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MIDDLE POWERS IN ASIA AND EUROPE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Middle Powers in Asia and Europe in the 21st Century

Foreign Policies of the Middle Powers

Series Editors: Giampiero Giacomello, University of Bologna & Bertjan Verbeek, Radboud University, Nijmegen

This series publishes studies that offer sophisticated theorizing about middle powers and cutting edge empirical analysis of middle powers in action, today as well as in distant history. It seeks to fill a major gap in our understanding of world politics. The International Relations discipline has traditionally centered on the security policies of the great powers. This resulted in a theoretical neglect of middle or secondary powers. Middle powers often aspire to be great powers or happen to be "demoted" great powers. This discrepancy between ambition and recognized status makes them difficult and often dangerous states to deal with. Global middle powers can also be regional great powers, enjoying leverage over regional security, diplomacy, economy, and technology. Middle powers can also be great powers in specific policy domains. A limited, traditional focus on the great powers prevents us from observing important power relations. In the twenty-first century, the "ranks" of middle powers have swollen to a size never seen before in international affairs. Nevertheless the topic of middle powers remains understudied and underestimated. This series seeks to remedy this issue.

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Introduction

Middle Powers as the Ugly Ducklings of International Relations Theory

Giampiero Giacomello and Bertjan Verbeek

World politics in the twenty-first century has developed into such a different setting compared to the bipolar Cold War world or the unipolar phase that immediately followed it, that so-called middle powers have become a much more relevant category of actors than before. Indeed, in the current multipolar world, many more countries than in the past aspire to become a middle power and perceive opportunities to rise up to that status. Also, the changes in the characteristics of the international political system (see below) have changed the indicators employed to measure power in general and to tell middle powers from small and great powers.

This volume aims to identify the problematique of twenty-first-century middle powers. As such, it is part of, and central to, a new series on middle powers' foreign policies, published by Lexington. In this introduction we set out to sketch the changes in world politics that, in our view, warrant a new approach to the middle powers' problematique. Furthermore, we will relate such changes to past and current theoretical debates in the International Relations (IR) discipline. In this volume, we propose that the twenty-first-century international political system invites states to seek to fulfill three possible middle power roles: they can aspire to be a "smaller greater power," affecting the behavior of the great powers in the system; or, they can aspire to be a regional power, playing an indispensable role in the relations in a specific region; or, lastly, they can aspire to be a niche power (cf. Cooper 2016), that is, they have a predominant influence on the governance of one or more specific issue domains. The chapter will conclude with a short overview of the substantive claims of the individual chapters in this volume and of how they relate to the central research question guiding this volume and series: How to describe and account for middle power behavior in the twenty-first century?

WORLD POLITICS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Several developments have contributed to the development of what is often called a post-Westphalian international political system. This system supposedly differs fundamentally from the Westphalian world that had increasingly characterized world politics since the sixteenth century. The Westphalian world obtained its name from the famous 1648 Treaty of Westphalia that ushered in the rise of modern states on the basis of the recognition of the idea of sovereignty. Sovereignty had first been formally expressed in the 1558 Peace of Augsburg (Caporaso 2000; Van Creveld 1999) and introduced the norm of noninterference (in the realm of recognized ruler). The concept of the coming about of a post-Westphalian world signals the reduced importance of the sovereign state and parallel to it a reduced acceptance of, and reduced compliance with, the norm of noninterference (see below). The debate surrounding this empirical transformation reflects a theoretical discussion in the IR discipline (see below). Both the empirical and theoretical debate have consequences for how we identify and study the so-called middle powers. In this section, we will first sketch the empirical debate, and then will highlight the theoretical implications with regard to middle powers.

Empirical Developments

Around the turn of the century IR scholars vehemently debated the nature of the international political system. The end of Cold War and the advent of American dominance ("the unipolar moment") had not led to the "new world order" that many had anticipated (cf. Sheetz and Mastanduno 1998). Ethnic violence in former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Rwanda had shattered hopes for a reduction of violence and pointed to the role of identity-driven warlords. The acceleration of economic and financial globalization since the mid-1980s had brought home the message that formal sovereignty could not prevent a reduction in the policy autonomy of governments, because social, economic, and financial interactions were less and less subject to territorial, thus governmental, control (Sassen 1996; Strange 1996). Indeed, some even came close to announcing the end of the nation state (e.g., Ohmae 1995). At the same time, for some, the expansion and deepening of regional integration schemes (sometimes as an attempt to somehow control the effects of globalization) did not amount to a restoration of the notion of sovereignty at a higher level, but rather reinforced the idea that governments no longer were in the driving seat and at best had "to pool" their sovereignty (Peterson 1997; Waever 1995). All of a sudden, many non-state actors (such as global businesses, internationally operating NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, and global media) seemed

salient players in political struggles over, what was soon called, global governance (cf. Weiss 2000).

Thus emerged the notion of a post-Westphalian order, in which sovereign state actors no longer defined world politics, in which violent conflict between states no longer was the major defining characteristic of the system, in which norms and ideas had become a central motivation of state and non-state actors alike and in which enduring cooperation had increased over time (Caporaso 2000). On top of that, the different waves of democratization since the end of the Cold War had increased the impact of domestic stakeholders on the behavior of state and non-state actors alike. Acting upon information readily available via the internet and motivated by various ideas, domestic actors (NGOs and businesses alike) engage with their governments, and demand a say in their global policies (Hill 2003). All in all, this new post-Westphalian order thus represents a political system that is less constrained by the consequences of anarchy and in which a rule-based pluralistic global society has come to the forefront. Although most proponents of this thesis focus on non-state actors, it is important to realize that the post-Westphalian order also changed the opportunity structure for state actors that were previously ignored: smaller and middle powers.

It is important to realize that there is no clear cutoff point between the Westphalian and post-Westphalian phases: some post-Westphalian traits can be observed in the early stages of the Westphalian order and Westphalian elements are still present in the world today (cf. Beaulac 2000). For instance, the development of diplomacy and international law as mediating instruments between states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is already indicative of the growing importance of ideas globally. The transnational mobilization of non-state actors favoring human rights since the late-eighteenth-century Abolitionist movement culminating into institutions of humanitarian law in the twentieth century testifies to the strengthening of norm-driven international politics. In reversed fashion, power politics is still present and luring in the background in the twenty-first century. The arms races in East and Central Asia and the escalation of interstate conflict in the Middle East (between Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel) underscore that claim; also, the intrastate conflict in Syria also has an important interstate rivalry dimension to it.

At this point, it should be noted that the idea of a post-Westphalian order to a large extent still represents a Western type of thinking: long-term cooperation is partly based on the strengthening of global legal rules (cf. Ling 2013). The increased weight of legal rules mainly reflects a Western approach to conflict resolution dating back to ancient Greece and Rome (Pennington 1993). It remains to be seen how that system will hold up against the rise of new state and non-state actors beyond the West. The material and ideational

constellation of the international system in the coming decades may take on a form that we have not yet been able to anticipate. Despite these necessary qualifications, in this volume we start out from the notion that the end of the Cold War, the acceleration of economic and financial globalization, the increase in regional organizations complemented with the domesticization of foreign policy have increased the weight of post-Westphalian elements in the present, still predominantly Western-based international political system.

Theoretical Implications

The empirical developments sketched above have also triggered a theoretical debate with potentially profound implications for the study of middle powers. Under the conditions of the Westphalian system, it seemed that states were the only salient actors and that they, and the potential violent conflict between them, were the primary subjects that merited study: states had to grapple with the consequences of the anarchical nature of the international political system and the ensuing uncertainty that forced them to think in terms of relative power. Indeed, until the end of the Cold War, the rationalist approaches ([neo]realism and [neo]liberalism) that dominated the debate in IR theory focused on the state (Keohane 1984; Waltz 1979). For (neo)realists, who at the time dominated the rationalist approaches, the distribution of power in the system constituted the most important variable explaining the dynamics of world politics. Power itself was defined in terms of material, in particular military, capabilities. As a consequence, (neo)realists talked about shifts in the power relations between states and the likelihood that they would engage in major, violent conflict. Clearly, by investigating such conditions, (neo)realist theorists would only focus on great powers in the bipolar or multipolar system. By implication, in their theories, middle powers, or small states, for that matter, were not considered as salient actors (Mearsheimer 2001; Waltz 1979). To the extent that (neo)realists granted middle powers a role at all, they expected them either to bandwagon with one of the great powers, or to remain neutral.

In this rationalist approach, criticism remained confined to the accepted realm of rational states in an anarchical world and was set against the backdrop of (neo)realist dominance: to (neo)liberals rational states could move beyond short-term alliances, and engage in long-term cooperation via international institutions (Keohane 1984). Scholars in the foreign policy analysis tradition, incorporating the insights of Herbert Simon (1991), would qualify the rationalist assumption and define and investigate the bounded rationality of states by opening the black box of governmental decision-making (Allison and Zelikow 1999; Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin 1962). To Marxists, states were rational actors in a larger global struggle to control the means of

production. Nevertheless, these critics of the dominant approach (Marxists, Foreign Policy Analysis, [neo]liberalism) seldom singled out middle powers as relevant actors in their own right (for an exception in Critical Theory, see Neufeld 1995), or presented them as a necessary cushion between core and the peripheral states (Wallerstein 1974).

The advent of social constructivism changed all this. The social constructivist approach to IR has its roots in the continental (German) approach to cooperation within international regimes (emphasizing the constitutive role of ideas and norms in power) (Kratochwill 1991; Onuf 2012/1989; Risse-Kappen 1994; Wendt 1999). Later, it incorporated the insights from the so-called English School to IR (Bull 1977). Constructivism offered a radically different approach because of its focus on ideational causation. For the purpose of this volume, two elements stand out: a different notion of agency and a different conception of power. With regard to agency, constructivism invited scholars to pay more attention to actors other than the great powers: middle powers, small powers, and transnational and domestic non-state actors. Also, in seeking to understand the surge in intrastate violent conflict after the end of the Cold War, constructivism moved beyond traditional interstate war as the dominant problematique of the discipline. Interestingly, constructivists have not paid much attention to the role of middle powers. This is odd, because, as we will argue below, the concept of middle power can be partly approached as a social construction that is related to domestic processes guiding the definition of a state's identity and role in world politics, as well as to the production of shared identities at the global level regarding the status (and expected role) of middle powers in the global system.

With regard to power, constructivists offered two important insights that are relevant to the study of middle powers. First, they made clear that the effect of material capabilities can only be understood if we incorporate the notion that capabilities are embedded in shared ideas about the likely and proper use of such capabilities: Wendt famously argued that differences regarding the expected handling by North Korea of nuclear weapons account for the situation that most countries fear one North Korean nuclear bomb more than hundreds in the hands of Great Britain or France (Wendt 1995). Second, constructivists have driven home the realization that the possibility of global actors, including states, to act effectively is increasingly based upon soft power, which in turn is to a considerable extent rooted in reputation, a trait *par excellence* based on shared ideas. Soft power, defined as the ability to make the other want what you want, is based on the legitimacy of a state's values and on the admiration for its culture as well as on the extent to which the state incorporates such values in its foreign policy in a consistent matter. Public diplomacy has become the foreign policy instrument that should advance one's position in terms of soft power (Nye 2008; Van Ham 2010).

In conducting public diplomacy consistency is vital because states hold each other accountable for not living up to what they profess to be. Also, domestic and transnational audiences hold their governments responsible for not practicing what they preach and thus indirectly affect the government's international standing. Reputation has thus become a major currency in world politics. Importantly, it offers middle powers a tool of influence vis-à-vis great powers which thus may compensate for their relative lack of material capabilities.

Even though all states take an interest in soft power and public diplomacy, material capabilities still matter. In this regard, rationalists would point out that technological advances rapidly change the nature of material capabilities. Two developments stand out: first, resorting to the (threat to) use force is increasingly linked to changes in the capacity to project power. In particular, states need to be credible in their capacity to bring a sizeable, effective force to a (potential) theatre of war (cf. Markowitz and Farris 2013). In the current system, where (perceived) threats are no longer exclusively located near home (terrorism; piracy; civil wars that produce mass migration), this requires states to have access to long distance transportation. This explains the rise in the recent increase in the (announced) construction of aircraft carriers (for instance, by Brazil, China, and India), transport air craft, fighting helicopters, and shock brigades. The current competition for the establishment of naval bases in the Indian Ocean and Around South East Asia reflects the same phenomenon (cf. Brewster 2017). For middle powers, the desire to matter globally is partly linked to the development of some degree of capacity to project power beyond their own region, in order to be taken seriously by great powers. The second development relates to cyber technology. Cyber technology has ushered in the possibility of engaging in conflict without exposing one's soldiers to the battlefield. Indeed, cyber technology allows for effectively striking a great power in vulnerable parts of its society at relatively little cost. Middle powers thus could potentially reduce the gap in material capabilities. Especially, regional powers are expected to develop cyber conflict capabilities as it may help them demonstrate their stakes and resolve in regional developments (Maness and Valeriano 2016).

PERSPECTIVE ON MIDDLE POWERS AS EMPLOYED IN THIS VOLUME

Following our earlier discussion of the concept of middle power (Giacomello and Verbeek 2011) we consider any material definition of middle power as a first step at best. Every measurement of power in world politics will produce a rather static ranking (and plenty of criticisms): some states would stand

out on top, other remain at the bottom, and yet other hover in between. The notion of middle power, however, will only take effect, once states share a meaning of what constitutes a middle power. To a considerable extent, then, what makes a state a middle power is the product of social construction. This process of social construction takes place at two levels. First, at the domestic level *within* the state: a state develops a notion of its proper place and role in the international system. This notion will be the product of an ongoing battle between competing narratives of a state's values, ideas, and history. Such narratives are often based on a positioning of the state in relation to other states it considers relevant. This domestic battle may or may not result in an aspiration to become or remain a middle power. Indeed, it is already interesting to observe how states choose a significant other state that serves as the measuring rod. For instance, Italy often seeks to define itself in relation to France and Spain. Second, at the global level *among* states: irrespective of a state's self-perception, other states continuously assess and reassess the reputation that other states claim to possess or strive for. In their statements and behavior states confirm or deny such desired or claimed status. This process of assessing and reassessing not only takes place in a dyadic relationship, but also in relation to all other state actors in the system. This may result in situations in which desired status and conceded status may coincide or may widely diverge. Because self-perception is the product of a constant internal discussion, a state's desired status may change over time. Similarly, because states continuously assess and reassess one another's status, a state's reputation may vary over time. Importantly, discrepancies between expected and actually attributed status may be a source of miscalculation and frustration, and may thus cause friction in world politics (cf. Giacomello and Verbeek 2011).

Within this general conception of a middle power, this volume entertains the claim that in the twenty-first century, given the rapid changes that characterize the post-Westphalian world described above, (aspiring) middle powers can be expected to seek one of three roles. First, they can seek to be a "smaller great power," that is, a state that seeks to influence the preferences and policies of the great powers. Such states seem to want to play with the big guys. We expect such middle powers to focus on domains such as defense, finance, trade, the relevance of global institutions, as well as the rule of law. The considerable number of emerging economies suggests that quite a few states will assume such an aspiration. Second, they can attempt to become a regional power. Regional powers can seriously affect the balance of power within a given geopolitical region. The end of the Cold War has reduced the involvement of the great powers in regional conflict. Hence, the middle powers in the region have to engage more intensely with regional developments. Third, middle powers can strive to become a so-called niche

power: because they may lack the (im)material capabilities to affect global or regional affairs, they invest specific issue areas that are relevant to their specific interests. It is important to realize that the three middle power roles, described above, contain an element of self-perception as well as an element of mutual (re)assessment by states. The contributions to this volume all will consider both dimensions of middle power construction.

STRUCTURE OF THE VOLUME

The volume is structured as follows: in part I, two chapters discuss the notion of power in the twenty-first century. In chapter 1 Ghermandi addresses the issue of projecting power by assessing the role of navies in energy security. He thus investigates the extent to which aspiring middle powers build up navies in order to acquire middle power status. Ghermandi, on the basis of an original data set, thus assesses changes in power from a traditional material notion of power. In chapter 2 De Rooij takes on the constructivist challenge and offers an additional concept of power by focusing on soft power, public diplomacy, reputation, and effective foreign policy, using the case of Norway as an example.

In part II the volume explores states that seek to play the role of a smaller great power. It covers defense, finance, and the role of multilateral global institutions. In chapter 3 Coticchia and Moro compare the defense policies of Germany and Italy. Both countries share a troubled past and hence had to face the defense issue from a particular viewpoint. Indeed, it is not a coincidence that both invested in mounting peacekeeping operations and share a non-provocative understanding of what defense entails. In chapter 4 Konoe addresses the middle power status of Japan in global banking regulations. Given Japan's troubled past, it always had to conduct foreign policy via trade and investment: banking is thus a vital domain for Japan enabling it to exert global influence. In chapter 5 Milani and De Pantz examine the foreign policy of South Korea toward multilateral global institutions. Building on its economic growth and regional importance, South Korea has been seeking recognition in such venues. This is partly related to the delicate security situation South Korea finds itself in: surrounded by sensitive states like North Korea, China, Russia, and Japan. Seeking protection from being recognized as a middle power in global institutions serves as a way out of this constraint.

In part III the volume focuses on the so-called regional powers. Both chapters in part 3 engage with the regional balance in the Middle East. The legacy of the American intervention in Iraq in 2003 was the weakening of a buffer state which affected the delicate balancing game that had existed between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Israel, and Saudi Arabia since the foundation

of Israel. The advent of the Arab Spring in 2011 increased instability in the region. In their chapters, Gürzel and Ersoy (chapter 6) and Shahnoori (chapter 7) take on the foreign policies of Turkey and Iran, respectively, since the Arab Spring. Although both countries faced new threats, they also perceived new opportunities to expand their position. Both chapters address the internal struggles defining the aspired role both countries sought to take and incorporate the narrative debates in which these struggles were framed. They thus testify to the importance of different domestic audiences, even in not so democratic states.

In part IV two chapters illustrate the possibility for middle powers to become a niche power. From a traditional perspective on power, both Sweden and the Netherlands may be too weak to aspire a role as a smaller great power or a regional power. Still, these countries possess and employ niche capabilities that allow them to fill an important role in these niches. In chapter 9 Eriksson argues that Sweden succeeded in carving a major role as an ethical guide to other countries. In chapter 8 Verbeek suggests that the Netherlands acquired such status in humanitarian issue areas. Interestingly, both countries subsequently used their niche status to upgrade their global position. Both chapters dovetail with De Rooij's analysis in chapter 2 of Norway's role conflict in balancing its ethical environmental policies with its energy policies.

The volume is completed with a chapter in which the editors assess their claim that twenty-first-century world politics warrants a closer look into middle powers and that three different roles account for the role middle powers seek to play today.

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Part I

THEORY—HARD AND SOFT POWER IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Chapter 1

Maritime Power as the Quintessential Source of Middle Power Status

Davide Ghermandi

This chapter will analyze the relation between the dependence on energy supplies by sea and the pursuit of sea power by a very specific category of actors: naval middle powers. Energy security has always been a key concern among developed economies, especially after the dramatic events of 1973 provoking the oil crisis and subsequent recession. At the same time, in countries with a maritime tradition, the naval instrument has always provided decision-makers with a flexible tool to pursue their foreign policy goals around the world, energy security included.

While the academic literatures on energy security and sea power are fairly abundant, few studies investigate the nexus between energy dependence and the use of military forces, in particular naval forces. Characteristically, such studies focus on American energy security policies in the Middle East and, more recently, on China's economic activities in Africa and the Middle East (Chapman and Khanna 2004; Downs 2004; Intriligator 2014; Palmer 1999). Lately, the European Union's (EU) energy security has attracted interest from academics and policymakers alike, in particular after the 2006 Russia-Ukraine dispute that had demonstrated Europe's vulnerability to Russian gas supplies (Proedrou 2016; Yafimava 2015).

The main goal of the chapter is to advance the knowledge on middle powers by bridging the literatures on sea power and energy security. In particular, it will investigate those middle powers that depend on energy supply by sea for their energy security and that have considerable naval power at their disposal. Importantly, 60 percent of oil and more than one-third of natural gas that are internationally traded are transported by sea. Most of these commodities have to travel along routes surrounded by geopolitical tensions ashore (Chyong 2016; EIA 2017). This chapter surmises that increased dependence on energy supplies by sea significantly affects a state's need to increase its

sea power. To that effect, the chapter presents a newly developed composite index on naval power—the Navy Importance Index (NII)—that will be linked to the dependence on seaborne energy imports for a group of middle powers.

ABOUT MIDDLE POWERS

As discussed in the introductory chapter of this volume, the concept of middle power is elusive and much disputed. As a result, a commonly accepted classification is lacking (Valigi 2014). Three main schools of thought can be distinguished in this debate: the capabilities-based approach, the behavior-based approach, and the functional-based approach. Each seeks to identify the main features of a middle power, but each offers contradicting elements, leaving a very complex and inconsistent theoretical framework (Chapnick 1999; Giacomello and Verbeek 2011; Holbraad 1984). Still, some formal criteria are needed in order to identify the group of naval middle powers that is the subject of this chapter.

To that purpose, in the present study we build on a classification based on operational capabilities that was created by Kirchberger (2015).[1] Kirchberger divides all existing 149 naval forces in the world (navies, coastguards, or riverine forces) in ten categories[2] that reflect 2013 data.[3] Importantly, Kirchberger blends these ten ranks into two macro-categories: *blue water navies* and *non-blue water navies*. For the purpose of this chapter, this subdivision is the key to formalizing the concept of naval middle power. Kirchberger (2015: 69) defines blue water as "the capability of a navy to operate in the high seas far from its home shores and conduct limited offensive strike operations." This definition is consistent with the one provided by Germond (2014: 40) who argues that a navy is blue water if "(has) the capability of operating far away from home for as long as possible." The general consensus on the notion of blue water navy is corroborated by Lindberg and Todd (2002: 196) who argue that a navy of this kind "(has) much greater reach and therefore possess[es] much greater capabilities than green water, coastal defense or constabulary navies. Thus, gradations in reach, once plotted as a negatively sloping line called the 'loss-of-power gradient,' are tantamount to divisions between types of navies." Table 1.1 suggests that the naval middle powers are part of the macro-category labeled as blue water navy.

