. If the steps proposed turn out to be ineffective, we see the danger of being drawn into a protracted military conflict that would affect the wider region. We should not enter a military confrontation on the optimistic assumption that quick results with few casualties will be achieved. Germany, therefore, has decided not to support a military option as foreseen particularly in OP 4 and OP 8 of

the resolution. Furthermore, Germany will not contribute to such a military effort with its own forces (Permanent Mission 2011).

The international role-taking process that took place during and after the vote was directly influenced by the domestic role-taking concerns of the executive. After a controversial internal debate, the government decided that Germany would have voted in favor of the resolution if the African states had not delivered the necessary majority among non-permanent members. Germany then abstained because the African states supported it (Rinke 2011: 52; Brockmeier 2012: 24). Moreover, weighing the pros and cons of supporting the resolution and not allocating forces against the foreseeable diplomatic fallout after the abstention, the government decided against conditional support for two reasons. First, NATO pressure on Germany would have been extremely high in this regard because Germany had the forces NATO needed; second, the government had very serious reservations about the expanded military mandate of Res. 1973 and the likely consequences for the escalation of the conflict. More specifically, the Foreign Office argued that the operational paragraphs of Res. 1973 could be interpreted to allow allied ground forces that were not “occupying forces”, which the resolution excluded explicitly (Greiner 2012: 76).

Given that the Federal Constitutional Court has ruled that any deployment of German forces that could probably face hostilities would require prior legislative mandating, the government also decided to withdraw German soldiers from ongoing NATO naval and AWACS missions that would start combat and embargo missions in late March. Again, weighing the diplomatic fallout within the alliance against the domestic problems that regular debates within parliament on the necessary mandating would cause, the Merkel government decided against openly supporting the NATO’s military missions in Libya.

However, about 400 German soldiers served within NATO in functions directly participating in the three military campaigns. Among these were about a dozen targeting officers and General M. Lange, the Chief of Staff at SHAPE. While the government probably assessed that it

could use this legal loophole to uphold its credentials within the alliance, a related motion before the Federal Constitutional Court was only prevented with the help of the oppositional parliamentary group of the Green Party (Naumann 2011). To compensate for the withdrawn German AWACS contingent over the Mediterranean, the Bundeswehr also increased its deployment in Afghanistan.

When viewed from an interactionist perspective, Germany, after losing much support from its political leadership strategy, switched its role and became a ‘loyal political follower’ of the US-French led intervention in Libya. In contrast to the African Union, Berlin never questioned the political goals of the intervention and never openly challenged the expanded military mission after its launch. Moreover, the German armed forces actively participated in the Libyan campaign, but below the benchmark that would have required parliamentary approval. While the government may have assessed that it could win the first of the mandatory votes on the deployment, it was convinced that the situation might worsen substantially, as it had foreseen, so that it may have lost a crucial vote when standing by the allies was needed most. Given that the government itself was very sceptical throughout the crisis about the chances of a quick military success with few civilian victims, it decided to assist the alliance as much as it could under the given constitutional restrictions (Brockmeier 2012: 31).

As a final point, several studies have stressed Germany’s “culture of military restraint” as the domestic reason for the abstention; while it is hard to see how this culture could also explain Germany’s ongoing substantial military deployments elsewhere, it clearly fails to account for two critical decisions on Libya. First, the German government offered to support Resolution 1973, if necessary, and Chancellor Merkel is on the record saying that, when a large NATO country like Germany supports the use of force, it then could not back down. Secondly, the interactionist account shows why German soldiers participated in the Libyan campaign despite well-known concerns about the prospects of the military campaign.

The German abstention was thus not just an appropriate thing to do under a shared “culture of military restraint”; it was a considerate, if debatable, choice taking humanitarian concerns, alliance solidarity and domestic constitutional considerations into the political equation. Drawing on Mead’s distinction between the ‘I’ and the ‘Me’, it became clear to all that it was the anticipation of the probable course of events in Libya that might have required the German government to follow up on a first military deployment for the no-fly zone that made the government reconsider. In addition, it was the anticipation of the probable voting behavior of the government’s own caucus on an expanded mandate, possibly including ground forces, that made the German government reconsider; whether these anticipations would have been proven right, i.e. by commensurate counter-role taking, is an interesting question. However, as Mead teaches us, role taking, as a social phenomena, always depends on the Other, before it can structure social order.