In Kirchberger's 2013 classification the only navy classified in Rank 1 was the U.S. Navy, followed by the French and British navies both appearing in Rank 2. The most striking element is that in 2013 China was in Rank 4, the lowest of the so-called blue water navies. This is mainly due "to a lack of fleet air support [the defining criterion separating Rank 3 from Rank 4, DG] resulting from the still-nascent carrier capability, that forced China to be included in the same category with such seemingly disparate naval powers as Japan,

Table 1.1 Blue Water Navies in 2013 According to Kirchberger (2015)

Country	*Kirchberger's Rank*	*Country*	*Kirchberger's Rank*
Argentina	4	Norway	4
Australia	4	Pakistan	4
Brazil	3	Peru	4
Canada	4	Poland	4
Chile	4	Portugal	4
China	4	Russia	3
Denmark	4	Singapore	4
France	2	South Africa	4
Germany	4	South Korea	4
Greece	4	Spain	3
India	3	Taiwan	4
Italy	3	Turkey	4
Japan	4	UK	2
Netherlands	4	USA	1

Source: Author-generated from Kirchberger's data.

Australia, South Korea, Pakistan, and Taiwan, notwithstanding the marked differences in their respective fleet sizes and force structures" (Kirchberger 2015: 61).

Obviously, since the United States is not a middle power, it can be excluded from the research. Therefore, the countries to be included in this study should be those from Rank 2 to Rank 4, or twenty-seven states in total. Yet, for the purpose of this chapter, China cannot be considered a naval middle power either (Kynge et al. 2017; Ruwitch 2017): China has been excluded from this study although its navy has been classified in Rank 4: China's military strength and economic power (Erickson 2014; SIPRI 2016) places it closer to the United States. The exclusion of China thus reduces the number of states included in this research to 26.

The methodological choice of selecting the sample of states according to a classification that includes only maritime middle powers could open the door to a selection bias (King, Keohane and Verba 1994: 139–50): it uses one key element of sea power—the military dimension—that in the present project is considered an essential part of the dependent variable. However, because what the navies here considered vary considerably in their capabilities and resources, there is ample variation on the dependent variable. The classification process thus avoids a serious selection bias.

METHODOLOGY

Although the relationship between energy exporters and importers would be better described in terms of *interdependence*, for the sake of methodological simplification it will be considered in terms of pure *dependence* on imports.

The dependence, therefore, can be defined as "a state of being determined or significantly affected by external forces" (Keohane and Nye 2012: 7) or, in an even more concise expression, a situation characterized by "some form of reliance" (Caporaso 1978: 18). Regarding the quantification of dependence on supplies by sea, we adopt the commonly accepted definition as its percentage on the total internal consumption[4] (Russett 1984: 484).

The commodities that will be considered are crude oil and natural gas. According to the relevant statistics on world primary energy use, these fossil fuels (with coal) represent more than 80 percent of overall consumption (BP 2017: 11). Coal will not be considered in this study because, historically, this commodity has always been neglected in research on energy security (Chester 2010: 889). The reasons for this are many. First, coal is not scarce. Based on current consumption, proven reserves worldwide will be sufficient for more than one hundred years (BP 2016: 43; IEA 2017a: xix). Notwithstanding the fact that the estimated amount of reserves has been drastically reduced over the past decades (IEA 2000b: 90; IEA 2017a: xix), coal is the more abundant fossil fuel in the world. Moreover, unlike with oil and natural gas, countries holding the largest coal reserves also tend to be its main consumers—at least on a regional level. This fact has significantly contributed to the absence of geopolitical tensions over coal supplies. Second, coal is mainly used for the production of electricity and, in this regard, is in direct competition with natural gas—consumption of which is expected to grow over the coming years (IEA 2017b)—causing a likely reduction of coal consumption worldwide. For these reasons, only oil and natural gas will be considered.

The analysis covers the 1995–2015 period, with data collected from three years: 1995, 2005, and 2015. Observations after an interval shorter than ten years would be pointless since the financing, building, and acquisition of warships normally take several years. Therefore, briefer observations periods would not capture changes in fleet size. Admittedly, the period of analysis is relatively short. Several factors affected this element. Regarding natural gas, transported by sea in liquefied form (Liquefied Natural Gas, or LNG), before 2000 internationally traded LNG transported on LNG tankers represented only 5 percent of the total amount of natural gas extracted in the world (ENI 2006: 229). Moreover, in the same period the LNG market was still very small. In 1996, for example, more than 75 percent of world LNG was exported to two countries only: Japan and South Korea (IEA 2000a: II.34). It would thus be of little significance to consider the LNG trade before the mid-1990s.

Oil is a different matter: since this chapter focus on energy seaborne imports, an analysis of flows of oil transported by sea is warranted. However, the main think tanks and international organizations do not provide the disaggregated data for every single flow[5] (i.e., imports by tanker, pipeline,

rail, etc.). Therefore, here we make use estimates of every single incoming flow of seaborne oil.[6] From 2000 onwards, the main publications by IEA, BP, and ENI allow for the estimation of reliable figures about seaborne oil imports for the middle powers considered in this chapter. Before the mid-1990s, however, the uncertainty caused by the absence of reliable, aggregated data for several states is too high to widen the investigation period.

ABOUT SEA POWER

Theoretically, we expect a country to increase its sea power, the more its energy security depends on seaborne energy supplies: sea power helps to secure those Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) that oil and LNG tankers use to sail from exporting countries to importing states. Considering the vital importance of energy supplies to states and their economies, a prolonged disruption of these flows and supplies may provoke severe damage to their entire economic systems and may produce domestic social unrest. Eventually, it may even put at risk the state's *de facto* independence. No wonder, then, that states tend to maximize their sea power in order to protect these vital flows of seaborne energy supplies. In the past, following classical Realist thought, the control of oil fields represented a key source of power and thus constituted a major concern for states (Morgenthau 1948: 82–85). Today, in a globalized world in the maritime *milieu* assumes an essential role for states' prosperity but, at the same time, holds major challenges and threats (Germond 2015; Noël 2014). It is thus essential to broaden the perspective beyond the territorial control of natural resources: nowadays, the security of seaborne energy transport is vital to understand states' behavior, giving more weight to their need to increase sea power.

It is important to realize that evaluating the weight that states attach to their navies goes well beyond measuring the number of warships or the share of the national budget allocated to naval forces. Indeed, sea power is an elusive and contested notion. Alfred T. Mahan, the American naval officer who coined the term in the nineteenth century, did not offer an explicit definition, thus leaving room for interpretations and misunderstandings (Till 2009: 20). The word sea power contains the noun "power," one of the discipline's most debated and contested concepts. Here, for pragmatic reasons, we adopt the definition of "power" offered by Dowding (2012: 120): the capacity for states "to attain what (they) aim for." The concept of "sea" is as problematical: this is testified by the complications in describing sea-related matters through the use of a multitude of adjectives without nouns ("maritime," "nautical," "marine"), nouns without adjectives ("sea," "sea power"), and nouns that have adjectives ("ocean/oceanic," "navy/naval") (Till 2009: 20–22). Here, we

follow Till (2009) who proposes a broad definition of sea power that includes not just the military dimension, but also all human activities affecting the sea and affected by the sea (merchant shipping, fishing, marine insurance, shipbuilding, repair, etc.). Till thus sides with Mahan who, while failing to provide a formal definition, identified several specific elements of sea power (Mahan 1890: 15), singling out seaborne trade and shipping. Other scholars favor a more limited approach, attributing only a military dimension to the term and discussing "the use of military power at or from the sea for the attainment of military policy" (Kane and Lonsdale 2012: 137–38). Another perspective highlights how the word sea power implies a wide spectrum of meanings: from a mere synonym of "navy" and "naval" to the wider interpretation of everything related to the sea and, in particular, "the ability of a state to use the sea to its optimum" (Sakhuja 2011: 4). The position adopted in this chapter embraces the wider definition of sea power, considering the term in relation to all the dimensions that affects the activities at sea (military, economic, scientific, etc.), but with a particular focus and emphasis on the military dimension. This broad conception of the term is increasingly challenged by a narrow perspective that interprets it as a simple "military concept," related to military power at or from the sea (Tangredi 2002). Indeed, official documents (e.g., U.S. Department of the Navy 2007, 2015) display a tendency to emphasize the military dimension of sea power to the detriment of the wider conception. This trend reinforces the working definition of sea power chosen in this chapter that includes all the dimension of human activities, but envisages a preeminent role for the military dimensions: sea power represents a state's capacity and ability to affect others actors' behavior to attain its aims, primarily by the use of its navy and naval forces, but also through its sea-related economic-industrial complex.

THE NAVY IMPORTANCE INDEX

In the previous sections, we have shown the main dimensions—military and nonmilitary—that constitute a state's sea power without having offered plausible indicators that measure the concept. In order to develop the NII, an online survey among forty-five Italian naval officers has been carried out with the aim of identifying the single indicators to be included in the index. Of the forty-five officers who were invited by email, twenty-eight participated in the online survey. The officers, with a seniority between twelve and sixteen years of active duty and in possession of at least of a master's degree, were invited to indicate the elements they thought were important to determine and weigh the different sources of a state's navy and naval forces. For the sake of

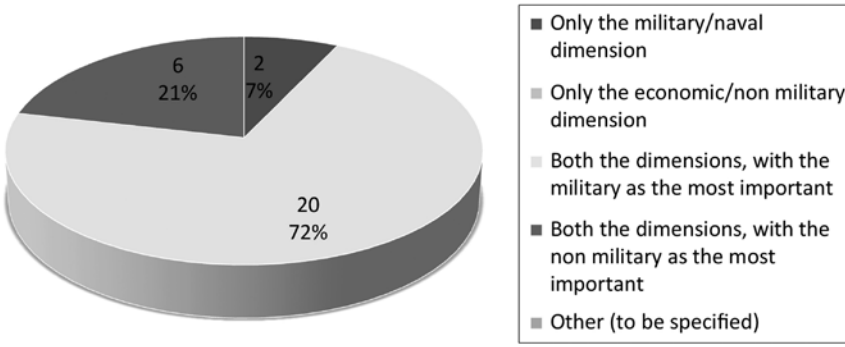

Figure 1.1 What are the Dimensions that Constitute the Concept of Sea Power? *Source*: Author-generated.

brevity only the results of the two most significant items will be shown here. In particular, naval officers were asked to specify the main dimensions that constitute the concept of sea power (figure 1.1).

Only 7 percent of the officers who completed the survey state that the sea power of a state is exclusively determined by the military–naval dimension, while 21 percent underlined the importance of both the military and non-military dimensions attaching a more significant role to the latter. A striking majority (72%) chose to identify the concept of sea power as consisting of both the military and the economic dimensions, with the former as the most important. These answers are fully consistent with the working definition of the concept of sea power adopted in the dedicated paragraph of this chapter that underlines the superior position of the naval dimension within the broad term of sea power.[7]

The second most significant question (figure 1.2) in the survey served the purpose of identifying the key elements of sea power and the importance of a navy. The officers have been asked to propose a minimum of two and a maximum of four elements that, in their opinion, are the most useful to quantify the concept of sea power. Clearly, as sea power is a very complex notion that involves several dimensions and aspects of a state's power, limiting the total number of possible answers forced the interviewees to select the elements that they considered important and to rank them. As the officers were asked to offer 2–4 elements, this item identified 107 different elements.[8]

Following the results of the online survey, the single indicators used to create the NII for each state in this chapter are presented below. All data are extracted from *The Military Balance*[9] published by the *International Institute of Strategic Studies*. The classification of the type of ships is provided by IISS as well:

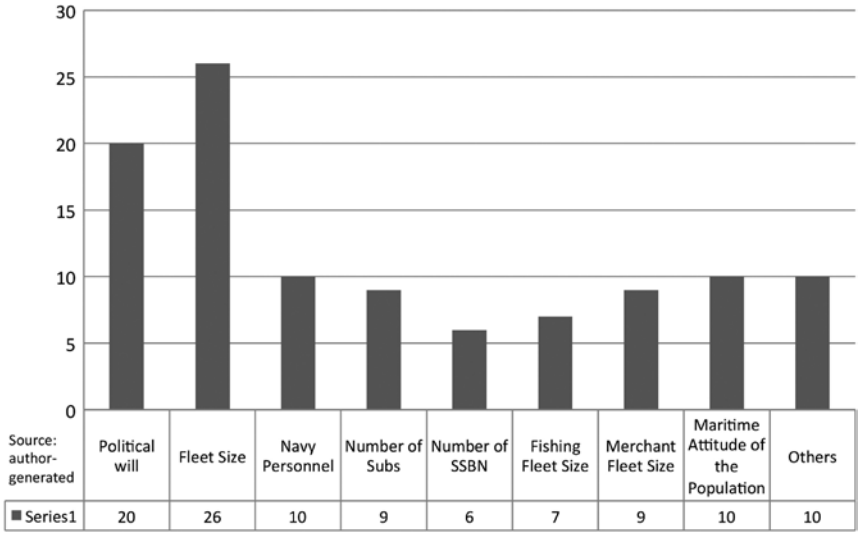

Figure 1.2 The Most Important Elements that Constitute the Concept of Sea Power. *Source*: Author-generated.

1. Number of Principal Surface Combatants
2. Number of Submarines
3. Number of Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBN)
4. Number of Replenishment Oilers
5. Number of Patrol and Coastal Combatants per 1,000 km of coastline
6. Percentage of seamen in relation to overall military
7. Number of seamen per 1,000 inhabitants

The principal aims of the NII are twofold: first, to quantify the operational capabilities of the navies included in this work by operationalizing complex concepts through the introduction of methodological simplifications; second, to show the state's consideration for its naval forces compared to other services, highlighting the aspiration of that state to obtain significant sea power. For these reasons, the NII does not reflect the mere strength or power of every single navy, but tries to provide a picture of both sides of the coin. On the one hand, the NII takes into account some material hardware of a navy (e.g., the number of ships, submarines, etc.), while on the other it considers the *naval attitude* of a state, or, the relative importance a particular state gives to its navy (e.g., the number of sailors compared to other services and the number of sailors per 1,000 inhabitants).

The NII introduces some simplifications with the subsequent inevitable approximations, but systematic simplification is a crucial step to useful

knowledge (King, Keohane and Verba 1994: 43) and one of the reasons to use an index is that it comprises extensive, complex data into a seemingly understandable summary form (Cooley 2015: 28). In the literature about indicators, there is criticism of aggregating multiple data, and questions are raised over the capability of understanding subtle changes or trends in the indicators used at the beginning of the aggregation process (Cooley and Snyder 2015: 182). Furthermore, the reduction of a complex, multidimensional reality to a single number is admittedly susceptible to criticism (Bhuta 2015). Nevertheless, it is an inevitable step to operationalize the complex concepts of sea power and "use of navy." This process introduces some inevitable subjective elements but this does not necessarily lead to the rejection of the validity of composite indicators, as long as the entire process is transparent, clearly assessable, and recognizable, and as long as it allows different researchers to improve on the theoretical approach used in creating the index (Corbetta 2003: 70; OECD 2008: 33). Despite the potential pitfalls of using a composite indicator to examine and explain complex concepts there are considerable advantages that make the development of the NII very useful, most importantly the possibility to summarize complex and multidimensional realities in a much easier fashion than a series of many separate indicators would do (OECD 2008).

Methodologically, we can divide the single indicators in two macrocategories: "Equipment and Heavy Weapons" and "Personnel." This choice is motivated by the fact that choosing diverging indicators means that the resulting composite indicator—the NII in our case—would be very weak in describing the phenomena it purports to measure. One important element to be included would have been the part of GDP allocated to the navy compared to other services. Unfortunately, the major international organizations and think tanks[10] do not provide this disaggregated figure from the overall military budget. The only alternative would have been to examine the different national budgets, an option not feasible for a group of twenty-six states.

Equipment and Heavy Weapons

This section includes indicators 1–5 from the list above. The total number of naval units and number of submarines constitute important elements when estimating part of the national sea power and the strength of a navy. Designing a model, as already said, introduces some simplifications such as the fact that in this model the level of efficiency of the ships or the time spent at sea or on maintenance and the level of training of the crews are not considered. In any case, these important elements are frequently classified and scarcely assessable in an objective way. Although the mean age of a navy's ships and their efficiency—frequently classified information as well—are not included,

the mere quantity provides a proxy indication for the quantity of resources that a state devotes to its navy.

The number of principal surface combatants represents the backbone of every fleet constituting the type of unit that is able to conduct operations and activities far from the state's shores, such as surveillance, maritime interdiction operations, monitoring shipping routes, and so on, well beyond its own Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). The number of SSBN and conventional submarines represent a vital part of a navy's structure. Due to their intrinsic nature, submarines are the best means to carry out maritime intelligence activities and sea denial operations, two essential elements of the military dimension of sea power. Furthermore, the presence of a nuclear deterrent has historically increased the national power and the existence of SSBN is an essential part of both national and naval strategies (Kearsley 2001). The Number of the Replenishment Oilers is very relevant to the middle power debate, because this type of ship allows navies to extend significantly both the range and the capability of conducting prolonged activities at sea, showing a political willingness of the state to have a capable blue water navy. The number of patrol and coastal combatants per 1,000 km of coastline reflects the importance that the state attaches to controlling its own shoreline and territorial waters. In this count only ships are included that belong to the navy, hence excluding coast guard's naval units or ships that belong to other paramilitary organizations. The coastline of each country is taken from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's *The World Factbook*. All indicators mentioned here have been normalized using the formula (x-min)/(max-min), with min and max representing, respectively, the lowest and the highest value among the states of the sample for each category.

Personnel

The percentage of seamen compared to the overall military manpower is a key element in showing a navy's importance to its state. The mean age of the fleet affects the interpretation of the variable: traditionally, older ships are less technologically advanced and, therefore, require a greater number of sailors to be used. Paradoxically, a higher number of seamen could mean older ships and, therefore, a less effective naval force. Nevertheless, the aim of this indicator is to demonstrate the importance that a state gives to its navy in terms of personnel—and consequently of resources allocated. The number of sailors per 1,000 Inhabitants represents the relative importance of navies among the states of the sample revealing one dimension of the "maritime character" of the population. In this regard, the presence of conscription in some states might introduce some sort of bias, altering the value of the indicator without representing a stronger "maritime attitude" of the nation. For both

indicators the data refer to navy personnel only—excluding therefore coast guard sailors or other paramilitaries. The data about the civil populations and the number of seamen are both taken from *The Military Balance*. Both indicators have subsequently been normalized using the formula (x-min)/(max-min), with min and max representing, respectively, the lowest and the highest value among the states of the sample for indicator.

Weighing

One of the most debatable issues about composite indices is the weight of the underlying single indicators. Weights show the relative importance given to every single indicator by the researcher and, therefore, necessarily involve the introduction of an arbitrary and significant component (Mazziotta and Pareto 2013). In order to weigh the single indicators both the results of the online survey and the approach used in the *Global Militarization Index*[11] serve as main reference. Table 1.2 shows the ranking of the twenty-six states.

Table 1.2 Navy Importance Index Values Ranked on 2015 Results

	1985	*1995*	*2005*	*2015*
	NII	*NII*	*NII*	*NII*
Singapore	1.71	1.02	45.25	92.05
South Korea	4.39	4.08	23.78	31.38
Taiwan	4.99	6.31	27.19	21.95
Russia	–	15.48	16.59	16.2
India	3.48	2.77	9.34	14.18
Japan	10.09	7.04	11.13	11.23
Pakistan	2.23	2.84	5.84	10.41
Portugal	4.86	3.71	10.12	10.32
UK	13.57	5.22	8.05	9.5
France	12.82	7.04	12.25	9.47
Peru	6.91	4.94	9.32	8.62
Turkey	5.41	2.75	8.01	8.42
Brazil	6.39	3.79	5.43	8.25
Netherlands	3.95	3.38	6.01	7.94
Germany	8.40	2.99	8.78	7.53
Italy	6.05	4.00	7.43	7.27
Argentina	7.11	3.88	6.08	6.91
Chile	5.32	5.50	6.29	6.78
Greece	4.46	3.49	4.81	6.73
Spain	5.75	5.20	9.18	6.5
Poland	1.00	0.87	19.52	6.11
Australia	5.06	3.21	5.71	5.59
Canada	4.44	4.00	4.93	4.02
South Africa	1.12	1.52	7.27	3.11
Denmark	3.42	2.16	6.53	3.1
Norway	4.67	2.52	3.02	2.71

Source: Author-generated.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

Representing the results of the dependence on seaborne energy imports and the values of the NII on a scatterplot for each year (figures 1.3–1.5), we find that the points cluster around the regression lines fairly regularly for 2015 and

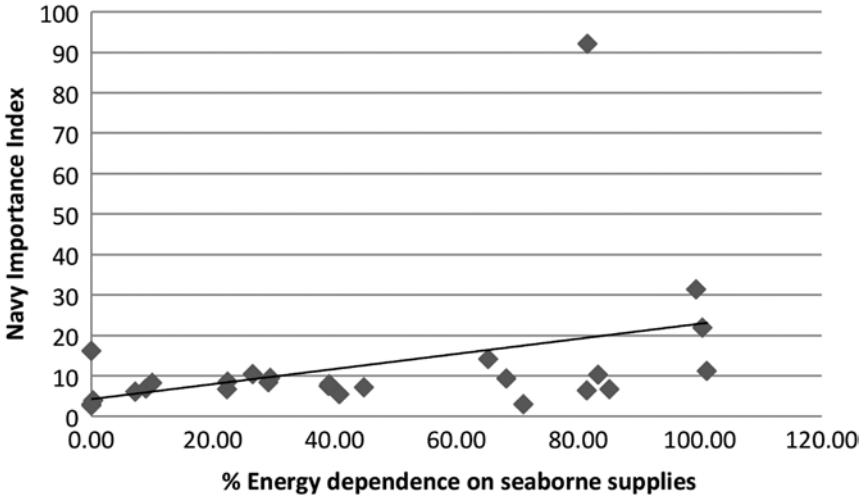

Figure 1.3 Naval Importance Index and Dependence on Seaborne Energy Imports for 2015. *Source*: Author-generated.

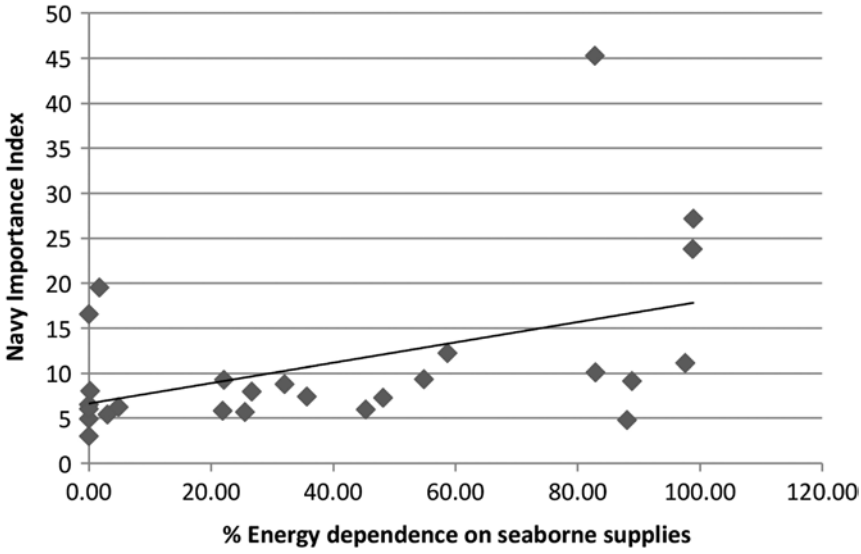

Figure 1.4 Naval Importance Index and Dependence on Seaborne Energy Imports for 2005. *Source*: Author-generated.

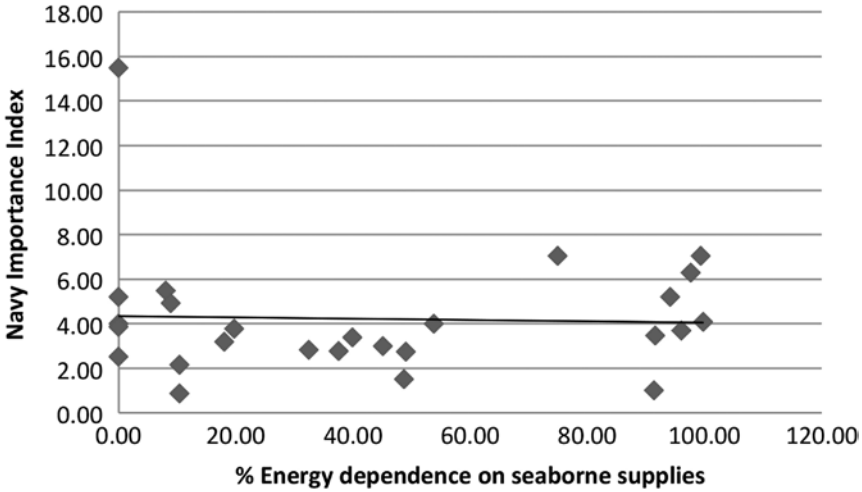

Figure 1.5 Naval Importance Index and Dependence on Seaborne Energy Imports for 1995. *Source*: Author-generated.

2005, but not for 1995. If we compute the correlation we find an *r* value of .376 (2015), .457 (2005) and a disappointing −.04 for 1995.

Concerning the data of seaborne oil in 1995 we need to recall the elements highlighted in the previous pages about the reliability of the figures for that year. Moreover, two factors, one historical, the other technical, potentially affect the correlation between the energy dependence and the NII. First, in 1995 the Cold War had ended only five years earlier. Strategic priorities during the bipolar world differed from today's world possibly affecting the relation between sea power and energy dependence. Another element is the choice to select naval middle powers in 1995 with a classification that itself was based on data from 2013. For these reasons, it is difficult to draw conclusions related to 1995.

Concerning 2005 and 2015, the scatterplot clearly suggests a strong outlier: Singapore.[12] Why is this the case for a small city-state of approximately five million inhabitants? Singapore is well aware of its reliance on safe SLOCs for its energy needs and for its role as an international hub in world trade. For these reasons the government, during the second half of the 1990s, kick-started an ambitious naval program in order to develop a capable blue-water navy (IISS 2006: 254). Following the commissioning of the new warships Singapore's NII increased from 1.02 in 1995 to 45.25 in 2005. Moreover only ten years later, according to IISS (2016: 286), Singapore's armed forces are the best equipped in Southeast Asia accounting for roughly 3 percent of the total amount of defense spending in Asia. In the *Global Militarization Index 2016*[13] (GMI) Singapore ranks second of 152 countries all over the world after Israel (and ranks first in Asia). Furthermore, Singapore's military

are equipped with modern weapon systems and are very large compared to its total population size (Mutschler 2016: 10) with a disproportionately large overall military apparatus compared with states with similar social and economic characteristics. Singapore, a strong outlier, is discarded (Dugard, Todman and Staines 2010: 86–87; Wilcox 2016: 215).[14] After removing Singapore we find that *r* in 2015 is .505 while in 2005 is roughly the same at .437, a correlation that in both years can be considered as "moderate" (Howell 2011).

Since the need for a state to increase its sea power has clearly a multicausal nature,[15] the traditional literature on the topic suggests other factors that might potentially affect NII's value, such as the length of coastline and the size of the merchant flees. Length of Coastline is an important element that might affect the sea power. Mahan (1890) underlines the significance of the extension of a nation's territory and its shape, highlighting the way in which these factors could alter the maritime attitude of a state and its people. Population Size is the second variable to be included in the regression. This element is frequently used either as a quantitative parameter to rank and evaluate countries (Holbraad 1984; Ping 2005) or to understand a nation's military power (Hendershot 1973). As the link between navies and shipping is a cornerstone in the literature about sea power (Corbett 1911; Mahan 1890), gross tonnage of merchant ships by flag of registration is the third variable that is included.[16] The last predictor variable is the percentage of GDP that states that is based on natural resources within their territories. Since this chapter argues that the dependence on energy seaborne supplies is one of the main factors encouraging states to increase their sea power, it is hypothesized that the more a state's GDP is based on own natural resources, the less it is likely to increase sea power (tables 1.3–1.5).

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter contends that dependence on energy imports by sea is a principal factor affecting a state's pursuit of sea power. Following the selection of twenty-six countries defined as naval middle powers and the formalization

Table 1.3 Naval Importance Index and Various Factors

Year	R	R *Square*	*Adj.* R *Square*	*Std. Error of the Est.*	n
2015	.764[a]	.584	.480	12.49889	26
2005	.626[a]	.392	.259	8.67265	26
1995	.499[a]	.249	.061	2.72433	26

[a]Predictors: (Constant), Coastline, Resource, Population, Flag of registration, Energy dependence.
Source: Author-generated.

Table 1.4 Naval Importance Index and Various Factors Excluding Singapore and Russia

Year	R	R *Square*	*Adj.* R *Square*	*Std. Error of the Est.*	n
2015	.544[a]	.462	.326	5.88689	25*
2005	.666[a]	.443	.297	5.03093	25*
1995	.516[a]	.266	.073	2.68847	25*
1995	.338[a]	.114	−.119	1.75183	25**

[a]Predictors: (Constant), Coastline, Resource, Population, Flag of registration, Energy dependence.
*Singapore excluded.
**Russia excluded.
Source: Author-generated.

Table 1.5 Standardized Coefficients

	Beta					
Model	*2015 (*n *= 26)*	*2005 (*n *= 26)*	*1995 (*n *= 26)*	*2015 (*n *= 25)**	*2005 (*n *= 25)**	*1995 (*n *= 25)***
1 (Constant)						
EnerDep	.456	.417	.289	.553	.302	.395
Pop	.016	−.082	−.022	.138	.030	−.060
Flag	.717	.226	.041	−.100	.510	−.092
Resource	.101	.095	.269	.096	.128	.104
Coastline	−.040	−.086	.100	−.025	−.102	.156

[a]Dependent variable: NII.
*Singapore excluded.
**Russia excluded.
Source: Author-generated.

of a composite index with the aim of representing the importance that states give to navies, a simple correlation and regression analysis has been conducted in order to understand the importance that seaborne energy imports assume for the pursuit of sea power by the nations included in the study. The findings show a "moderately" positive correlation between the dependence on energy supplies by sea of oil and natural gas and the NII, although no conclusions can be drawn regarding the pre-2000 period due to shortcomings in data related to oil flows. Furthermore, the results in table 1.5 show that EnerDep and the Flag are the variables that have a major impact on the NII's value, once again underlining a valid connection between navies and merchant fleets, similar to the age of sail. Dependence on energy supplies by sea thus seems to be a major element accounting for a state's pursuit of sea power.

The NII constitutes the first attempt in the literature to operationalize in a single concept the complex notion of sea power and the relative importance that states attach to their navies and naval forces. Several aspects remain unaddressed, leaving room for future research (i.e., domestic factors and

Table 1.6 Percentage of Energy Dependence on Seaborne Energy Supplies and Navy Importance Index (NII) Values

	1995		*2005*		*2015*	
	% Dependence on Seaborne Energy (Oil + LNG)	*NII*	*% Dependence on Seaborne Energy (Oil + LNG)*	*NII*	*% Dependence on Seaborne Energy (Oil + LNG)*	*NII*
Argentina	0	3.88	0	6.08	8.97	6.91
Australia	17.95	3.21	25.54	5.71	40.73	5.59
Brazil	19.66	3.79	3.08	5.43	9.96	8.25
Canada	0	4	0	4.93	0.26	4.02
Chile	8.07	5.5	4.84	6.29	22.27	6.78
Denmark	10.34	2.16	0	6.53	0	3.1
France	74.86	7.04	58.63	12.25	68.14	9.47
Germany	45.02	2.99	32.03	8.78	39.02	7.53
Greece	91.56	3.49	88.06	4.81	85.15	6.73
India	37.56	2.77	54.82	9.34	65.22	14.18
Italy	53.76	4	35.71	7.43	44.79	7.27
Japan	99.23	7.04	97.6	11.13	101.12	11.23
Netherlands	39.9	3.38	45.34	6.01	39.13	7.94
Norway	0	2.52	0	3.02	0	2.71
Pakistan	32.46	2.84	21.88	5.84	26.56	10.41
Peru	8.9	4.94	22.11	9.32	22.37	8.62
Poland	10.31	0.87	1.73	19.52	7.19	6.11
Portugal	96	3.71	82.88	10.12	83.26	10.32
Russia	0	15.48	0	16.59	0	16.2
Singapore	91.35	1.02	82.76	45.25	81.52	92.05
South Africa	48.64	1.52	48.16	7.27	71.02	3.11
South Korea	99.67	4.08	98.82	23.78	99.37	31.38
Spain	94.08	5.2	88.84	9.18	81.41	6.5
Taiwan	97.6	6.31	98.85	27.19	100.41	21.95
Turkey	48.93	2.75	26.64	8.01	29.1	8.42
UK	0	5.22	0.25	8.05	29.42	9.5

Source: Author-generated.

international constraints). The findings of the quantitative analysis underline that the theoretical link between energy imports by sea and sea power is plausible. As a consequence, the trend of worldwide energy consumptions could provide some hints of the regional context in which future naval "arms races" may occur, driven by countries hungry for energy. Over the next decade, the growth in the international trade of seaborne LNG will boost the importance of the *Energy Sea Lines of Communication* further. Consequently, navies can be expected to play a larger role in their protecting these lines. In this scenario naval middle powers will likely play a major role in protecting (and exploiting) SLOCs, in particular in those waters where a diminishing presence of the U.S. Navy in the following years would occur.

NOTES

1. Kirchberger draws part of her classification from Todd and Lindberg (1996).
2. From Rank 1 (Global-reach power projection navy) to Rank 10 (Token navy).
3. Kirchberger in her book (2015) mentions only part of the classification used in this chapter. The entire ranking has been provided to the author by Sarah Kirchberger, Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University, with a written communication on December 10, 2016.
4. See table 1.6.
5. Written communication to the author from IEA's Statistics Office, December 2, 2016. The author wrote to several institutions, think tanks, and companies with the same result.
6. *Sources*: BP Statistical Review of World Energy; ENI World Oil & Gas Review 2006, 2016; IEA Oil Information 2017, 2007, 2000; IEA Energy Supply Security 2014; IEA Oil Supply Security 2007.
7. The working definition of sea power used in this work has been formalized before the survey, and in particular for the paper presented by the author at the fifty-eighth ISA's Annual Convention in February 2017. The online survey among the Italian naval officers has been conducted in April 2017. The correspondence between the working definition provided based on a literature review and the answers to the survey reinforce the accuracy of the definition adopted in this chapter.
8. In order to use effectively the answers the author grouped the elements provided by the officers in eight categories—so if one interviewee wrote the "number of frigates and destroyers" and another officer wrote a more generic "number of warship," both these answers have been included in the category "size of the navy's fleet." All the elements that received less than six answers by the interviewees have been considered less significant by the author and therefore are not specified and have been included in the category labeled "Others." For example, the presence of a national off-shore energy industry has been identified by four officers, therefore it has been included in the category "Others." The "political will"—the second most important element according to the survey after the "size of the navy's fleet"—is an element

that is not included directly as it would not be feasible to operationalize. Furthermore, the physical-material hardware (ships, submarines, sailors, etc.) might be considered an effective proxy measure for "political will" as it could be implied that a state that has a huge number of warships or submarines has a strong "political will" or attitude toward naval affairs.

9. Years 2015, 2005, and 1995.

10. In this regard the author had an email exchange with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on November 17, 2016 and with the Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC) on November 21, 2016. The latter publishes the Global Militarization Index.

11. http://gmi.bicc.de/.

12. A second outlier is represented by Russia in 1995 (NII value of 15.48). This outcome has probably been caused by the structure of the armed forces of the country that still reflected that of the Soviet Union.

13. "The GMI depicts the relative weight and importance of the military apparatus of one state in relation to its society as a whole" from https://www.bicc.de/uploads/tx_bicctools/GMI_2016_e_2016_01_12.pdf accessed on January 4, 2017.

14. Since in 1995 Russia, rather than Singapore is the outlier.

15. As an inevitable methodological simplification, internal factors (i.e., institutions, domestic politics, etc.) and exogenous factors (i.e., international constraints, wars, etc.) will not be considered.

16. Due to the well-known phenomenon of the "flag-of-convenience," it would have been more significant to use the data about the country of beneficial ownership. Unfortunately, the data provided by UNCTAD do not cover the time frame of this research.

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Chapter 2

"Peaceful Nature," Norwegians Believe It, But Do Others Too?

The Effects of National Role Conceptions on Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding

Boaz de Rooij

Every year, Norway awards the Nobel Peace Prize to a state, organization, or person that has proven its commitment to a world where all live in peace. The award ceremony is not just beneficial or an honor for those who receive the award: it is part of Norwegian foreign policy aimed at getting more influence in the world, although only in the niche area of peace (facilitation). With this award ceremony, Norway promotes not just the Norwegian interest of a peaceful world, but also itself as a peace-loving nation that has expert knowledge on the matter. That is, Norway gains soft power through the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize (Bátora 2005; Henrikson 2005; Leonard 2002; Leonard and Small 2003). A relatively mediocre state in terms of resources, inhabitants, territory, and economy actively (and successfully) pursues influence on the world stage.

National Role Conceptions (NRCs) influence a state's soft power through nation branding and public diplomacy. This is the main claim that I will discuss during the course of this chapter.[1] Many studies have been written on self-image, role conceptions, and state identity, yet they fall short of two aspects. The concept of NRCs is rather underdeveloped, usually argued to be caused by international factors, placing little emphasis on domestic factors and thus black-boxing the state (Brummer and Thies 2015). In the first part of this chapter, I will discuss what NRCs are, and shortly probe the plausibility that NRCs are not just defined by international influences, but also by the mix of cleavages in a state. The aim with doing so is to better understand the emergence of NRCs, with a specific focus on the domestic aspect. Second, discussions on NRCs are often limited to questions on what they are and how they come to existence, leaving open-ended what the possible effects

of the NRCs are. Therefore, the second—and most important—goal of the chapter is to examine what the effects of NRCs are on power (particularly soft power), through both nation branding and public diplomacy. It would be impossible to examine all of the effects and implications of NRCs, hence I chose a topic that is of major—if not most—importance within International Relations (IR): power.

During this chapter, Norway will be used as a case. Norway, as a middle power, lacks the capacities to ever become a great power. Nonetheless, it tries to be a dominant player in certain niche areas. In order to shed light on the domestic aspects of NRCs, particularly the mix of cleavages, I will focus on the topic of environment, since it is one of the most prominent sources of debate in Norway (Stolen and Dagenborg 2017). Norway is used as a pathway case in order to identify the emergence of an NRC and subsequently its influence on Norwegian soft power, through public diplomacy and nation branding. The environment is the first theme that will be discussed and is central in the first part of this paper. In the second part, looking at public diplomacy and nation branding, another NRC will be added to the discussion, namely that of Norway as a peace-facilitator. Due to already existing extensive coverage on this aspect, I will not discuss the domestic aspect of this as much.

The chapter contributes to the body of texts of both Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) and IR, because it combines concepts that were originally studied in these more or less separate fields. It addresses the literature on NRCs, public diplomacy, nation branding, and soft power. Additionally, its scientific relevance is that because of that combination, a new causal mechanism is developed, which probes the plausibility of the social-constructivist body of thought.

First, a discussion will take place on the two theoretical claims made in this study. Second, the methodology used in this chapter shall be addressed. Third, the Norwegian case will be examined in order to concretize the so far theoretical causal mechanism. In addition to the research on the emergence and effects of NRCs, I will also try to take a short look at the role of possible counter movements. It is presumable that there are actors who monitor or contradict the Norwegian strategies of public diplomacy and nation branding. I will examine to what extent they are able to counter the Norwegian efforts and thus touch upon topics as Transnational Advocacy Networks and credibility.

THE EMERGENCE OF NATIONAL ROLE CONCEPTIONS

Generally, NRCs are defined as "policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions, suitable to their

state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems" (Holsti 1970: 246; cf. Aras and Gorener 2010). Thus, how does the policymaker perceive the position of their state in a certain situation (within the international system), and what should be done with this position? Other authors, such as Krotz (2002: 6), proclaim that NRCs are defined by a broader public rather than a single or few policymakers: "domestically shared views and understandings regarding the proper role and purpose of one's own state as a social collectivity in the international arena." Such definitions already point at the influence of domestic sources of NRCs, which is why it is contradicting that many scholars limit their research to international causes (Brummer and Thies 2015; Cantir and Kaarbo 2012).

NRCs are related to several other concepts, such as national self-image and state identity (who you are as a state), which need to be addressed to help understand what NRCs are. Self-image refers to how people see themselves (Sirgy and Su 2000), meaning that on a national level, it should be similar to how a state or state's population sees itself. Kaplowitz (1990) argues that the national self-image comprises manifests and underlying dimensions, affecting state behavior. He also points out that it matters what topic is subject to the self-image as it causes variation in the intensity of behavior and opinions: behavior is also about understanding a state's power and limits (ibid.). Identity is defined as "the understanding of oneself in relationship to others" (Barnett 1999: 9). Stretching this concept to the state level, state identity is defined as a state's understanding of oneself in relationship with others. The first part of this definition almost equals the definition of national self-image, showing how the concepts are interwoven. And while national identity and self-image are usually voiced through political elites, in a democratic state politicians represent trends within society and can be seen as entrepreneurs of identity (Reicher and Hopkins 2001). Multiple identity conceptions can exist alongside each other, stretching the importance of a state's internal diversity (Aras and Gorener 2010; Reicher and Hopkins 2001). These ideas of self-image and identity are clearly related to NRCs and stem from the social constructivist approach that provides the causal mechanism discussed in this paper. Indeed, there is a relationship between domestic structures, ideas, and interests and the international environment, and this relationship (and the accessory attitudes) is subject to change (Kassianova 2001).

NRCs can be conceived of in two ways: through the individual leader or state he/she represents, or as a notion shared by the larger community of the state (Brummer and Thies 2015). I argue that these notions do not fundamentally differ: in a democratic state, an individual leader is also "the product" of the general election where that larger community is voting; she/he thus

represents that community (at least partly), and is thus accountable to that community, making foreign policy decisions based on what is acceptable to their voters (Putnam 1988). This is also consistent with those authors who argue that politicians need to represent and act according to the identity of the people. Moreover, a public leader's statements define the state's interaction with other states (Farrell and Newman 2017). We thus need to understand how an NRC becomes dominant and translates into foreign policy.

NRCs are not self-evident, but are subject to contestation between competing NRCs. NRCs are thus not set, but subject to change and can exist alongside each other, especially if no NRC has yet become dominant (Brummer and Thies 2015). I argue that the specific mix of cleavages in a state partly defines a state's competing NRCs, as well as the contestation between them. More specifically, this chapter finds that the mix of cleavages affects NRCs in at least two different ways. First, the contestation between NRCs can be seen through the mix of cleavages that constitutes parliament. Cleavages influence the composition of the elected legislative branch in a given democratic polity (Neto and Cox 1997). If a certain mix of cleavages is dominant, it is visible in parliament through, among other ways, the types of parties, the number of parties, and the topics these parties discuss and disagree on. Social constructivists argue that collective identity is achieved through construction, negotiation, manipulation, and affirmation: the basis of a democratic parliament where politicians engage in an identity discourse (cf. Kassianova 2001). Thus, if the dominant mix of cleavages determines the parties in these elected arenas, they also influence—if not determine—the debates and contestations between NRCs.