*China, the Responsibility to Protect and the NATO intervention in Libya*<sup>7</sup>

“For developed countries, we will continue to strengthen strategic dialogue, enhance mutual trust, deepen cooperation and properly manage differences to promote long-term, stable and sound development of bilateral relations. For developing countries, we will continue to increase solidarity and cooperation with them, cement traditional friendship, expand practical cooperation, provide assistance to them within our ability, and uphold the legitimate demands and common interests of developing countries” (Hu 2007)

China’s rise and its implications for the Responsibility to Protect norm (R2P) have attracted considerable scholarly interest. A prominent approach is to ask to what extent China still sees itself as developing nation, defined as a “norm-taker”, or whether it already considers itself a great power, defined as a “norm-maker” (Hirono/Lanteigne 2011). The interactionist approach employed here is used to argue that China does not attempt to roll back R2P, but that it is more concerned with carving out a ‘distinct Chinese role’ for itself.

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<sup>7</sup> This section draws on the respective section in Harnisch/Baumann 2012.

Starting in the 1950s, significant others have always had an enormous effect on China's stance on peacekeeping. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (FPPC), the PRC's official foreign policy doctrine, can be interpreted as an inversion of the imperialist role of Western powers, turning China's weak international position and the experience of the “century of humiliation” into a position of moral strength (Levine 1994). Acting on its victim role, China rejected UN peacekeeping until the 1980s, seeing the UN as being dominated by Western powers. At the time, China considered peacekeeping to be a form of hegemonial intervention; after all, China had fought US forces operating under a UN mandate during the Korean War (1950-53) (Huang 2011: 258).

Third-world countries had limited significance for China. Rather than seeking equal partnerships, China expected them to side with it in its anti-imperialist struggle. This is no longer the case. While the FPPC's guiding function has never been toned down formally, over the last two decades the PRC has “become more flexible in dealing with the issue of sovereignty and more supportive of non-traditional peacekeeping” (Hirono/Lanteigne 2011: 243-244). This greater flexibility is sometimes attributed to a hesitant, but nevertheless growing acceptance of the normative developments in international politics, culminating in China's vote in favor of the 2005 World Summit consensus on R2P (cf. Huang 2011: 267).

From the interactionist perspective, this is not necessarily the case. Rather, China's attachment to significant others better explains the country's acquiescence to the new peacekeeping practices of the international community. China's peacekeeping position began to change in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Following Deng Xiaoping's reform initiative, China distanced itself from the US, “emphasizing its role as an important country in the developing world, which required a more cooperative attitude towards the UN and PKO as these institutions were important to many developing states” (Choedon 2005: 40). Since then, and most visibly during the 1991/2 Gulf crisis, China has followed this pattern. It regularly sided with the majority in the Security Council, routinely registered its normative objections in the Council de-

liberations but did not translate them into obstruction. In times of high international legitimacy for peacekeeping, such as in Somalia 1992/93, China went along. When legitimacy was low, especially with developing countries, as in the 1999 Kosovo crisis, China acted erratically.

The Kosovo crisis also illustrated that China, with a rapidly growing economy, was no longer willing to avoid conflict with the United States at any cost. From 2003 to 2005, it obstructed the international community's reactions to the alleged genocide in Darfur when it was reminded of the influence of its significant others. In 2005, when the Security Council discussed the protection of civilians in the conflict, Benin lectured China that the "collective responsibility to protect is the basis for the creation of the African Union" (UN-Doc. S/PV.5158, 31.3.05). In 2006, pressure from the African Union, which had made the Darfur crisis a test case for its new conflict resolution capacity, mobilized China to bend its own rules. When the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1679 on Sudan, China stated that; "on the basis of our political support for the AU we have not pressed our objections" (S/PV.5439, 16.05.06).