Second, election results determine not only the composition of parliament but also the structure forming of a coalition in which decision-makers are chosen, who set, define, specify, and utter NRCs. They are important in forming NRCs and constitute a good proxy for a society's dominant NRC. The NRC literature recognizes the elite as the most important actors (Holsti 1970; Wish 1980) and stipulates that these leaders are accountable to their voters (Brummer and Thies 2015; Oppermann 2012), meaning that their policies are based on NRCs that are acceptable to the voters. Yet, the NRC literature does not draw the inference that NRCs can thus be traced back to those voters.

Importantly, the relationship between the dominant mix of cleavages and NRCs is not linear, but rather reciprocal. Even though earlier role theorists neglected the embeddedness of roles (Harnisch 2010), NRCs are never isolated, meaning that they also influence the dominant mix of cleavages. The relationship between national identity, cleavages, and the political structure is complicated: roles are "a two-way process between structure and actor" (Hollis and Smith 1990: 167; cf. Bloom 1990).

THE ROLE OF NRCS IN ACQUIRING SOFT POWER

NRCs affect a state's foreign policy because they impact that state's soft power through the policy tools of nation branding and public diplomacy. Although effective foreign policy allegedly requires smart power, or a measured mix of hard and soft power (Nye 2008, 2009; Wilson III 2008), this chapter focuses on soft power rather than hard power for two reasons. First, since hard power requires coercion and inducements based on differently distributed resources, not all states can exercise power equally. Indeed, few states can be great powers, making hard power less relevant to most. Soft power, conversely, is about making another state want what one wants oneself, and is thus more relevant to states that have insufficient hard power resources (Nye 2008). Second, middle powers often use soft power to achieve more influence in certain domains than one would expect when looking at its material resources. Since all states can obtain and employ soft power, it is more interesting to look at how states try to persuade other states that they fit a specific role in the international system. How, then, does a state successfully communicate its NRCs to other states and their populations, and how do these states allow it to conduct foreign policy based on its NRC? I focus on two specific routes or policy tools that a state can use: nation branding and public diplomacy.

Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy

First, a state can increase its soft power by communicating its NRCs through nation branding. A nation brand is defined as "the total sum of all perceptions of a nation in the mind of international stakeholders" (Fan 2010: 99). I follow the idea that it is about perceptions, yet disagree that it is only relevant for international stakeholders, since a brand has to be endorsed by everyone, including a state's own population. Also, as Dinnie (2015) points out, a brand has to be in line with the prevailing *Zeitgeist*. For nation brands, this is the national identity. Nation branding is thus rooted in NRCs. One could argue that nation branding is concerned with the reconstituting of a nation at the levels of ideology and praxis, aimed at both domestic and international audiences (Kaneva 2012). Nation branding relates to national identity (self-perception vis-à-vis other states), image (how does one want one's state to be perceived), and reputation (the feedback on that image), and is used to persuade those who can change a state's image (Fan 2010). Still, nation brands change very slowly, which makes sense since NRCs also change very slowly. Altogether, it is reasonable to assume that NRCs affect nation branding and that nation branding is a source of soft power (Fan 2008;

Nye 2004). When successful, nation branding creates a better and more sympathetic image of the state, which subsequently enhances a state's soft power (Fan 2008).

Second, a state can increase its soft power by communicating its NRCs through public diplomacy. Most definitions of public diplomacy state refer to a state's communication with the broader foreign public to promote its national interests (cf. Tyler et al. 2012). Note that this is different from nation branding, which is about promoting the state. A second difference is the target group. Public diplomacy only focuses on specific organizations, individuals, and nonofficial groups, while nation branding aims at a much broader audience. Public diplomacy has two forms: the traditional variety aims to change the perceptions of the broader foreign public, while the "newer" form engages with the domestic audience, either explaining foreign policy or asking input for foreign policy (Szondi 2008). This "engaging" part of public diplomacy is further elaborated by Wilson III (2008), who argues that the advocates of soft power are scattered, yet more often invited to take part in discussions that lead to recommendations on foreign policy, providing another way of how NRCs may influence a state's soft power. Specifying the relationship between public diplomacy and soft power, Bátora (2005) argues that public diplomacy is the promotion of soft power. Based on the definitions given in this article, we can state the following: while public diplomacy communicates a state's interests to the broader foreign public, soft power is that what you gain once that broader foreign public knows what you want, and later on wants the same thing. If a state has soft power, it means it has successfully promoted its interest through public diplomacy.

Three dimensions characterize public diplomacy (Leonard 2002): (1) daily communication; (2) strategic communication; and (3) the development of long-term relationships. Daily communication is aimed at the explanation of (mostly foreign) policy and making sure that diplomacy is in line with the news. More structural is the strategic communication where "a set of comprehensive messages [is developed]" (Leonard 2002: 51). This resembles a campaign, where symbols are very important. The development of long-lasting relationships with key individuals is predominantly pursued through scholarships, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences, and access to media channels (Leonard 2002; Nye 2008). Focusing on these individuals is vital, as, later on, they may look upon a state's position more favorably.

There is a lot of confusion, misconceptions, and incorrect use of the concepts of nation branding and public diplomacy. For example, Szondi (2008) points out that public diplomacy is sometimes described as the foreign policy part of nation branding. I disagree with such arguments, because both policies have different target audiences and serve a different goal. Yet, it should be

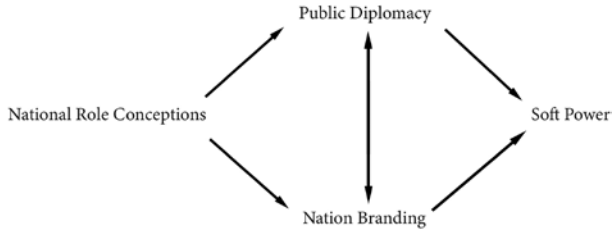

Figure 2.1 Public Diplomacy, Nation Branding, and Foreign Policy. *Source*: Author.

acknowledged that the concepts are related and sometimes partly overlapping. Figure 2.1 displays the relationship between public diplomacy, nation branding, and foreign policy.

The Role of Credibility

Credibility is highly important to nation branding, public diplomacy with reality, and soft power itself. Credibility is what sets public diplomacy apart from mere propaganda (Nye 2008). Non-credible communication can even backfire, causing the opposite result. Also, the credibility of sources is increasingly checked nowadays. If the source is found to be "not credible," the content provided by that source will be labeled "fake news" (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017). Furthermore, for a state's image to be credible, its own population has to agree with the values of the brand image (Moilanen and Rainisto 2009). This "domestic credibility," or lack thereof, will then affect a state's soft power (Pamment 2014). A state's credibility thus requires attention to both international and domestic audiences. As a consequence, actions should match image. Indeed, counter movements may occur that discredit the nation branding and public diplomacy efforts of a state exploiting a mismatch between image and behavior. Such movements are called Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) and include networks of activists, experts, and/or firms, who interact with governments, each other, and international organizations (IOs) (Keck and Sikkink 1999).

METHODOLOGY

Norway was selected as a case for several reasons. Norway's 2017 national elections were particularly determined by a competition between environmental narratives, making Norway an interesting case of societies in which heated environmental debates take place on a daily basis. Additionally, as an aspiring middle power, Norway has limited (hard power) capabilities,

meaning that it is a typical case regarding its "middle power-ness." Last, the Norwegian Government's relative openness about its public diplomacy and nation branding strategies provides more accessible data. Although the empirical analysis covers the 1970–2017 period, it particularly focuses on the post-2000 period because the Norwegian government started explicitly using the tools of public diplomacy and nation branding after this year. Yet, role contestation during the 1970–2000 period has to be taken into account, since it is expected to have affected later Norway's public diplomacy and nation branding strategies. The themes chosen as subject for this study are the NRCs of "Norway as an environmental frontrunner" and "Norway as a peace-facilitating state." Both topics have dominated role contestation in Norway in the twenty-first century.

The empirical analysis constitutes a qualitative case study employing document analysis and process-tracing. Process-tracing will be employed to investigate the black-boxed state, thus identifying the causal mechanism that leads from NRCs to soft power. Process-tracing, out of all qualitative research methods, serves describe social and political phenomena as well as to evaluate causal claims. The objective is to develop a causal claim and probe its plausibility, in order to contribute to future theory-building.

Below, I briefly address how relevant concepts will be measured. Regarding the choice between parliament and political leaders for studying NRCs, the study looks at both, yet focuses mainly on political leaders, since they are also affected by parliament. This runs the risk of an ecological fallacy, if data of higher levels is distributed to lower levels thus risking to identify a relationship that is not present. Therefore, as already mentioned, I will also shortly discuss the route via parliament in order to reduce that risk. Soft power will be primarily measured with the so-called soft power rankings, which usually provide a detailed description of why a state has received a certain ranking. Data will be retrieved from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include government documents and webpages, news articles, and rankings.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAVAGE: DOES IT EXIST?

Norway's role in the international system consists of two parts in particular: Norway as an environmental frontrunner and Norway as a peace-facilitator (Leonard and Small 2003). Yet, how have these NRCs come to existence? Here, I will limit myself to discussing the environmental NRC, since this volume seeks to understand the influence of middle powers, and this chapter aims to probe a causal mechanism, that accounts for how NRCs help bring about soft power.

Aardal and Valen (1997) point out that before the "earthquake elections" in the beginning of the 1970s, an environmental cleavage was absent in Norway. In the 1970s citizens grew increasingly concerned with post-materialistic values, such as gender equality and the environment, causing new parties to arise, such as the radical right Progress Party in 1973, and later the Green party in 1988 (Miller and Listhaug 1990). Although it is often presumed that most parties have since incorporated climate change into their manifestos, are relatively "green minded," and agree on sustainable growth (Båtstrand 2015), I argue that an environmental cleavage does exist. First, opinions on the environment clash, particularly on topics such as Arctic drilling (Jortveit 2017; Libell 2017). Second, awareness is also present, since there are many debates and discussions on the topic, which can, for example, be seen in the regular coverage by Norwegian news organizations, such as Aftenposten (Onarheim and Årthun 2017). Third, political mobilization around the issue occurs, with the Green Party (although it did not enter parliament until 2013) and the Progress Party as main players (Båtstrand 2015). Therefore, following Lipset and Rokkan (1967), an environmental cleavage clearly exists in Norway.

In 1984 former Norwegian minister for the environment and later Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland was asked to chair the World Commission on Environment and Development. During her term as minister of the environment, she had already learned of the effects of climate change (Anker 2018: 31–33), causing her—and thus the entire commission—to focus on something else: the framing of climate change. In 1987, the commission published the report named "Our Common Future," arguing that climate change is of concern to the entire world and that "sustainable development" should be a global objective, meaning that the needs of the present generation should be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). The idea of sustainable development has become of major importance in Europe and in the field of global development (Ingebritsen 2002). Favasuli (2017) points out that Norwegian governments and parliaments have ever since been influenced by the environmental cleavage, with Norway's two largest political parties, the Labor Party (AP) and the Conservatives (Høyre), being in favor of using fossil fuels, and with the Greens and the Liberals (Venstre) opposing such activities. This reflection of cleavages in parliament also shows the contestation between NRCs. In the 1960s, the class and center-periphery cleavages were represented by the Labor Party, the Conservatives, Liberals, and Christian Democrats (NSD n.d.). Later, new parties joined the spectrum: the Greens and the Progress Party, both representing opposite sides of the environmental cleavage.

The other way of assessing NRCs is through studying the state's political leaders. For Norway, two political leaders come to mind: Gro Harlem

Brundtland and Erna Solberg (Prime Minister [PM] since 2013), representing two different NRCs. Brundtland represents the NRC that conceives of Norway's role in promoting sustainable development and encouraging other states to do the same. She faced domestic events during her term as minister for the environment, her three terms as PM, and as chair of the UN commission. Solberg, a conservative, is also in favor of the idea of sustainable development, and is often on the same page as the Labor Party (NSD n.d.). Yet, she also has to take into account the preferences of her coalition party, the Liberals. Additionally, when entering coalition negotiations with the Progress Party, the Liberals, and the Christian Democrats, she had to move more toward the "New Left," fulfilling the green standpoints of the latter in order to form a majority government. She chose to embrace the NRC that portrays Norway as an environmental frontrunner, saying that "[d]ifferent countries are frontrunners in various areas. I strongly support the idea that we must demonstrate leadership by showcasing progress and sharing experience, with a view to further increasing our collective ambitions" (Solberg 2017). Now, as Norway's natural resources are diminishing, Solberg's government is key to selecting an NRC that will guide Norway's foreign policy: the question arises whether to search for alternative ways of generating wealth, or to opt for exploiting the Arctic oil and gas reserves (Favasuli 2017). Clearly, then, cleavages, in this case the environmental cleavage, are of major importance: they help account for the rise of politicians, the specific NRCs they articulate and the eventual weight of an NRC in foreign policy.

PEACEFUL NATURE

In 2003 Leonard and Small wrote their advice to the Norwegian government on its public diplomacy policy. In the executive summary, they identified two important narratives (or NRCs), which are "Norway as peace-facilitator" and "Norway as environmental frontrunner," together leading to an identity conception of "Peaceful Nature" (Leonard and Small 2003). Their paper has been defining Norwegian public diplomacy and nation branding strategies in the twenty-first century.

There is a national consensus on Norway's role in peace work, which has been persistently embraced by Norwegian governments (and their relevant foreign policy leaders, such as prime ministers and foreign ministers). The Norwegian tradition of peace and promoting peace has long been part of Norway's self-image and identity (Skånland 2010). Yet, the active use of this NRC in public diplomacy and nation branding strategies did not occur until the mid-1990s, when Brundtland served as PM for the third time. In the 1995 governmental White Paper, the concepts of peace and peace promotion were

made explicit (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1995). This shows that both elites and the broad support from the population are necessary, since such policies would not have been adopted without the continuous support from voters and without a leader who can embody the NRC.

"Norway as a peace nation" can be used in two different ways: not only as a brand, but also as a definition of Norway's national interest. How credible is Norway's brand as a peace nation if it is not backed up by Norway promoting this interest? Reversely, how credible is the promotion of peace if that state does not have an image of a state that facilitates peace? Skånland (2010) points out that nation branding regarding this role conception occurred through an explicit policy of engagement in the 1990s and early 2000s. Norway aspires to put itself on the map as a state with high integrity concerning peace-making: a national strategy that is important for both Norway and other states.

As for public diplomacy, the "peace-nation" efforts of Norway are often compared with that of Canada. Henrikson (2005) argues that both states benefit from a certain "niche," being a rather permanent favorable position that leads to an advantage. Both Canada and Norway overlap in their foreign policies, in particular in their roles as international peace-builders. Both are small- or medium-sized countries, making it more relevant to look at soft power rather than hard power, since they lack military and economic power (Bátora 2005). Indeed, as this volume argues, middle powers may have a disproportionate amount of influence in certain areas almost purely based on soft power.

A relevant example is the Sri Lankan peace process in 2002–2003, where Norway aspired the role of peace-facilitator. The case serves as an example of how Norway applies the three different dimensions of public diplomacy in practice. Through daily communication, the government tried to counter or spin stories that Norway had other interests than the facilitation of peace (Moolakkattu 2005). These communication efforts led to the perception of Norway as a legitimate broker. Supporting such day-to-day communications has been the strategic communication, which is more long-lasting and not specific to the Sri Lanka case. It is about the repeated communication of a rather simple message: Norway is a peace loving state (Leonard and Small 2003). Additionally, regarding the long-term dimension, by maintaining a relationship with key individuals, Norway has been able to make the outside world adopt a more benevolent attitude toward it (Moolakkattu 2005: 388). By doing so, it succeeded in convincing others that Norway is an expert in crisis management. Together they have led to Norway being accepted as a third-party broker, thus enhancing its soft power, as both parties want the same thing as Norway: a solution to the conflict with an active role of Norway in establishing it. That is, even though Norway is not a particularly meaningful state in terms of population, territory, or resources (apart from oil), it has

succeeded in convincing other states that it is the most knowledgeable and skilled state in facilitating peace.

"Norway as an environmental frontrunner" also has two sides, namely that of an image as a state that is upfront in dealing with the issue of climate change, but also as a state that motivates others to follow and show how the issue of climate change should be tackled. Looking at nation branding, Norway is actively trying to put out the image that Norway is and should be an environmental frontrunner (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006; Sverdrup 1998). Yet, the environmental NRC is more controversial than the peace-facilitating NRC, because of Norway's whaling activities, and because it is an important oil-producing nation (Halverson 2004). Leonard and Small (2003) argue that Norwegian public diplomacy efforts (on all three dimensions) should actively focus on the whaling activities, trying to maintain (or obtain) the image of being a "green state." This has not been without success: Nye (2008) concludes that Norway's whaling has hardly affected its positive environmental image or its attempts to promote its environmental interests.

The *Nasjonalt Omdømmeforum* (Public Diplomacy Forum, or, National Reputation Forum) is concerned with Norway's reputation, which is more linked to nation branding. Its goals were to "encourage debate and dialogue between the authorities, business sector, academia and other actors on how and in which areas we can develop cohesive public diplomacy strategies" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007). A forum like this had been already proposed by Leonard and Small who argued that a group of people (the Norwegian Public Diplomacy Board) representing civil society, the business sector, and communications should launch a debate on both Norway's role and image. The forum is an example of engaging domestic public diplomacy that we discussed earlier, and shows how domestic actors such as civil society can contribute to a state's foreign policy. The forum also referred to Leonard's (2002) different dimensions of public diplomacy regarding daily communication, strategic communication, and lasting relationships with certain individuals (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007). It shows another route of how the population (which is divided in cleavages and the accompanying domestic competing narratives) and its NRCs directly have influence on the public diplomacy and nation branding tools, and thus on a state's soft power.

NORWAY: THE WHALING STATE

Does a successful implementation of these policy tools actually lead to more soft power? Norway's reputation, identity, and power have been enhanced due to nation branding and public diplomacy efforts (Bátora 2005; Moolakkattu 2005; Nye 2008). This can be seen in multiple rankings (both

regarding nation brand and reputation), where Norway ends consistently high (Brand Finance, 2017; GfK 2014; Trad 2017). Additionally, Norway continues climbing the ranks of the "Soft Power 30," moving up from the eighteenth position in 2015 to the twelfth in 2017. In 2018 it ranked thirteenth (McClory 2018). Nation branding and public diplomacy helped increase Norway's soft power: the ranking instruments relate Norway's soft power to its perceived positive role in protecting the environment and peace, in addition to Norway's image of an equal society. The rankings also show that the peace-facilitating NRC enjoys a higher credibility than the environmental NRC. This discrepancy between what Norway is communicating regarding the environment and what is actually believed seems caused by a counter movement, leading to a relative lack of credibility. This counter movement particularly focuses on Norway's whaling.

Whaling has been part of Norwegian history for centuries, and while most states in the world have abandoned the hunting of whales, Norway has continued doing so, sometimes ignoring reports from the International Whaling Commission (Halverson 2004; IWC 2017). The negative effects of this unpopular activity have so far been limited. As Nye (2008) has pointed out, whaling has hardly had any effect on the Norwegian image. Yet, although the negative effects remain limited, Norway's whaling activities explain why Norway cannot reap the full benefits of its public diplomacy and nation branding strategies. Norway should actively employ such strategies to counter any negative images of whaling, which apparently has led to a blurred environmental reputation (Bátora 2005; Leonard and Small 2003). A significant part of Norwegian environmental policies are now being contested by an advocacy network that criticizes Norway for its treatment of indigenous people (Bailey 2008), making Norway's policies less credible.

Such an adversary advocacy network is not present regarding the Norwegian role as peace-facilitator. Returning to the Sri Lankan peace process, we see that even though there were opponents of Norwegian interference in the beginning, eventually everyone accepted Norway's expertise in the process of peace-making (Moolakkattu 2005). It is a sufficient explanation for why the role of Norway as peace-facilitator in the world is more accepted than its role as an environmental frontrunner. It thus comes as no surprise that the promotion of this peace-facilitating role is far more prominent in public diplomacy and nation branding strategies.

CONCLUSION

In this contribution, a causal mechanism has been developed linking NRCs with soft power. First, the relationship between the domestic influences and

national role conceptions has been discussed: cleavages and competing narratives affect the composition of parliament and lead to certain political leaders who represent different NRCs. Political leaders are also affected by the international system, which influences their NRCs as well as those of the population, since citizens face new global issues. Second, NRCs affect a state's soft power through the tools of public diplomacy and nation branding. Focusing on the role conceptions of Norway as an environmental frontrunner and as a peace-facilitating state, evidence suggested that the presence of this causal mechanism is plausible. The chapter thus provides a better understanding not only of NRCs, but also of the differences between nation branding and public diplomacy. Additionally, the Norwegian case shows how states, in particular middle powers, can exercise considerable influence in specific policy areas without having to invest in sticks or carrots. The case of Norway has shown that credibility plays a crucial role: public diplomacy and nation branding policies have to be in tune with each other. Counter movements (specifically transnational advocacy networks) may affect such credibility since they may expose the discrepancy between the public diplomacy and nation branding efforts on the one hand, and practice on the other hand, thus negatively affecting a state's soft power.

Norway's efforts to promote both Norway and its interests have had different effects. Regarding its role as peace-facilitator in the world, Norway enjoys considerable credibility due to its "niche knowledge" of crisis areas and peace negotiations. Regarding its role as environmental frontrunner, Norway may have lost its role as norm entrepreneur because it preferred to stick to the goal of sustainable development, yet continued its support for whale hunting. "Peaceful Nature": Norwegians Believe It, But Do Others Too? Arguably, the rest of the world finds Norway's environmental contributions less credible than its role as peace-facilitator.

NOTE

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Part II

PLAYING WITH THE BIG GUYS—(ASPIRING) GLOBAL MIDDLE POWERS

Chapter 3

Aspiring and Reluctant Middle Powers?

Italy's and Germany's Defense Reforms after the Cold War

Fabrizio Coticchia and Francesco N. Moro

In the two decades that followed the end of the Cold War, Germany maintained a weary attitude to military engagements abroad, and very slowly proceeded to reform its armed forces. At the same time, the country enhanced its position as the largest powerhouse in Europe in economic terms, becoming a great economic power with relatively little military might. On the contrary, Italy—whose economic weight in Europe shrank in the past decades—was an early adopter of military reforms in the 1990s and played an increasingly active role, intervening with troops in many crises from the Gulf War (1991) to Libya (2011) and beyond. In other words, Germany seems to accept the "undersized" role of a middle power, while Italy strives to advance its position as a middle power through widespread military interventionism and quickly paced military reforms.[1]

Literature on middle powers (cf. Valigi 2017) often focuses on three themes: the definition of what constitutes a middle power; the identification of the systemic constraints to which middle powers must respond; and the assessment of the domestic features and choices, allowing middle powers to act effectively and prosper in the international arena. The present study is linked to the last strand of research, and has the primary objective to identify the processes of defense reform occurring in Germany and Italy after the Cold War. Germany and Italy received less attention than other European counterparts, particularly France and the United Kingdom (UK). Studies that address the overall change in their defense policies over the past three decades have been rare (Coticchia and Moro 2015; Dyson 2007). Yet, the two countries are, for different reasons, two key pillars of the both the Transatlantic and European defense partnership.

The interest in comparing Germany and Italy goes beyond a novel take on how a key aspect the two countries' defense policies (institutional reforms in the defense domain) has been unfolding. Actually, a comparison provides an ideal ground for exploring the drivers of defense policy change. Existing studies on Germany often compare it to France and the UK (Dyson 2008; Larsdotter 2008; Wiesner 2011), placing the burden of explanation on variables linked to strategic culture (Longhurst 2004). Notwithstanding Germany's increasing role in Europe (Destradi 2015), several studies have argued that cultural constraints on the use of military force had largely shaped the country's minimal military footprint (Berger 1998; Longhurst 2004). French and British strategic cultures, on the contrary, would have fostered more assertive defense policies. We claim that such comparisons provide important insights on how Germany changed (in terms of direction and overall size).

The empirical analysis below shows that looking at the processes of change, rather than simply their outcomes, allows uncovering other drivers of, and obstacles to, change. Two factors emerge as potential drivers of change that are not often accounted for by the literature dealing (separately) with these two cases. On the one hand, the empirical analysis shows the role of domestic institutional arrangements in shaping defense policymaking. In particular, "domestic material power relations" (Dyson 2014) play a key role in explaining divergence between Italy and Germany. More restrictive constraints on the executive's power to act in the defense domain (especially in the use of military force in external interventions) in the latter prevented the flexibility—intended as relative lack of hurdles represented by thorough parliamentary scrutiny and need to create political coalitions—that characterized the former. On the other hand, a "feedback loop" between deployment and defense reforms exists that strongly affects the latter. Deployment of armed forces in military interventions, in other words, strongly pushed toward reforming defense. Rather than testing selected hypotheses, this chapter aims to shift the attention to these overlooked factors in understanding how defense policy changes. In doing so, it develops possible hypotheses that can be tested in further studies.

This contribution, which is based on the secondary and primary (interviews and official documents) sources, proceeds as follows. First, it briefly reviews the common elements of Italian and German defense policies in the pre-Cold War environment, then showing the extent of divergence occurred after the demise of the Soviet Union (SU). The third section provides a summary of German and Italian defense reforms and of the existing literature on the topic. The following parts represent the core of the essay: fourth section discusses the empirics about the first decade after the Cold War, while the fifth section looks at the evolution of German and Italian approach to military

interventions after 9/11. The conclusions sum up the findings and suggest ways to advance this research.

THE COMMON LEGACIES OF GERMAN AND ITALIAN DEFENSE POLICIES

A consistent body of literature has dealt with changes in defense policy of NATO European countries since the end of the Cold War (Auerswald and Saideman 2014). Inevitably, most research focused on the two major powers, France and the UK, leaving Germany and Italy on the sidelines. The latter two cases, however, are crucial as they present crucial challenges to existing literature both on their own and in comparison. At the end of the Cold War, both countries, with armed forces and defense policies having relatively similar backgrounds, faced a completely new strategic context. First, the armed forces of both Germany and Italy during the Cold War mostly focused on territorial defense. This is certainly true for the *Bundeswehr* that was "organised, structured and equipped for one purpose: territorial defense" (Seibert 2012: 60). Italy was not very different, with territorial defense being the primary mission, as widely illustrated in the first White Books in the 1970s (Coticchia 2013).

Low defense spending (in relative terms) and a budget heavily biased toward personnel costs were characteristic of both countries. Ranks were filled through conscription (Kummel and Leonhard 2005). Conscription certainly made sense from the point of view of effectiveness (with territorial defense being the primary goal), but it also responded to other rationales, starting with mistrust of professional soldiers, often associated with the misdeeds of the previous nondemocratic regimes (Kummel 2003). This overall resemblance should not obscure the fact that the two countries differed with reference to availability of assets more adapt to the emerging post-Cold War challenges: Italy's forces already had two precious assets such as the *Carabinieri* (who would prove relevant in peacekeeping missions as a hybrid military police force) and other specialized units (e.g., the *Genio*, the mine-clearing forces, etc.) whose features and tasks well fit with the needs of contemporary military operations.

Other, immaterial, elements were common as well. The two countries similarly shared a culture of anti-militarism shared by the major political families of the post-World War II era (Berger 1998, Giacomello and Coticchia 2008; Ignazi et al. 2012). The defeat in war, associated with the experiences of totalitarian regimes, inevitably shaped the view of political formations after the war. Christian Democrats in both Germany and Italy were profoundly shaken by the experience of World War II and soon adopted narratives about

the role of war in international politics that was coherent with pacifist strands of Christian—both Protestant and Catholic—doctrine (Panebianco 1997). Also, for different reasons the Italian Communist Party (PCI), the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), and the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) all adopted peace-oriented political platforms (Coticchia 2013; Longhurst 2004). Coherently, the definition of national interests in terms of (military) power has been, for a long time, a taboo in both countries (Ignazi et al. 2012; Maull 2000). Reconstruction and economic development, not military prowess, were widely seen as the measure of renewed strength and national pride.

The legacy of World War II also deeply affected key constitutional traits. Both postwar constitutions contain articles that constrain the use of force. In Italy, Article 11 explicitly states that Italy "rejects war as an instrument of aggression against the freedom of other peoples and as a means for the settlement of international disputes." In Germany, Article 26 of the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law) also explicitly states how "activities tending and undertaken with the intent to disturb peaceful relations between nations, especially to prepare for aggressive war, are unconstitutional."

When actions had to be taken in the international arena, both Italy and Germany often referred to the need for multilateral frameworks and an active role for the United Nations. Even within these frameworks, however, Germany and Italy engaged only in limited activities (Ignazi et al. 2012). Exceptionally, Italy intervened in Lebanon in 1982 within the UNIFIL framework, and this probably represents the major break with Germany (which did not intervene at all) during the Cold War period. As we shall see later, Lebanon had a somewhat important role for Italian armed forces to frame—and prepare for—future missions.

DIVERGENT PATHS: A SUMMARY

Notwithstanding the broad similarities depicted above, the outcomes, intended as the degree of military involvement in military operations abroad and pace of post-Cold War reform of the armed forces, largely differed between the two countries. Italy participated in the first mission of the post-bipolar world (the 1991 Iraq War) and adopted an active role in the UNITAF and UNISOM missions in Somalia (1992–1995). But differences persisted also after Germany engaged for the first time since World War II to participate in the humanitarian intervention in Kosovo in 1999. In fact, the role Germany played in the most recent operations (Afghanistan), the nonparticipation in Iraq (Italy was present from 2003 to 2006) and Libya (Italy was involved in the operation "Unified Protector" in 2011) show how a deep reluctance to deploy troops is a recurrent feature of German foreign and defense policy.

In addition to participation in military interventions, Italy was in fact quicker than Germany in adopting thorough military reforms. This aspect has been never assessed from a comparative perspective. This chapter aims at addressing this gap.

Doctrine and organizational structure were all profoundly changed. First, Italy adopted a new doctrine on crisis management already in the 1990s. The "New Defense Model," approved in 1991, signaled a clear shift toward power projection capabilities, and recognized that Italy's contribution (the emerging "Italian way of warfare," Ignazi et al 2012) had to be mostly dedicated to stabilization and peacekeeping missions. Second, the importance attached to thinking in terms of joint forces led to important organizational reforms: Law 25/1997 reformed the Chiefs of Staff (*Stato Maggiore della Difesa*) aiming to enhance the cooperation among forces, overcoming the separation that had constantly affected Navy, Army, and Air Force in the bipolar era. In addition, the power of the Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was increased, altering its previous status of a primus inter pares (Coticchia and Moro 2015). Third, although the outcome of a longer process, Italy suspended conscription in 2000.

These reforms took much longer to be implemented in Germany (Breuer 2006), and German reluctance to military intervention is enduring. Existing explanations on why this is the case focus on different elements. Certainly, Germany emerged from the Cold War with more daunting domestic challenges than Italy and thus had to focus internally rather on the reshape its international role. The integration of former Eastern Germany was certainly the key problem in that period, entailing a redefinition of German statehood in its constitutive elements that distracted from other foreign undertakings (Dyson 2007). Closely related to German unification is the different strategic context that Germany faced after the Cold War. First, the new Germany was under constant scrutiny from its very European allies, who worried about the reemergence of a powerhouse in continental Europe. Germany's self-restraint with reference to obtaining more effective armed forces could have been conceived as a conscious strategy to soothe potential tensions. Second, Germany's borders no longer were the hot spot that they used to be during the Cold War. Starting from the 1990s, the Mediterranean (Italian "borders") took back center-stage with conflicts occurring in the Balkans first and in Middle East later, thus creating a more challenging environment for Italy compared to Germany.

Arguably, the notion of strategic culture accounts for Germany's slow pace of transformation and its limited use of military force abroad (see, for example, Longhurst and Miskimmon 2007). According to this logic, the norms and values relating to the use of force, encapsulated in Germany's distinctive and unique strategic culture have shaped German security policy preferences

(Buras and Longhurst 2004). Culture has also been considered a key factor in explaining the way Germany responded to mutating incentives from its environment. Indeed, the new security German posture after Kosovo, its first military engagement after World War II, "still closely approximates the civilian-power ideal" (Maull 2000: 56). Nonetheless, the effects of another major event, 9/11, were similar in shaping the overall attitude toward the use of force. But how is this compatible with the narrative above, showing deep similarities in legacies (starting with strategic culture) and different outcomes of Germany and Italy?

Differently, adopting a neoclassical realist perceptive (Davidson 2011; Rose 1998; Taliaferro et al. 2009), one could reasonably believe that the (diverse) definition the two countries attach to alliance value and "prestige" (conceived as social recognition of power) in the international arena plays a role in shaping their approach to defense policy. Indeed, by addressing security challenges and contributing to the national standing in the global system, a country enhances its international reliability. But prestige is linked to self-conceptions based on what countries believe are the tools that best fit their resources. Accordingly, we can expect different behaviors. Germany, already during the Cold War, defined prestige in terms of extraordinary economic recovery and industrial prowess. Economic diplomacy is a powerful tool used by German policymakers (Miskimmon 2009), and the search for new markets remains a cornerstone of German foreign policy's institutional architecture (Maull 2000). Although also Italy experienced an "economic miracle" after World War II, it always struggled to translate economic strength into political advantages in Europe. Starting from the early 1990s, then, Italy entered a phase of economic crisis that further precluded the assertion of national prestige with (almost exclusive) reference to the economic dimension. The transformation of its defense policy with the purpose of providing military operations abroad was perceived as an opportunity to assert a middle power role in regional and international politics (Cladi and Webber 2011; Coticchia 2018; Davidson 2008, 2011).

However, *additional* factors should be taken into consideration to understand specifically the diverse evolution of Italian and German defense reforms. Indeed, in conformity with the recent "domestic turn" of the foreign policy analysis (Kaarbo 2015; Wagner et al. 2017), the analysis below shows how "domestic material power relations" (Dyson 2014) constrain the executive's power to act in the defense domain at the expense of flexibility. In Germany decision-making is severely constrained by the need to involve the Parliament (*Bundestag*) in all key decisions relative to defense policy (Dyson 2008). In Italy, discussions and debate seldom occurred in Parliament (Di Camillo and Tessari 2013). Therefore, the Italian government did not suffer audience costs (Fearon 1994) addressing complex and unpopular

issues (Battistelli et al. 2004), such as reforming the defense structure or the constant active military engagement abroad.

Feedback from operational experience itself constitutes the other factor accounting for the different trajectories of German and Italian defense policy. Interventions, once agreed upon, feed into subsequent policy choices, creating self-sustaining incentives to reform. An active defense policy fostered a growing collection of lessons learnt and military experience that led to a greater military adaptation (Coticchia and Moro 2015), and then "required" in turn reforms and transformation (Coticchia and Moro 2015, 2016; Grissom 2006). The following sections have the primary objective of describing the process of change, while highlighting how the two factors mentioned above merit careful consideration.

MILITARY REFORMS IN THE 1990S

Standing Still: Germany in the 1990s

The *Bundeswehr* faced new challenges at the end of the Cold War. However, the reforms adopted in the 1990s only "did the minimum to respond to the new security environment" (Dyson 2007: 1). While new "humanitarian" narratives had been adopted to support military involvement abroad, the pressing needs to modify the *Bundeswehr* and reforming national defense never were at the center of the debate. Although the *Bundeswehr* engaged with several post-1989 challenges (e.g., absorbing the East German People's Army, the first out-of-area missions, the persistence of conscription; financial restraints, etc.), "the *Bundeswehr* ha[d] still to master another formidable obstacle: reforming itself" (Longhurst 2005: 21). This is testified in official documents. The 1992 "*Verteidigungspolitische Richtlinien*" (Defense Policy Guidelines or VPR), and the 1994 "Defense White Paper" addressed vital security interests such as the prevention, containment, and resolution of crises and low-intensity conflicts. Yet, although The White Paper accepted the new geopolitical situation, "no fundamental conceptual reforms were introduced" (Janning and Bauer 2007: 532) while fundamental decisions on procurement were delayed. The 2003 "*Konzeptionelle Leitlinien zur Weiterentwicklung der Bundeswehr*" (Conceptual Guidelines for the Further Development of the Bundeswehr) confirmed the crucial role of conscription and the primary function of territorial defense (Longhurst 2005).

In terms of reforms, Germany tried to adapt to new security demands gradually: German Army Operational Command, encompassing all three services, was created in August 1994, while the *Krisenreaktionskräfte* (the Crisis Reaction Forces—KRK) were crafted in the mid-1990s. Germany (like Italy)

had two armies, "comprising the larger and less well-equipped main defense forces with a substantial conscript element geared for territorial defense and the smaller, all-professional crisis reaction component, better equipped and prepared for out-of-area missions" (Longhurst 2005: 25). Likewise, defense spending was disproportionate on Bundeswehr personnel and infrastructure costs. "[G]radualism and slow reforms" (Sarotte 2001) characterized the actual capacity for force protection as well as the whole modernization of the *Bundeswehr*. Despite the efforts to adapt to a changed regional and global scenario, domestic constraints left the armed forces "oversized, ill-structured and ill-equipped" for years (Seibert 2012: 61).

The military involvement in Kosovo in 1999 ushered in a new phase of German defense reforms, confirming the driving role of military deployment. Indeed, "Kosovo represented a critical juncture in the post-Cold War adaptation of German security policy" (Longhurst 2005: 25). Maull considers the shift occurring in Kosovo more symbolic than real and identifies the lack of reforms in the armed forces as clear proof: "The *Bundeswehr* reforms are unlikely to receive the kind of financial resources and political commitment that they would need, and German security policies will probably continue to be troubled by unresolved strategic issues" (2000: 80). In fact, after the Kosovo war, SPD Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping concluded that the *Bundeswehr* was still organized for Cold War scenarios, lacking the proper capabilities for military operations abroad (Longhurst 2005).

Despite the shift in domestic political consensus about legitimacy of the use of force, the *Bundeswehr* "has undergone a conservative adaptation" (Dyson 2007: 1). Germany did not redefine its doctrine and structure, still devoting crucial attention toward territorial defense: "[In] the 2003 defense policy guidelines, the mission of the *Bundeswehr* was re-defined: their 'top priority' was no longer the defense of the country, but to guarantee Germany's 'capacity to act abroad'" (Hellmann 2011: 51). Indeed, the attempts to reform the armed forces in the 1990s resulted from a "triumph of domestic constraints over international opportunity" (Dyson 2007: 51).

Regarding the "slow pace of German reform," it is remarkable how the government has been under constant, strict parliamentary control regarding military affairs. The level of executive autonomy in Germany differs from Italy. Indeed, the German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) defines the Bundeswehr primarily as a defense force (Article 87). The Federal Constitutional Court's landmark decision of July 12, 1994 removed the legal obstacles for "out of area" engagement (Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010). "According to the Federal Constitutional Court decision, the Bundeswehr is a 'parliamentary army' whose deployment abroad requires a constitutive Bundestag decision (parliament's right of prior approval), a step that is not provided for in the Basic Law" (Gareis 2013: 60).[2] The constitutional mandate of the Bundestag

is to oversee expeditionary troop deployments, also including the Rules of Engagement (RoE). Thus, in the case of Germany, all operational issues have been examined by the parliament.

The Bundestag has been also constantly concerned about the reforms of defense policy. German MPs have deeply focused on the needs of their constituency (e.g., preserving military bases, maintaining local military industries), hindering drastic reforms for electoral reasons (Dyson 2007, 2008). On the whole, the conception of the Bundeswehr of a "parliamentary army" has led to a constant attention devoted to military issues.

Interventions and Change: Italian Reforms in the 1990s

Since the end of the bipolar era, the Italian Armed Forces have been continuously engaged in military operations abroad, participating in more missions than in the previous forty years (Coticchia 2014). The constant involvement of Italian troops in regional crises reflects the continuity of Italian post-Cold War defense policy and represents a considerable break with the past (Ignazi et al. 2012). It also contributed to raising Italy's status as a middle power: "Since the 1990s the country has raised its profile in European affairs, in transatlantic relations and in various arenas of the globe, with its troops, interests and its resources … Italy is a necessary and inescapable one—a country that simply cannot be taken for granted in contemporary international affairs" (Brighi 2013: 6).

Still some elements of continuity remain: for one, Italy's self-image as a "pacifist country," which was shared during the Cold War by all the main Italian political cultures and parties (D'Amore 2001) has not been altered by the end of the bipolar era (Pirani 2010). Indeed, the bipartisan consensus on national military interventions has been constantly based on the framework of "peace missions" (Ignazi et al. 2012); also, "neither the place of Atlanticism in Italian foreign policy nor its relationship with Europeanism has changed" (Croci and Valigi 2013: 38).

On the whole, despite such elements of continuity, there is consensus on the extent to which the Italian military instrument changed after the Cold War. Its evolution is well illustrated specifically by Italy's involvement in multilateral and multinational operations abroad (with an average of 8,000 units employed abroad per year in the post-Cold War era) as well as by the reforms crafted by national decision-makers.

The time and pace of the Italian transformation is significant when compared with Germany, which did not de-emphasize "territorial defense" within its strategic doctrine until 2003 (Dyson 2008). On the contrary, Italy has embraced "crisis management" as a main goal of its defense policy since 1991 (Giacomello and Verbeek 2011). As already noted, in the 1990s, long

before Germany, Italy undertook several large reforms of its armed forces, suspending conscription and modifying the structure of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Longhurst 2005).

The document that shaped the structure of the Italian armed forces in the post-Cold War era in terms of their tasks, aims, and organization was already published in 1991. In the *New Defense Model* (1991) power projection capabilities became the key feature of the Italian defense policy.[3] The new strategic concept was based on the constant deployment of troops abroad in order to deal with new threats and menaces, spreading peace and promoting stabilization across regional and global crises. A quantitative reduction of personnel (enhancing the role of volunteers), qualitative improvements, flexibility, readiness, and a joint approach were all necessary to support the evolution of the military instrument.

As stated above, from the 1990s on, several reforms were enacted. Law 25/1997 reformed the Chiefs of Staff (*Stato Maggiore della Difesa*) in order to enhance cooperation among forces and remove the separation that had constantly affected the Navy, Army, and Air Force in the bipolar era. Moreover, the power of the Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was increased, altering its previous status of a primus inter pares. Several years before Germany, the *New Defense Model* also paved the way for a transformation of Italian forces into all-volunteer services. With Laws 331/2000 and 226/2004 (and the following legislative decrees), Italy suspended conscription. It has had an all-volunteer force (open to women) since January 2005. Similar to Germany, the Cold War legacy affected the degree of transformation. Only a limited part of active personnel is effectively deployable abroad: only around 30,000 out of 190,000 units can engage in military operations abroad (Bellinzona 2007). This is (largely) a legacy from the Cold War, when Italian forces were not even conceived as tools of foreign policy and were often seen as means to maintain employment levels (Panebianco 1997). Second, and relatedly, a disproportionate share of the Italian defense budget is still devoted to personnel, similarly to the *Bundeswehr*. Third, despite the significant transformation of defense policy, in terms of reforms and deployability, Italian strategic culture hardly changed, keeping "peace" and "multilateralism" as main core values and frames (Coticchia and Giacomello 2008; Ignazi et al. 2012; Marrone and Di Camillo 2013; Pirani 2010). Indeed, despite Italy's growing international military activism, the military dimension has constantly been neglected in the post-Cold War political debate (Coticchia 2013, 2014). This neglect served to maintain strong bipartisan consensus on the idea of Italy as "international peacekeeper" (Battistelli 2004). Thanks to this narrative based on "peace" and "multilateralism" Italy supported the constant deployment of troops abroad, despite the organizational heritage of the Cold War (in terms of structure and equipment) and a "pacifist public opinion" (cf. Battistelli et al. 2012).