This counter-role taking pattern emerged again in 2011, when Resolution 1973 authorizing NATO's intervention in Libya was tabled. This time, it was the Arab League which asked for China's help. The Chinese representative explained after the vote that; "China attaches great importance to the relevant position by the 22-member Arab League" (S/PV.6498, 17.03.2011). In both cases it was the role of significant others that made China compromise, while there was virtually no "evidence of a dramatic shift in Chinese attitudes towards R2P" (Garwood-Gowers 2012: 1). As of mid-2013, the conflict in Syria and Russia and China's blockade of the Security Council do not seem to constitute a fundamental departure from that pattern.

Identity-based approaches or socialization studies emphasize stability and predictability in the PRC's behavior. However, China's checkered R2P approach is much better explained by the

dynamic interactionist model of the self, which emphasizes an actor's "enlarged experience" in assuming new roles (Mead 1934: 219). As such, a positive self-identification of the Chinese government and people should be found in the process. According to Lei, the Chinese government is making efforts to advertise its new role domestically, obviously not without success. "In order to spread public knowledge of China's peacekeeping policy, the Ministry of Public Security filmed a television series, *Chinese Peacekeeping Police*, reflecting their work and lives in host countries in 2009; the Ministry of National Defense also filmed a full-length television documentary, *China Peacekeeping Force*, revealing the hardships of Chinese peacekeeping soldiers and China's growing contribution to PKOs in 2009" (Lei 2011: 349). Curiously, this positive self-identification seems to coexist with paternalistic and ethnocentric views, which might also explain China's participation in "intrusive peacekeeping" (Suzuki 2011).

However, make no mistake; despite its involvement in peacekeeping and its support of the 2005 R2P-consensus, China continues to harbor strong reservations about the use of force and intervention without consent of the host state. To that end, it has actively worked to distinguish peacekeeping from R2P (Garwood-Gowers 2012: 7-11; Teitt 2011). For China, as for many developing countries, sovereignty is a defense against interventions by liberal-democratic states universalizing their concepts of human rights and democracy. Speaking in interactionist terms, Western criticism with regard to China's treatment of Tibet and other provinces resonates strongly with China's victim role and associated patterns of China perceiving Western powers as hostile. Consequently, this adversarial role set and respective R2P-scepticism persists and China will certainly not support a norm (R2P) that could be used against itself or those nations that the PRC considers significant others.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The interactionist framework above suggests a new research agenda on the international-domestic nexus. The distinction between domestic and international roles is untenable, if based on the assumption of anarchy as enmity. While more and more states dissolve, giving way to competitive roles of rivalry or worse, dense webs of state-to-state interaction are built on trust and friendship allowing for deep supranational integration and hierarchy in the international society.

We ought to be seeking an integrated theory of domestic and international role-taking and -making which accounts for changes in both domestic and international role-taking patterns as well as their interaction. Recognizing the social nature of roles and identities in world politics and foreign policy analysis has profound implications for international relations theory and practice. Assuming that international roles are determined by power potentials or institutional obligations alone may set actors into a proverbial 'state of nature' or 'state of infantilization', in which the established members of an international society tell the newly arrived powers (how) to behave.

As seen in this brief introduction to the international-domestic nexus, governments, in their pursuit of enacting their roles, may or may not establish stable social orders at home and/or abroad. Whether they succeed in doing so does not depend primarily upon their material strength or ideational attractiveness (alone). Others, domestic and international, must take complementary roles to stabilize social structures, such as borders, treaties or international organizations. Although some subordinate states may benefit economically from taking complementary roles, they may not take up such a role, because it violates their sense of dignity. Acceptance of leadership by others, for example, depends on trusting that the leader will neither harm the interests of the follower, nor disregard the quest for autonomy from external control. As an instrument of social order, role-taking and making equally imply a struggle for autonomy and identity within and for the role-taking society.

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**V. Illustrations**

Figure 1: Role and identity in process of self-identification.