This raises the question why the "peace narrative" has been so effective in promoting military dynamism? Without considering the (limited) role of the Parliament in discussing operations and reforms we cannot properly answer this question. For instance, the military intervention in Somalia was paradoxically "approved" *after* the end of the mission. The air strikes in Kosovo were not authorized by the Parliament. Therefore, the parties that opposed the new military Italian activism—and the related doctrines and reforms—had few opportunities to formally resist military dynamism. Several authors (Coticchia and Moro 2015; Marrone 2014) revealed how the abovementioned reforms were approved purposely in order to adequately support the national military involvement in operations abroad, adapting armed forces to the emerging needs from the ground. The attention devoted by the Italian Parliament to defense reforms has thus been scarce (cf. D'Amore 2001). As argued above, the German context was significantly different, especially in the 1990s.

DEFENSE POLICY CHANGE IN THE NEW CENTURY

Moving Slowly: Germany's Timid Steps toward Reform

Germany maintained the "*Wehrpflicht*" (conscription) until 2011, despite the drastically reduced likelihood of territorial defense (Krotz 2015). Italy had already decided to suspend conscription in the mid-1990s (Coticchia and Moro 2015). Also in the post-2001 era, the pace of military transformation in the two countries diverged. Germany continued to prefer nonmilitary—that is, diplomatic and economic—instruments to act in the global arena, toolbox in order to pursue its interests and prestige abroad.

The last fifteen years witnessed a "learning process" resulting in increased German ambitions in security policy.[4] For example, the "*Bundeswehr* deployments to the Balkans in the 1990s demonstrated the limited utility of this territorial defense force in expeditionary operations" (Noetzel and Schreer 2008: 216). In Germany learning from operational experience in operations abroad remained limited and did not increase pressure to transform the military, as occurred in Italy (Coticchia and Moro 2015). In fact, while Italian troops were involved in a considerable number of operations abroad in the last fifteen years, the deployability of the *Bundeswehr* remained limited, despite its involvement in Afghanistan. The consequences of such different military engagement were evident in terms of emulation, adaptation, and external pressures to reform the armed forces.

At the beginning of the new century, although the independent "Weizsäcker Commission," headed by the Chief of Staff Hans-Peter von Kirchbach, and

Defense Minister Scharping expressed its concern toward the *Bundeswehr* regarding the delay in modernizing and transforming of German armed forces, it still emphasized territorial defense. Thus, oddly enough, territorial and collective defense, rather than crisis management, remained "the underlying rationale" of German security (Dyson 2007: 95). The committee recognized that a shift from the doctrine of territorial defense was necessary on the basis of two considerations. First, the experience of participating in war as occurred in Kosovo well illustrated the drastic need to modernize the armed forces. Second, the redesigning of the *Bundeswehr* was widely supported under the condition of not spending more money. In that senses, the role of the Bundestag has been extremely relevant.

The 2003 Defense Policy Guidelines (2003), deeply affected by *nine-eleven*, seemed to represent a turning point for the German defense, expanding the role of the armed forces to a wider spectrum of operations, and highlighting a brand new ambition. The Guidelines "radically redefined the *Bundeswehr*'s role" (Dyson 2007: 122), focusing on crisis management and finally adopting the recommendations of the "Weizsäcker Commission."

However, the gap between ambitions and capabilities was still considerable, as illustrated by the 2004 huge cuts to the defense budget. Reforming the *Bundeswehr* remained "an outstanding task and one which will continue to be both protracted and problematic" (Longhurst 2005: 34). In addition, the Defense Policy Guidelines were not formally approved by the Cabinet, which preferred to "avoid debate on foreign military deployment" (Wiesner 2011: 171). The 2006 White Paper aimed at readjusting German defense policy to a changing international security environment (Noetzel and Schreer 2008). The White Paper was extremely ambitious, imagining the possibility to undertake two stability operations of the size of ISAF. Precisely the operation in Afghanistan had made clear the need to adapt and transform the armed forces (Franke 2012). The document illustrated the goal of deploying 14,000 troops in up to five separate crisis-management operations. Five years later, however, the *Bundeswehr* was capable of deploying only around 8,000 troops. The context on the ground helped to reduce such ambition to more realistic views, also by showing significant problems in terms of the deployed assets (from tactical transport aircraft to protected armed vehicles, from surveillance to UAVs).

On the whole, as occurred in Italy (Coticchia and Moro 2016), the military mission in Afghanistan represented a real engine for military transformation, much more than the operations undertaken before (Dyson 2011). For instance, the complexity of the ISAF operational environment fostered important changes to the lessons-learned process. In the 2000s doctrines followed deployment, and the different development of the operations and military crises abroad. In the 2003 Defense Policy Guidelines conflict resolution

and fight against terrorism were the main tasks, while in the 2011 Defense Policy Guidelines territorial defense was among the top priorities. After problems of ground (especially the dramatic events in Kunduz in 2009) and budget restraints, the German Defense opted for narrowing the tasks.[5] As a result of deployment abroad "a new sense of realism about the deficiencies in processes and structures that constrained the force has set in" (Seibert 2012: 60). Several internal reports[6] confirmed the significant weakness of the *Bundeswehr* as well as the fact that the national level of ambition could not be achieved with current force structure and capabilities.

Also the independent Weise Commission released a report (October 2010) that illustrated the considerable problems and lacks of German defense, proposing noticeable changes to reform structures and capabilities. The 2011 Defense Policy Guidelines welcomed some of those suggestions, restructuring the Ministry of Defense and its Directorates (which were halved), and increasing the power of the *Generalinspekteur* (the Inspector General). Moreover, the categories of "stabilization operations" and "crisis response missions" were abolished, the experience of ISAF had revealed the impossibility of maintaining such separate force categories. Above all, the reforms adopted by the ministers Zu Guttemberg and De Mezière in recent years helped "the re-structuring and the re-orientation of the German defense."[7] The reforms introduced relevant "bureaucratic adjustments"[8] for German defense. The "reorientation" of the *Bundeswehr* in recent years thus was marked by the suspension of the compulsory service, and the reduction of personnel and equipment.[9] Recent attention devoted by German government to defense spending (Ungaro 2016) relates to the significant lack of military capabilities, aggravated by the shrinking budget, increasing costs of personnel and by the delays of old programs, such as frigates or the "Puma" vehicles.[10]

Despite those significant changes, the pace and timing of the reforms between Italy and Germany diverged also in the new century. For instance, the German Defense published the first conceptual outline of its approach on net-centric warfare in 2006, struggling then for years to implement the so-called Net Op Fu (Wiesner 2011: 157). In addition, while Italy adopted on the ground during ISAF the first net-centric equipment (Coticchia and Moro 2016), Germany was still waiting for the first general simulation in 2015. Moreover, "jointness" became crucial in the German defense debate only in the new century, as illustrated by the creation of the "Operations Command" and the "Response Force Operations Command" in 2001. The "joint mentality"[11] was reinforced in 2011, when the structure of the Chiefs of Staff was modified in order to increase coordination. On the contrary, Italian defense, which had focused on jointness since the 1985 White Book, had already created similar joint structures and institutions in the mid of the 1990s.

In Germany the "Operations Command" was established only in 2001, thanks to the lesson learnt in Kosovo when the *Bundeswehr* understood that one service command was insufficient to direct complex operations that required support from all services.[12] It is worth noticing how those reforms were strictly linked to the crucial role played by NATO and multinational interoperability on the ground. Deployment fostered the German military modernization, increasing needs and demands of adaptation (Dyson 2011). This was true also for Italy which, unlike Germany, had a different degree of participation in military operations abroad. Also, variation in parliamentary control helps understating the different paths.

The most recent German White Paper (2016) affirmed that Germany should provide a larger contribution to regional international security, also with armed forces. The document highlights how the external environment, following Crimea and Brexit, is becoming more volatile. Its main novelties are a clear reference to "national interest" and the possibility to operate abroad in ad hoc multinational coalitions. German policy thus deviates from the strict multilateralism that had always guided German defense. Nevertheless, the role of the *Bundestag* remained unaltered: it maintained the prerogative over military issues, limiting the deployment that fostered military innovation in the Italian case. The White Paper recognizes the relevance of the parliament encouraging a "more flexible interpretation of the law to be able to act if necessary, but ad hoc military coalitions might well turn out to be incompatible with Germany's Basic Law, although the Constitutional Court has yet to be called upon to give a verdict."[13] Thus, domestic legal flexibility can be considered a crucial premise for greater military activism and transformation.

Indeed, the concept of "parliamentary army" designed by the German Federal Constitutional Court "attempts to strike a balance between executive effectiveness and parliamentary participation" (Aust and Vashakmadze 2008: 2221). The Court's 2008 decision on the presence of NATO AWACS planes in Turkey confirmed the need of an authorization of the *Bundestag* even for that type of mission (Aust and Vashakmadze 2008: 2233). Therefore, while the *Bundeswehr*'s military involvement has increased over time, parliamentary control has also been enhanced. Nothing similar occurred in Italy, which is still waiting for a law that regulates the role of Parliament in the case of military operations abroad (Di Camillo and Tessari 2013). In other words, the Italian executive still maintained autonomy concerning defense and military issues. While, as reported by Noetzel and Schreer (2008: 221), "the general issue of deploying the *Bundeswehr* was no longer seen as a source of contention in German domestic politics," the constraints posed on the deployment helped reducing the degree of involvement of the armed forces. Among them, the strict control of the *Bundestag* over all key-elements of the missions represents a crucial dimension and allowing it to preserve the "culture of

restraint" over operational issues, including rules of engagement, command and control and risk assessment (Dyson 2011: 553).

Adaptation in Contact, the Italian Way

Throughout the 2000s Italy displayed substantial continuity in terms of narratives on the defense model to adopt. The 2001 report *New Forces for a New Century* underlined the main lessons learned from a decade of military interventions abroad: combined use of diplomacy, force and intelligence; a constant focus on reconstruction and development; a proportional use of force for deterrence and protection; the effectiveness of communication; quality of training; and readiness.

The *Libro Bianco 2002* (White Paper), released only a few months after 9/11, aimed at adapting the Italian defense model to new threats by developing an effective and efficient military instrument. After the publication of the White Paper, other documents contributed to shaping Italian military doctrine. The *Chief of the Italian Defense Staff Strategic Concept* focused on a "holistic approach" (2005: 31) which should encompass political, diplomatic, economic, social, legal, and informational initiatives in addition to military operations. The main innovation, compared with the *Libro Bianco 2002*, was the definition of "combat situations." *Investire in Sicurezza* (Investing in Security), released in 2005, emphasized the risks of the "usability" (2005: 21) of the military instrument. The never-ending legacies of the Cold War (above all expenses for personnel), and the effects of the financial crisis in terms of cuts in the defense sector, hindered the process of military transformation. Nevertheless, thanks to constant deployment on the ground (especially in Afghanistan) the Italian armed forces continued to develop skills, equipment, capabilities, and approaches, collecting a growing experience even in combat situations (Coticchia and Moro 2015). The 2013 *Ministerial Directive* was a review of the overall reform proposed by the technocratic government led by Mario Monti (2011–2013) as part of a spending review of the entire defense sector. The reform, adopted with bipartisan consensus, was a pragmatic attempt to save money by reducing personnel (from 190,000 to 150,000 military units) and large procurement commitments in order to refit the armed forces to a new context of large budget cuts throughout the public sector in Italy. According to the document, despite the mounting constraints posed by the economic crisis, widespread regional and global instability still entailed constant military involvement in multilateral stability operations abroad. Once again, unlike Germany, "power projection" remained at the center of the Italian doctrine. Also the most recent *Libro Bianco* (2015) confirmed this emphasis, focusing primarily on the Mediterranean as a key strategic region for Italy (Locatelli et al. 2016).

In sum, the pace and timing of the while process of transformation, as well as the degree of engagement in military interventions, confirm a substantial difference with the case of Germany. In fact, despite considerable financial problems, the abovementioned reforms allowed the military instrument to provide a vital contribution to multilateral operations, from Afghanistan to Libya.

WAYS AHEAD

The comparison of defense policy change in Germany and Italy offers two important insights into how middle powers behave on the international scene by unpacking the process of change. First, it is important to look at how different domestic institutions interact with policy preferences (on how to define a country's place in the international arena) thus helping shape key decisions in defense policy. By comparing Germany and Italy, domestic differences help understand better the divergent post-Cold War trajectories of the two countries. Second, it illustrates the vital importance of "feedback effects" deriving from field experience in fostering, and establishing the directions for, reforms. In sum, this chapter suggests two hypotheses for future research. The first hypothesis is that differences in executive-legislative relationship explain post-Cold War the timing and nature of military reforms. The second hypothesis is that a greater involvement in military operations abroad fosters sooner and more structural reforms because of the lessons learnt by the military on the ground.

The chapter has also contributed to the debate on the evolution of defense policy in the two countries. By doing so, it opens the floor to contemporary defense policy. Current European middle powers face extreme volatility, marked by Brexit, EU defense novelties (such as PESCO), regional instability, populism, and challenges, and the mounting attention devoted to defense spending within NATO. Is Germany still reluctant and hesitant in the field of security? Recent developments suggest that German defense and foreign policy is taking a new path. Although the debate over Germany as a reluctant hegemon is still open and controversial (Destradi 2015), signs of change are evident (e.g., a growing defense spending). However, the military involvement of German troops abroad remains limited. As for Italy, activism deeply reshaped the country's forces much earlier than in Germany. Is this going to continue in the future? More than other European countries, Italy suffered from the economic and financial crisis, leading to a reduction of the defense budget. These developments suggest that Italy's approach in the near term might be more prudent, as advocated by the populist parties who won the 2018 elections. Further research should investigate the possibility of discontinuity in both post-Cold War German and Italian defense policy.

NOTES

1. For a general analysis of middle powers in international politics, see Holbraad 1984; Jordaan 2003; and Valigi 2017. On the evolution of Italian and German Defense Policy, see Coticchia and Moro 2016; Coticchia 2018; Dyson 2008; and Kraft 2018.

2. Executive autonomy in Germany is "compromised by the diffusion of competencies on defense policy within the core executive anchored in the Basic Law" (Dyson 2011: 249).

3. The *New Defense Model* represented a reflection on the 1991 *Desert Storm* operation in Iraq, when Italy carried out its first air strikes since World War II.

4. Interview with a senior SWP researcher, Berlin, April 9, 2015.

5. Interview with a ZMSBw researcher, Potsdam, April 1, 2015.

6. For instance: the Ministry of Defense's 2010 "Internal Deficit Review" (*Strukturkommission der Bundesweher*), and the review led by the Inspector General in August 2010.

7. Interview with a ZMSBw researcher, Potsdam, April 1, 2015.

8. Interview with a former member of the "Weizsäcker Commission," Berlin, April 16, 2015.

9. The De Mazière's reforms have witnessed a reduction of the *Bundeswehr* to 180,000 troops.

10. Interview with a German journalist and blogger, Berlin, April 9, 2015.

11. Interview with a former German Lieutenant General, Berlin, April 9, 2015.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

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Chapter 4

Germany and Japan

Great or Middle Powers in Global Banking Regulation?

Sara Konoe

When looking at the material power capacities of Germany and Japan, it would be hard to characterize them as "middle powers," especially due to their large economic size and presence (i.e., large GDP and high GDP per capita) (cf. Manicom and Reeves 2014: 27–28).[1] Indeed, some scholars on middle powers categorize both countries as great powers, ranked just below the United States and China (Gilley and O'Neil 2014: 4–5). If countries' material capacities primarily determine their positional power in the international system, then Germany and Japan can be great powers, at least in economic and financial affairs.[2] The increasing role of middle powers in contemporary economic governance is reflected in the formation of the Group of Twenty (G20)—the countries closely cooperating in financial regulatory reforms at a global level. In this group, Canada, Australia, South Korea, Indonesia, Argentina, Mexico, and Turkey are called the Middle 7, based on their plausible middle power status. The Middle 7 interacts with and mediates between or within the G7 (the United States Germany, France, the United Kingdom [UK], Canada, Italy, and Japan) and BRICS (Brazil, South Africa, China, Russia, and India) (Cooper and Jongryn 2012: 111, 113).

The regional positions of Germany and Japan also impact their positions in the international system: Germany enjoys a close regional partnership with the EU, while Japan engages in a looser form of policy coordination with its Asia-Pacific partners, including the Association of South-East Asian Nations plus Three (ASEAN, China, Japan, and South Korea). Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP or TPP-11), which came into effect in December 2018. In particular, Germany's close ties with European partners often strengthen and amplify its bargaining power. The two countries' influential

presence in a regional context—even more so in the case of Germany—could make any analysis of them as middle powers unconvincing.

However, the middle power literature looks not only at countries' material power capacities but also at their diplomatic behaviors and policies to define whether a country is a middle power. The behavioral characteristics of a middle power are called "middlepowermanship," which offers mediation, coalition-building, multilateralism, and compromise brokerage (Stephen 2013: 39–40). In particular, middle power countries' typical behavior includes mediating disputes between great powers and building bridges between countries, although they could also challenge and diminish the hegemony of great powers. By aligning with great powers or countering great powers, middle powers often seek and promote peacekeeping, multipolarity, and rule-based institutions (Gilley and O'Neil 2014).[3] Although Germany and Japan cannot be called middle powers in a capacity dimension, their post–World War II diplomacy has been oriented toward multilateralism, displaying some elements that can be called "middlepowermanship" (cf. Cox 1996).

Germany has long emphasized the importance of European integration as the core of its foreign policy in the post-World War II context and pursued collaborations with European partners on various issues, to such an extent that it forfeited its own strong currency, the Deutsche mark, to be replaced by a new common currency, the euro. This should be conditioned by Germany's recently enhanced power in the region due to its largest creditor status, after the euro crisis. Japan also placed high priority on multilateralism in economic cooperation through the GATT/WTO forum over a narrower regional arrangement in Asia—the latter led by a small number of great regional powers, including Japan itself. Japan's stance in economic diplomacy shifted in the late 1990s, as it increasingly took leadership in constructing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) network in the Asia-Pacific region (Katada and Solis 2008: 121). In general, both Germany and Japan prefer not to be seen as too great a power in a global forum and do not want to antagonize their neighboring states for political and historical reason (cf. Gilley and O'Neil 2014: 15). Recently, discussions have arisen as to whether, against the background of post-Cold War uncertainties, declining U.S. hegemony and the changing balance of power in Asia and Europe, Germany and Japan are becoming "normal countries" through rethinking of their foreign policies and more actively engaging in regional or international affairs.[4]

This chapter looks at how the two countries' power positions in the global system possibly influenced the policymaking process and outcomes for a specific issue of global banking regulation—capital adequacy requirements through the Basel Accords. Due to their large creditor status and transnationally active financial institutions (especially Japanese city banks in the late 1980s before the bursting of Japan's bubble), both countries can be seen as

"great powers" in their market capacity in the field of finance. Yet, they are distinctively positioned below other big financial powers—specifically the United States (and also the UK for the negotiations of Basel I). The United States and the UK host important international financial markets such as New York and London, respectively, and have started tightening regulation of banks' capital and solvency standards earlier than other countries (especially Japan), partly to mitigate the fallout of financial liberalization in the 1980s, which progressed as part of broader neoliberal reforms under Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, respectively. Thus, the United States and the UK were able to use their market power as a threat and effectively put together proposals for new global banking regulation, as exemplified by their initiative in Basel I in 1988. Compared to the United States and the UK, Japan and Germany—hosting Tokyo and Frankfurt, respectively—had been considered to be second tier, even after their market liberalizations in the 1990s. When one looks at the negotiation process of the Basel Accords, Germany and Japan seemed to adopt or reluctantly accept—at least, in the stages of agenda setting and setting out a basic framework at each negotiation—an overall framework that was put together under other countries' initiatives, despite their occasional success in gaining various concessions.

The empirical evidence below suggests that national and jurisdictional preferences regarding capital adequacy requirements originated from industrial interests, which were embedded in the countries' financial and banking systems and situations. Although central bankers, who are rather politically independent, were major players in negotiating detailed proposals, especially for the countries whose central banks are fully in charge of financial regulations, national preferences associated with industrial situations influenced the agenda-setting and negotiation process. This is because central bankers or regulators cannot agree on terms that might severely damage their financial sector (for Japan, see Himino 2005: 45). The main concerns of central bankers and financial regulators at a negotiation table are twofold: financial stability on the domestic, regional, and global levels, on the one hand, and the competitiveness of their own financial institutions, on the other. Facing the necessity of rebalancing these aims, the major economic/financial powers harmonized the rules and standards in bank capital adequacy regulations mainly through discussions at the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (Basel Committee) since the 1980s. Major agreements initiated by the Basel Committee include Basel I (agreed upon in 1988), Basel II (agreed upon in 2004), and Basel III (agreed upon in 2010). In Basel I and Basel III, U.S. and UK regulators initiated or strongly supported strengthening capital adequacy regulations for banks, while ensuring a level playing field with other foreign banks. In Basel II, U.S. regulators, again, played a leading role in laying out its framework and arguably leading to deregulation, while representing the

interests of their financial sectors in a boom. The next section discusses the context of the Basel Accords negotiations as well as the national preferences and compromises of Germany and Japan in the negotiation process.

BASEL NEGOTIATION: CONTEXTS, PREFERENCES, AND COMPROMISES

Capital adequacy regulations for banks have long been discussed and coordinated at a global level since the 1970s through discussions at the Basel Committee, initially called the Committee on Banking Regulations and Supervisory Practices. The Basel Committee is hosted at the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) in Basel, Switzerland. Originally, central bank governors and regulators of the G10 countries were represented at the Basel Committee. After the 2008 crisis, the committee's membership was expanded to twenty-eight countries and jurisdictions in order to include emerging economies. The Basel Committee has acted on the basis of consensus without enforcement power, which means that cooperation with member states is necessary for implementing the agreed-upon standards. The Basel Committee was first set up to address the global financial repercussions of the collapse of Bankhaus Herstatt in 1974, which resulted in the spread of losses across borders due to time gaps in settling international transactions. After the Basel Committee had set up the rules for supervisory responsibilities over foreign branches and subsidiaries in 1975, it reached the first important agreement on capital adequacy standards in 1988—Basel I—to ensure both financial stability and a level playing field. Basel I was initiated by the United States and the UK to respond to their market turmoil around that time and to the increasing competitiveness of foreign banks—Japanese banks, in particular. Even before Basel I, each country on its own initiative employed different standards to minimize the bankruptcy risk of its banks. Capital adequacy regulations—which mandate that banks hold a certain level of capital to absorb possible losses from their risky assets—had become standard practices for the United States and western European countries. In the United States, the Latin American debt crisis and the savings and loan crisis led to intense discussions to enhance capital regulations. To address the Latin American debt crisis, the U.S. Congress had to approve an increase in contributions to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In exchange, fearing an electoral backlash, Congress pressured regulators to tighten regulatory standards. This led to the enactment of the International Lending Supervisory Act (ILSA) in 1983, which enabled regulators to impose capital adequacy regulations on banks. In response, regulators faced increasing demands from American banks to keep the industry competitive vis-à-vis foreign banks and possible political interventions on their behalf.

The ILSA led to the U.S. initiative for bilateral and multilateral agreements on capital adequacy requirement (Kapstein 1994; Reinicke 1995). This law directed the U.S. Federal Reserve Board (FRB) chairman and the secretary of the Treasury—the heads of agencies in charge of financial regulations—to work on developing an international agreement on capital adequacy regulations. The competitive disadvantages of American banks vis-à-vis foreign banks that could result from capital adequacy regulations were discussed during congressional discussions on the ILSA. Congress mandated that regulators provide a report after one year of seeking international agreements within a Basel framework. FRB Chairman Paul Volcker presented this congressional request in the Basel Committee in March 1984. In the United States, the subsequent failure and bailout of Continental Illinois in 1984—the eighth largest bank in the United States—renewed political pressures on the FRB to adopt more stringent capital adequacy regulation. Thus, it sought a better model by looking at other countries' practices and eventually replaced its fixed capital-to-asset ratio regulation with a European-type risk-weighted capital requirement system, which the Bank of England, an official regulator in the UK, had adopted in 1980. Accordingly, resistance from the American Bankers Association (ABA) mounted. In response, the FRB sought bilateral international cooperation with the UK rather than multilateral cooperation, as the Basel negotiation was not making good progress in harmonizing (Kapstein 1994: 108–13; Reinicke 1995: 148–49, 162–63). On the UK side, the Bank of England wanted to incorporate off-balance-sheet activities into the risk-weighted model to mitigate the possible fallout from the financial big bang in 1986. Bilateral cooperation would help fend off resistance from industries (Solomon 1995: 416–17).

In July 1986, Volcker cooperated with Bank of England Governor Robin Leigh-Pemberton to agree on common standards to incorporate UK-type risk-based capital adequacy regulations as well as capital regulation of off-balance-sheet activities. They officially announced their standards in January 1987. For the UK, such a bilateral initiative counteracted the harmonization initiative with European Community (EC) partners, thus generating resentment among EC officials (Kapstein 1994: 113; Solomon 1995: 425). While the United States and the UK pursued talks with Japan and the EC, they also pressured the Basel Committee to come up with an agreement on common standards among the G10 (Kapstein 1994: 115). This pressure was effective, as there was a possible threat to exclude noncompliant foreign banks from American and British markets based on their bilateral agreement (Oatley and Nabors 1998: 50; Singer 2004: 546; Singer 2007: 60–61). As Kapstein (1994: 106) notes, "The story of the Basel Accord thus illustrates the enduring strength of the United States in shaping and advancing policies in international economic relations." Japan and France—countries with low capital ratios—resisted such

a proposal. Germany also resisted the proposal due to its view on the poor fit between a uniform capital standard and its universal banking system, in which securities businesses and banking are not separated on a sector basis, and the resulting disadvantages for German banks (Kapstein 1994: 113; Oatley and Nabors 1998: 47–48).

In the case of Japan, before the unveiling of the U.S.-UK bilateral plan in January 1987, the Ministry of Finance, then financial regulator, issued a notification in May 1986 to renew capital adequacy regulations and announced a capital-asset ratio target of 4 percent, to be achieved by March 1991.[5] In Japanese guidelines, assets were calculated based on fixed amounts, not risk-based amounts; a 6 percent ratio target was adopted if 70 percent of unrealized capital gains on banks' shareholdings (Japan's substantial component of capital, due to its asset bubble) was included in the definition of capital (Himino 2005: 13–15). In contrast, the Anglo American agreement proposed risk-based calculation for a capital-asset ratio, excluded the unrealized capital gains on banks' shareholdings from the definition of capital, and required quick implementation. Moreover, the common understanding of the minimum ratio was set to be higher than the United States's existing 6 percent (Solomon 2005: 417, 422–24). Japan was not experiencing stability issues at that time, and tightening capital regulations over its banks would have harmed their competitiveness. However, the threat of exclusion from American and British markets would damage Japanese banks even more, thus leading Japan to accept their deal (Oatley and Nabors 1998: 49; Ota 2011: 28–44; Singer 2007: 61). In response to Japan's demand, the United States and the UK allowed part of the unrealized capital gains on securities (up to 45 percent) to be counted as base capital (capital of lower quality than Tier 1 capital), although capital standards were raised from an initially agreed 6 percent to 8 percent, of which 4 percent should be Tier 1 capital consisting of shares and reserves. In the case of Germany, Bundesbank President, Karl Otto Pöhl, objected to any deviation from the German national definition of "pure" capital, as German banks would not be able to meet high standards using only "pure" capital (Solomon 1995: 425). During the negotiation process, the definition of capital and the minimum level of capital holding to access foreign markets were the key controversies among member states. The negotiation shows how the financial regulators or central bankers who were involved in financial regulatory coordination could attempt to, at least indirectly, accommodate the interests and situation of their national banking sector. Yet, competitiveness was not the only concern, as the regulatory coordination occurred against a backdrop of Anglo American electorates' increasing concerns over financial instability.

The Basel Committee announced a proposal on common standards in December 1987, and after making some changes following a comment period, Basel I was agreed upon in July 1988. Basel I introduced rough measures to

calculate the risk of different types of assets. For example, any mortgage corresponded to a risk weight of 50 percent (thus requiring 4 percent capital—a half of 8 percent requirement), while credits to OECD countries corresponded to a risk weight of zero (thus requiring no capital to cover potential losses). However, as Tarullo (2008: 87–91) describes, against a backdrop of securitization and the development of highly complex internal risk methods by banks, the weakness of Basel I increasingly became a concern for both banks and regulators—especially for the U.S.'s FRB. As a widening gap existed between regulatory capital and banks' own risk assessments, accommodating large banks' internal risk assessments into regulation was considered to be necessary to make capital regulation effective (Ferguson 2003). Banking industries also kept complaining about the impact of Basel I on efficiency, profitability, and competitiveness; in response, regulators increasingly allowed banks to count more and more items as Tier 1 capital and lowered the risk weighting by interpretation. Eventually, to incorporate more detailed risk calculations into bank capital regulation, Basel I was revised in January 1996 to accommodate the market risk and enable banks to use their internal risk assessment—to be called the internal ratings-based (IRB) approach. After several years of extensive lobbying by banks, the committee finally allowed banks to use internal ratings to calculate regulatory capital (Wood 2005: 125–26). American bankers' intensified lobbying reflected an economic situation in the mid-1990s in the United States. American bankers were becoming powerful around this time, as the information technology (IT) revolution that started in the 1970s and 1980s led to increasing profits in the U.S. financial sector as a whole. The American economy entered a long-time boom, called the "New Economy," with the aid of low-interest rate policies (cf. Ishizaki 2014). At the same time, the increasing role of new financial products, such as money management funds (MMFs), and nonbank sectors' financial activities challenged the market share and business models of commercial banks, thus incentivizing banks to counter their rivals through lobbying.

Furthermore, FRB Chairman Alan Greenspan publicly stated the limitations of the Basel I framework in May 1996. At the international conference in February 1998, which was hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and entitled "Financial Services at the Crossroad: Capital Regulation in the Twenty-First Century," the Basel I framework was severely criticized, and many speakers supported the use of banks' credit risk models as a basis for calculating regulatory capital requirements. In September 1998, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York William McDonough, who had become chair of the Basel Committee in June 1998, called for a major overhaul of Basel I (Ota 2011: 90–97; Tarullo 2008: 89; Wood 2005: 128–29).

In June 1999, the Basel Committee published the first consultative package of Basel II for comments and feedback. Concerning the agenda-setting

process for Basel II (1997–1999), Goldbach (2015: 1106) points out the essential role of U.S. regulators—the FRB, in particular—in responding to domestic pressures from their banks. As Wood (2005) characterizes, the committee's first proposal included the IRB approach, in which capital requirements are calculated based on the estimated probability of defaults within a year (how likely borrowers are to not make due payments, so that banks have to incur the cost), as well as the standardized approach, in which banks could use external ratings, including those provided by credit rating agencies. Both were the major elements eventually adopted by Basel II. In response to the consultative package, a network of transnationally active financial institutions such as the International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA) and the Institute of International Finance (IIF) demanded more differentiated treatment of risk and insisted upon the accuracy of their internal risk-evaluation mechanisms over external ratings. Furthermore, major controversies among member states included the treatment of loans to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). European countries—Germany, in particular—raised concerns about the impacts of the new Basel Accord on lending to SMEs, as a basis of their economic strength, as most SMEs were unrated by credit agencies (Wood 2005: 132–36). In response to resistance from nationally and locally oriented German banks, the German Parliament mandated its regulators renegotiate an international deal on behalf of these banks (Goldbach 2015: 1112).

After the Basel Committee published the second consultative package in January 2001 (a modified version of the first package), German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder threatened to veto any EU directive to implement Basel II in its present form due to its negative impact on SMEs. Germany's demand was incorporated into the negotiation outcomes by reducing charges on SMEs in the IRB assessment of banks (The Economist 2001; Wood 2005: 137–43). In accordance with the reduced charges on SMEs in the IRB approach, a simplified internal-ratings approach, called Foundation IRB (F-IRB), was made available for smaller banks so that more banks could benefit from reduced capital charges for their lending to SMEs. For the issue of treatment of loans to SMEs, Japan and Italy had similar concerns as the Germans, and the three countries cooperated in lowering risk weights for SME loans (Himino 2005: 165–66; Sato 2008: 272). Moreover, in the midst of this package's coordination, especially after October 2002, and after the announcement of the third consultative package in April 2003, U.S. politicians and domestically oriented American banks increased their involvement and gained concessions such as beneficial treatment of securitized residential mortgages, while politicians threatened a possible veto (Goldbach 2015: 1114–17). This compromise reflected growing business interests in the United States in subprime mortgage lending, a substantial portion of which was securitized, during a housing bubble in the early 2000s.

It was later criticized that Basel II had the effect of relaxing capital regulations for banks. The inclusion of a sophisticated risk-based approach and the accommodation of banks' internal risk models into regulatory processes (the IRB approach) led to about a 6.8 percent average decline in minimum capital requirements for international banks in G10 countries (Singer 2007: 65). The relatively stable financial markets in G10 countries during the 1990s, except for Japan, changed regulators' calculus and made stringent regulatory standards at the international level unnecessary (Singer 2007: 66). As many member states, including the United States and the UK, were experiencing an economic boom, there was no strong political will to tighten regulatory measures for the sake of financial stability. The regulatory weakness of Basel II was severely criticized when the 2008 global financial crisis erupted, although any account about the impact of Basel II should be qualified by the fact that the rules had not been fully implemented yet when the crisis started to develop in the summer of 2007.

Although the Basel Committee initially hesitated to admit its failure, it eventually had to respond to the criticism. The G30, a group of financial experts in national and global financial regulations and central banking, including influential figures such as Paul Volcker, Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, Mario Draghi, Timothy Gaithner, and Paul Krugman (Ota 2011: 133–37), agreed on a proposal calling for a transformation of the financial regulatory platform. Moreover, due to the global and political repercussions of the 2008 global financial crisis, political involvement in financial regulations was increased through regular meetings of the G20 Summit and by the establishment of the Financial Stability Board (FSB).[6] At the first G20 Summit in Washington, DC, in November 2008—an emergency meeting—the countries agreed to undertake financial reforms, and at the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh in September 2009, the deadline for reaching an agreement on bank capital and liquidity regulations was set as the end of 2010, by which time the Basel Committee had to come up with a new framework (Krasner and Jongryn 2012).

This led to the enactment of Basel III, which introduced a stricter definition of capital, an increase in overall levels of capital, and other new requirements, such as a capital surcharge on systemically important financial institutions (SIFIs), a leverage ratio, and liquidity regulations (cf. Bengtsson 2013: 321–23). An initial plan for Basel III was presented in December 2009 and approved in December 2010 after modification. Then, after member states prepared for implementation, implementation started in 2013, to be completed in 2019.[7] In fact, Basel III reflected the content of postcrisis reforms in the United States and UK—economies that were severely hit by the 2008 global financial crisis. Before the implementation of Basel III, the United States and UK had already tightened their regulatory requirements through

the Dodd–Frank Act and the Financial Services Act, respectively. Global harmonization of stringent capital requirements, capital surcharge, and liquidity ratios was expected to promote a level playing field and mitigate competitive disadvantages for U.S. and UK financial industries (cf. Howarth and Quaglia 2016: 181–86; Konoe 2014: 184–86; Quaglia 2014: 43–46, 53).

Under the Basel III framework, with regard to capital holdings, banks are obliged to hold at least 4.5 percent of their risk assets as core Tier 1 capital (called Common Equity Tier 1 Capital), which is limited to common shares and reserves. The new definition of core Tier 1 capital excludes subordinated debt, long-term public borrowing, silent participation (e.g., German states' investment in public banks), and hybrid capital. As many continental European banks do not rely on equity finance compared to banks in the United States and UK, many European countries resisted such changes. Japan also joined forces in broadening the definition of capital. Their resistance did not lead to much success but to some concessions, including counting a portion of deferred tax assets (overpaid tax, which can be calculated into tax deductions in the future) as core Tier 1 (Ota 2011: 147).

In addition to core Tier 1 assets, banks were obliged to hold a 2.5 percent capital conservation buffer and a 0–2.5 percent counter-cyclical buffer to mitigate countercyclical effects. Moreover, a 1–2.5 percent capital surcharge on SIFIs was imposed, as proposed by the United States and UK against resistance from Germany, France, and Japan (Bair 2012). Furthermore, a leverage ratio requires banks to hold 3 percent of capital in relation to their gross assets without risk weighting, in order to mitigate pro-cyclical effects. Concerning the influence of U.S. and UK domestic regulations, it is noteworthy that a leverage ratio regulation had been already introduced in the United States, and a liquidity regulation had been introduced in the UK. Moreover, after the global financial crisis, the United States and UK injected capital into nearly collapsed banks to strengthen their capital base, so their major banks were in relatively good standing before the initiation of Basel III.

In the EU, Germany and France opposed a narrower definition of capital and an increase in capital requirements (Admati and Hellwig 2013: 319, note 8), while the UK and the Netherlands sided with the United States (Howarth and Quaglia 2016: 181). Thus, the EU could not present a unified position on the matter and gained only limited compromises, such as a long transition period until 2019 and a reduction in the level of capital surcharge. However, the EU relaxed the regulatory requirements of Basel III in its implementation through the Capital Requirement Directive (CRD) and Capital Requirements Regulation (CRR) (Howarth and Quaglia 2013: 336–37; Quaglia 2014: 49–50).[8] This can be seen in the incorporation of silent participation into core capital and the limited application of leverage ratios and liquidity regulations in the EU. The Basel Committee reports that some elements of

implementation in the EU are unsatisfactory (Basel Committee on Banking Supervision 2014; Howarth and Quaglia 2016: 187–88).[9] As background for this relaxation of regulatory requirements, one can point to a low level of capital holdings such as core Tier I twice into Tier 1 by SIFIs in Germany and France and political pressures from the German Landesbank and Sparkassen (public banks), which are financed by their states (Länder) through silent participation (Howarth and Quaglia 2013: 340–41; Howarth and Quaglia 2016: 191–93; Masters 2010; Spiegel 2010). A tradition of "bancassurance" in France and some other European countries also motivated the EU to allow double gearing—counting an insurance subsidiary's capital as part of Tier 1 holdings (Howarth and Quaglia 2013: 338–39), which was not allowed under Basel III.

The case studies above show that Germany and Japan gained concessions to some extent, although they played a limited role in framing the core elements of global banking regulation. In Basel II, compromises were made for preferential treatment of loans to SMEs on the insistence of Germany and Japan, whereas the two countries' differing positions on the issue of unrealized gain were balanced in Basel I. In Basel III, definition of capital was broadened to a limited degree and a capital surcharge on SIFIs was reduced on the insistence of these countries. Such compromises originated from the Basel Committee's consensus-based characteristics. As Kapstein (1994: 128) states, "(T)he committee is only as effective as its member states want it to be." Thus, within the broad agenda and framework setup by the largest financial powers, many issues became open to compromises for both transnationally active banks and other member states. In reference to Basel II, Goldbach (2015: 1115) characterizes the Basel Committee as having developed "proposals that would integrate all relevant veto players to a degree sufficient for agreement on a new Accord." The Basel Accords were made inclusive to respond to domestic criticism regarding an "unregulated" financial sector without seriously damaging its competitiveness through regulatory harmonization (cf. Goldbach 2015; Lall 2012). The compromises and inclusiveness shown in the negotiation outcomes did not override the powers exercised by the United States and UK in framing and structuring the agendas and directions of global banking regulations.

Japan's difficulties in leading global financial regulation indicate that a country's financial capacities do not necessarily lead to the enhanced leadership, typical of great powers. As Strange (2015: 27) argues, a distinction exists between relational power—a conventional understanding of power ("the power of A to get to B to do something they would not otherwise do")—and structural power, which is composed of four elements: the security structure, the production structure, the financial structure, and the knowledge structure. To influence the general direction of the world economy, countries

need structural power, that is, "the power to decide how things shall be done, the power to shape frameworks within which states relate to each other, relate to people, or relate to corporate enterprises" (Strange 2015: 27). In the 1980s, Japan's relational power had grown due to financial institutions' increasing market share, which motivated the United States to seek an international agreement for tightened standards. However, Japan's enhanced relational power did not lead to the country's strong leadership in directing global banking regulations. The EU structure gave Germany more advantages in negotiation, but this did not empower Germany with the ability to frame the structure of agreements, either.

THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL AND REGULATORY DYNAMICS

The political science literature provides various explanations for the Basel Accords. Kapstein (1994: 126) emphasizes the role of the international regulatory community in addressing systemic problems. This view is called a functionalist account, as it stresses the international community's role in providing public goods—that is, financial stability and equal footing in global competition. Although U.S.-UK bilateral pressure in 1986–87 was power-based and politically led, "there is little argument over the importance of the end," which meant tightening rules of supervision but ensuring a level playing field, as it set "common rules for a greatly altered international payments system" (Kapstein 1994: 126).

Oatley and Nabors (1998) criticize such functionalist accounts and state that the Basel Accords involved redistributive cooperation, as politicians sought international cooperation to reduce the costs for voters and bankers. This view can be called a political account. For instance, they argue that, when the Latin American debt crisis hit American banks in the 1980s and the United States had to spend taxpayers' payments on a bank bailout and tighten regulations for banks, U.S. politicians demanded that regulators seek agreement on capital adequacy requirements at the international level to constrain the rapidly growing market share of Japanese banks. In particular, Oatley and Nabors (1998) emphasize the role of the political mandate behind the Basel I negotiations.

However, as shown in the case of Basel II, the initiative for regulatory change can come not only from politicians but also from regulators, who responded to industrial demands to incorporate risk features and complexity into regulatory models, white politics intervened at the later stage. In the case of Basel III, although regulatory harmonization sought to reduce the

adjustment costs for U.S. and UK bankers, the threat of competition from foreign banks was not the main reason for the new agreement. The initiative came from pressing concerns over financial stability, which were expressed at not only domestic but also global levels through FSB, rather than from redistributive questions. In the cases of Basel I and Basel III, political intervention either at domestic or global levels was necessary to initiate international cooperation toward regulatory tightening, but the detailed negotiation process was in the hands of the regulators and central bankers.[10] Thus, not only politicians' roles and motivations but also regulators' discretion and motivations need to be more fully considered to explain the negotiations.

In contrast with the functionalist or political accounts above, Singer (2004) emphasizes the relevant role of regulatory agencies, which seek regulatory autonomy from political intervention. Regulators aim to achieve international cooperation to ensure financial stability without compromising their industries' competitiveness vis-à-vis the competitiveness of industries in other countries. Politicians are likely to intervene, either on behalf of their electorates during the worsening financial crisis or on behalf of the industry under worsening competitiveness of their banks. Thus, regulators face a dilemma during a crisis: possible political intervention on behalf of industries if regulations become stricter, or possible political intervention on behalf of electorates if the status quo holds. To avoid both types of political intervention, regulators are likely to seek international regulatory harmonization. In the 1980s, Japanese and French banks increasingly encroached upon U.S. financial markets, while American banks' exposure to the debt crisis in Latin America made it difficult for regulators to avoid tightening capital regulations for American banks. This led to strategic cooperation between the United States and UK in putting forth their agreement and forcing other countries to come to the negotiation table at the Basel Committee under a framework agreed upon by the United States and UK. While regulatory discretion tends to allow scientific discussion to be reflected in regulatory standards, political backlash often made implementation difficult, as shown by the delayed and limited implementation of the Basel Accords in the United States. The regulatory fragmentation of the United States, in which multiple regulatory agencies exist for different sectors and states, worsened its implementation problems. This is contrasted with the Japanese case, in which domestic criticism against Basel I for its pro-cyclical impact on the credit crunch in the 1990s did not lead to Japan's active move to renegotiate or renege on the agreement.

Concerning Basel III, while the G20 summit and FSB as international bodies politically mandated regulatory overhaul, traditional financial centers in the United States and UK, the countries most severely exposed to the 2008

global financial crisis, supported a reform initiative to tighten global banking regulation in accordance with their already-tightened regulations in domestic contexts. This process resembled the U.S.-UK bilateral initiative for Basel I and reflected their concern over financial stability and competitiveness. At the Basel III negotiation, the EU as a whole could neither take the lead due to many countries' exposure to the 2010 euro crisis nor come up with a unified stance about how to improve capital regulation. Even large powers in the Eurozone, such as Germany and France, were quite reluctant to take the initiative due to their large financial institutions' impaired assets and low levels of core Tier 1 capital among major banks. Japanese financial institutions could not regain their strength after the bursting of Japan's asset bubble at the beginning of the 1990s and the subsequent economic recession or slowdown, which lasted until the early 2000s. Japan's leadership has also been limited in terms of proposing a new vision of what kind of supervisory structure could improve either financial stability or equal footing. In accordance with the shrinking market share of its financial institutions, not only did Japan's relational power decline, but also did one of the resources weaken that could have potentially strengthened its structural power. Although Japanese banks did not incur huge losses from the 2008 global financial crisis compared to the losses of American and European banks, Japanese banks could not significantly strengthen their capital base or their profitability, even after a partial recovery from the bursting of the bubble and the financial crisis of the 1990s. Therefore, Japan was unwilling to lead the discussion on regulatory tightening or to impose stringent financial stability policies on its banks.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION: GERMANY AND JAPAN IN THE BASEL NEGOTIATIONS

The negotiation power of Germany and Japan was never small or marginal, as the sizes of their banking sectors, overseas investments, and capital markets were world-class. In particular, the growing financial power of Japan was prominent in the late 1980s. Japanese banks' share of the international banking business increased from 17 percent to 38 percent from 1983 to 1988 (Solomon 1995: 415), threatening the U.S. and UK markets. However, Japan's enhanced relational power did not overthrow the structural power of United States and UK in global banking regulation. Neither Japan nor Germany was a great power regarding this issue. Great powers are expected to be able to actively take the initiative in framing the core elements of institutions and to pursue their goals without multilateral cooperation, if necessary. Germany and Japan were not in that position. They needed multilateral cooperation in

order to give their banks enough credentials to conduct international business and enable them to access large and deep international markets. For that purpose, they could not bluntly reject the U.S.-UK initiative.

In the cases of Basel II and Basel III, Germany exercised its power more explicitly than Japan did by threatening a veto or by not fully implementing the accords at the EU level. Germany had a relatively strong negotiation power, which stemmed in part from its EU membership. EU member states occupied a large share of the Basel Committee, and their approval would have significantly increased the likelihood of reaching a multilateral consensus. Moreover, the United States needed agreement from the EU to enable its banks to conduct business in the EU market. Such pressure influenced the policy-making process on the issue of securities supervision in the United States, in particular, as examined in Singer (2004, 2010).

The power—whether small, middle, or great—that countries have regarding a specific issue is based on not only relative power capacities within the international system but also the institutional makeup and capacities at the domestic and regional levels, which makes certain national or jurisdictional actors stronger or weaker at the bargaining table. Germany's EU membership generally helped it to influence the Basel negotiation process in its favor, although divided views among EU members often limited the EU's role. Japan's relative inexperience in capital-based regulations due to its so-called convoy system (letting no banks fail) that continued until the mid-1990s as well as the limited ability of the Japanese capital market to attract funds and services from abroad weakened its possible agenda-setting or bargaining power in the 1980s and 1990s. By contrast, not only did regulatory fragmentation in the United States empower its banks to influence the decision-making process, but also America's status of hosting a deep and active capital market as well as issuing a key currency, the U.S. dollar, enlarged its bargaining power. In spite of the substantial material capacities of Germany and Japan from the 1980s to the 2000s, these countries showed "middlepowermanship" in the Basel negotiations while sticking to a multilateral coordination and countering any unilateral or bilateral attempts that contradicted their industrial interests. These two countries have been perceived as great powers, at least in the economic sphere, but their actual bargaining powers in terms of structural power have been limited in the context of global banking regulation. Beyond material capacities, institutional structures/capacities, institutional crisis responsiveness, and regional settings influence countries' positions in the policy-making process at the global level.

For the impact of Brexit on the EU's role, on the one hand, it could reduce some tensions among member states regarding the issue of financial regulation. If so, this could strengthen the EU's negotiation power globally in the

long run, although immediate financial and economic shock stemming from Brexit would severely limit the EU's options and resources. On the other hand, the EU's member states would lose their power to influence preference formation and the policymaking process in the UK, which hosts one of the deepest and most active capital markets, so the divisions between the major powers in the Basel Committee could become sharper. This will add another coordination challenge to the existing one that originated from the recently expanded membership of the Basel Committee.

NOTES

1. I am grateful for financial support from the Murata Science Foundation Research Grant and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Grant-in-Aid for Young Scientists (FY 2013–2016, FY 2017–2018). This contribution is partly based on Konoe (2017).

2. Even in security policy and military affairs, despite the two countries' reserved attitudes, with their "deeply-rooted caution and reactive approach" (Cooper 1997: 3–4), in the post–World War II era, the absolute volume of their expenditures in security and defense policies may not justify their categorization as middle powers.

3. Typically, the concept of middlepowermanship has been used for mediating negotiations between great powers and keeping the status quo under the Cold War context as well as for employing issue-specific entrepreneurship and pursuing niche diplomacy in multilateral settings (Manicom and Reeves 2014: 30-32).

4. For power shifts in Asia in the post-Cold War context, see Aggarwal and Koo (2008) and Katada and Solis (2008); for work related to changing diplomacy in Japan, see Okano-Heijimans (2013) and Soeya (2014). Hyde-Price and Jeffery (2001) analyze discussions of "normalization" of Germany after its reunification.

5. Japan's negotiation power in banking regulation was compromised due to its relative inexperience in capital adequacy requirements (cf. Singer 2007: 59–60).

6. The FSB replaced its precursor, the Financial Stability Forum, which had been set up after the Asian financial crisis, while extending its functions and expanding its membership.

7. The most recent report, "Finalising Post-Crisis Reform," was issued in December 2017 (see https://www.bis.org/bcbs/publ/d424.htm). This added some modification to the previous framework, to be implemented from 2022 to 2027.

8. However, the scope of application is wider for the EU compared to the United States (Howarth and Quaglia 2013: 337; Quaglia 2014: 50).

9. The Basel Committee considered the implementation in Japan to be compliant and in the United States to be largely compliant. See http://www.bis.org/bcbs/implementation/rcap_jurisdictional.htm.

10. However, regulators' roles should not be overstated, as political intervention can curtail regulatory capacities. Political interference in the later stage of the Basel II negotiations led to the United States's late and limited implementation of the agreement, despite U.S. regulators being the ones who initiated the regulatory changes.

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Chapter 5

South Korea's Role as an Emerging Middle Power among Security Concerns

Marco Milani and Federica de Pantz

South Korea represents a useful case for the analysis of the impact of security threats on a state's role as middle power. On the one hand, South Korea is often portrayed as a clear example of a twenty-first-century middle power. Since the launch of the "Global Korea" strategy in 2008, the country's foreign policy has focused on conducting middle power diplomacy in multilateral frameworks such as the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (DAC/OECD), the United Nations, and the G20. On the other hand, the constant threat to its core national security represented by North Korea (DPRK) and the Mutual Security Treaty signed with the United States (U.S.) are intuitively expected to have affected profoundly the country's development of domestic politics and foreign policy. However, in line with traditional definitions of middle powers, in the Korean case this role has been largely associated with its economic rise and ability to project power internationally through *middlepowermanship*-like strategies.

The haziness of the concept of middle power and the related lack of consensus around its sources, its characteristics, and its performance have led the research agenda to focus mainly on the constraints and opportunities that some medium rank states face in projecting power internationally. Traditional definitions of middle powers have flourished within three main research paradigms: realism (Holbraad 1984), liberalism (Cooper et al. 1993), and neo-Gramscianism (Jordaan 2003). These approaches provide different understandings of how we should define and categorize middle powers. Also, they differ on expectations regarding their international conduct and their impact on international relations.

Realist definitions rest on the amount of hard power that a country possesses, and highlight the inability of middle powers to affect the systemic level of global politics. Structural factors, such as the polarity of the international system (measured in relation to the presence of mightier actors), constrain their room for maneuver to the sub-systemic, or regional, level, where they can only act as proxies of a major ally, when bound to this kind of partnership. Liberalism has focused on the international behavior of some medium-ranked states, defined as *middlepowermanship*, to highlight the ability of these countries to project power in an indirect way, namely through actions conducted within global multilateral institutions. Neo-Gramscianism has drawn upon the liberal approach to show the impact of the position of middle powers in the world economic system in creating nuances in international behavior.

What remains strikingly unexplored in all these perspectives is the potential role of security issues in generating constraints and opportunities for the international action of middle powers. This neglect necessarily generates a significant limitation to middle power theory and hinders its ability to provide encompassing understanding of foreign policy conduct. In order to fill this gap this chapter will explore the relation between security issues and middle power diplomacy in the South Korean case: the next section will review the three abovementioned approaches to middle powers and problematize the neglect of security issues from the literature at the theoretical level. The following part will overview South Korea's foreign policy trajectory after the end of the Cold War to trace the emergence of its role as a middle power. Subsequently, the chapter will focus on the middle power strategy implemented by Presidents Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013–2017). Finally, we will discuss the country's security issues and their relations with the middle power role along three lines: the North Korean issue, the alliance with the United States, and South Korea's regional and global aspirations. This analysis will provide important results for opening up new research avenues for the three existing approaches to middle powers, with the inclusion of the role of security issues in generating constraints and opportunities.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITS TO THE ROLE OF MIDDLE POWERS

Focusing on hard power resources, *realism* has traditionally neglected the study of middle powers, more often only distinguishing between great powers and "the rest." A more nuanced understanding of the roles of lesser states in the international system traces the role of middle powers in different structural

conditions, aiming to ascertain the causal relations between these and the foreign policy behavior of medium-ranked countries (Holbraad 1984). In fact, Holbraad's definition of middle power rests on an interpretation of the international system as a hierarchy of power measured in terms of gross national product (GNP), of which middle powers occupy the intermediate class. The projection of power by any country is assumed to be exclusively direct, and for this reason the amount of hard power resources a country commands fully determines its scope of influence. Middle powers' position in the international hierarchy makes them particularly sensitive to the characteristics and dynamics of "high politics," namely the number of great powers in the system and the nature of the relations among them. Conducting a comparative study on different international systems defined in terms of these two criteria, Holbraad finds that the overwhelming presence of more powerful actors limits the room for maneuver of middle powers to the sub-systemic (or regional) level. There, they can aim to exert some degree of influence in multipolar systems when the great powers are in a situation of moderate competition (or a mix of cooperation and conflict) among each other (Holbraad 1984: 213). System polarity thus acts as the main determinant of middle powers' room for maneuver. However, an identified intervening variable is the relationship between a middle power and a great power: unaligned middle powers have historically shown a tendency to enjoy broader independence than the ones who have aligned to a particular great power (Holbraad 1984: 207). In any other situation (unipolarity, bipolarity, fierce great power rivalry) middle powers have tended to act as proxies, operating in the interest of the great power of reference at the regional level, or to create unfruitful coalitions with other weak states.

Middle powers can thus aspire, at best, to conduct independent actions at the regional level, under the constraints of structural dynamics. Their only hope to bring about change in the international system is to become a great power, but this process is not explored in realism, coherent with its structuralist premises and the related exclusion of domestic variables. Realism provides a static view not only of the international system but also of the nature of the middle power role itself, because it does not elucidate the process of power accumulation that could lead a country to develop or abandon the middle power role. The neglect of domestic factors becomes even more problematic in reference to the issue of security, central to realism and somehow implied in Holbraad's intervening variable on which he bases the distinction between aligned and unaligned middle powers.

In reaction to these shortcomings, *liberal studies* have tackled the concept of middle power from a different perspective: while in Holbraad's study national influence could only be exerted directly, liberalism highlights the possibility for states to project power indirectly, operating within global

multilateral institutions to promote policies more aligned to their interests. But while every state in the international system is subject to these structural conditions, middle powers are defined as the subgroup of the medium class of hard power, willing to take full advantage of these opportunities. Great powers do not need to concentrate their actions on institutional bargaining, since their resources allow them to implement more effective strategies, whereas Small powers do not possess a sufficient amount of material capabilities to sustain this bargaining. Middle powers can thus be identified as those countries that possess enough resources to display a particular foreign policy behavior named *middlepowermanship*. This is designed around the core principle of functionalism and is focused on the participation in multilateral institutions, where middle powers assume roles of technical and entrepreneurial leadership on specific niche issues on which they have a comparative advantage in terms of task-related experience. This "niche diplomacy" is mainly conducted on second and third agenda issues, such as human rights, environmental problems, and economic matters, where middle powers tend to act as catalysts (policy entrepreneurs), facilitators (coalition builders and agenda setters), and managers (building institutions, confidence, and credibility) (Cooper et al. 1993: 24–25). In order to maximize the outcomes of their policymaking, they seek the support of like-minded states, which share a common concern on the selected issue, and build consensus around specific political plans. In this sense, middle powers foster cooperation and, at the same time, exert leadership within the policymaking process. According to this perspective, the national interest that underlies the selection of this strategy is diffuse and long-term, in that it concerns the support of a predictable international order, since middle powers do not possess sufficient power to reap the benefits of international conflicts.

Despite throwing light on several aspects that remained unexplored in realist analyses, liberalism has limitations of its own. First, despite the aim of updating the concept of middle power in order to account for changed conditions, the cases on which this concept has been based have mainly been secured, developed Western countries such as Australia, Canada, Norway, and Sweden (Cooper et al. 1993; Cooper 1997). This selection is linked to the claim that "in the security domain, middle powers are often among the most secured (not threatened in the traditional sense of the word) in the world" (Cooper 1997: 41). However, it restricts the universe of cases to a number of countries and leaves aside other potential candidates to the middle power role that, despite being affected by security issues, could be already displaying a *middlepowermanship* strategy. In turn, this limits the potential to apply the concept of middle power to the analysis of the foreign policy more broadly and undermines our understanding of the underlying reasons that lead a country to adopt this particular type of statecraft and hinders the descriptive

accuracy of the strategy itself. Moreover, Cooper's treatment of the connections between high and low politics leaves little room for analyzing security issues (Cooper 1997: 38). In particular, he assumes that the differentiation of the international agenda into first (security), second (economic), and third (environmental and social) issues is gradually deepening. However, since his analysis of middle powers' action concerns only the latter two, he is not able to explain further the linkages between these issues, leaving unexplored an aspect that could prove to be significant for the exertion of technical leadership on which his concept is based. Similarly, liberalism claims that the positive outcome of middle powers' mediation roles also depends on their ability to present themselves as neutral, reliable brokers, but this assumption is based on a case selection limited to secured countries, which has allowed to discard from the analysis any action developed on the first agenda. Furthermore, since middle powers are also assumed to be countries with a strong national interest in a stable and predictable order, analyzing the linkages between the issue of security and the middle power behavior sheds light on additional incentives or constraints for the choice for, and implementation of, such strategies (Cooper et al. 1993; Cooper 1997).

In order to update the concept of middle power, Jordaan has expanded the analysis to "nontraditional" countries that display the middle power behavior, and coined the term "emerging middle powers" (Jordaan 2003). Within the broad class of countries that pursue *middlepowermanship*, he distinguishes between two subgroups on the basis of constitutive criteria: democratic stability, timing of emergence as middle powers, societal cleavages, sociopolitical values, position in the global political economy and attitude toward regional integration (Jordaan 2003). Countries identified as traditional middle powers, such as Australia, Canada, Denmark, and Norway, started implementing *middlepowermanship* during the Cold War, show particular constitutive criteria: they are situated at the core of world economy, are characterized by a high degree of social equality, do not have regional influence, and their perceived neutrality is due to a regional ambivalence of unimportance. Conversely, emerging middle powers like South Africa, Malaysia, Nigeria, Argentina, Brazil, and Turkey display opposite values: these countries are relatively young, unstable, democracies that started displaying a middle power attitude only after the collapse of the bipolar system. They are semi-peripheral in relation to the center of the world's economy, have highly unequal societies and possess strong regional clout, and tend to institutionalize with their neighbors, which provides them with an image of neutrality. These constitutive differences translate into two different styles of *middlepowermanship*. While traditional middle powers have an appeasing attitude toward reforms of the international order, and try to contain pressures toward change, emerging middle powers are more openly reformist (Jordaan 2003: 176). This

means that, although every middle power has a strong and diffuse interest in the support and conservation of a predictable order from which they benefit, the different positioning of traditional and emerging middle powers in the world economy generates different attitudes toward adapting the rules of the system. While providing a more nuanced analysis of middle powers in the twenty-first century and explaining more clearly the origins of their interest in the support of the international order, this focus on the economic dimension risks an inability to capture other major concerns of emerging middle powers. As in the case of the *liberal approach*, middle powers are assumed to be distant from major sources of international conflict, implying that a country under security threat will not display middle power behavior (Cox 1989: 827).

According to this assumption, we would thus expect not to find the identifying behavioral traits of middle powers in a country such as South Korea, which is subject to existential security threat in its immediate neighborhood. For instance, following Holbraad's assumptions, only limited Korean contribution to issues of global significance or participation in international forum is to be expected, as a result of its close relationship with the United States. Similarly, the limited neutrality that derives from this close alliance would not allow Jordaan's model to envision a significant role for the country within the institutions of the international regime. Finally, according to the *liberal approach*, a similar ineffectiveness should derive from Korea's geopolitical proximity to sources of international conflict. In light of empirical observation, however, the aprioristic exclusion of security issues by the literature on middle powers appears to have left under investigated a dimension that may be central to the development of foreign policy strategies. Consequently, this chapter argues that each of the three approaches under review here could benefit from the inclusion of the security dimension within the study of middle powers. Moreover, in order to update the concept itself to current conditions, it is necessary to explore how some countries have dealt with security issues, whether or not it is possible to be a middle power despite traditional security concerns and, if so, how this has evolved. The case of South Korea is able to shed light on such questions.

SOUTH KOREA'S FOREIGN POLICY AFTER THE COLD WAR: PRECONDITIONS FOR GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS

Despite the fact that the concept of middle power has become prominent in South Korea's foreign policy narrative in the past decade, its roots can be traced back to the period immediately following the end of the Cold War and the country's democratization (John 2014). In terms of its material capabilities

(economic power, growth rate, population, and military expenditure), South Korea has been a middle power since at least the early 1990s, (Lee 2012: 4). In addition, the country's international projection and its active role in the international environment can be traced back two decades before Lee Myung-bak's election as president in 2007. During the Cold War Seoul's foreign and security policy had been entirely trapped in the adversarial dynamics with North Korea and the necessary alignment with the United States, as the only guarantor of its survival. During this period the imperative of traditional military security dominated South Korea's foreign policy and its only possible role in the international arena was that of a faithful American ally. In addition, the authoritarian regimes that ruled the country almost unceasingly from the Republic of Korea's foundation in 1948 until 1987 took advantage of the security threat from North Korea in order to impose a strict control of domestic opposition. Public debates about the country's foreign policy and its role in the international environment were systematically suppressed.

The radical domestic changes between the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s had a strong impact on South Korean foreign and security policy. The first transformation took place in 1987, when the democratic movement succeeded in overthrowing the authoritarian regime of General Chun Doo-hwan, achieving democratization. A revised constitution was adopted in October 1987 and the first free presidential elections were held in December. Democratization introduced new priorities into the country's foreign policy agenda and gave legitimacy to new actors in the political debate. Also, South Korea's international image benefited from the successful outcome of the 1987 democratic movement and its steady economic growth. The country was no longer considered an underdeveloped country, or a victim of the Cold War or a hostage of North Korea. Second, the end of the Cold War invoked a transformation of the international system giving new operating space to countries that had been trapped in the bipolar balance of power.

The combined effect of these two radical changes highly influenced South Korea's foreign policy and paved the way for a new role of the country within the international community. Despite the presence of the North Korean threat, South Korea's focus shifted from a security-oriented approach toward a more comprehensive attitude, which included economic prosperity and international recognition and prestige (Hwang 2017: 3–6). South Korean foreign policy has since sought a new and more active role in international affairs, although not yet expressed with a clear self-perception as a middle power.

In this new context, the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games represented a sort of "coming-out party" for the new South Korea, and the so-called Olympic Relations helped the country to develop new relations with former hostile neighbors. The window of opportunity created by the end of the Cold War offered the new South Korean leadership more possibilities to play a regional

role as well as new operating spaces toward former communist countries. China and Russia, but also Eastern European countries and Mongolia, were the main targets of this new policy. The twofold goal of Roh Tae-woo, the first South Korean president after democratization, was not only to improve relations with Pyongyang, but also to create a positive environment for the country, fostering good relations with all South Korea's relevant regional partners, in order to expand economic growth and international prestige. Roh launched a key foreign policy initiative, called *Nordpolitik*, with considerable successes: within four years, South Korea normalized relations with twenty-two formerly hostile countries, including the Soviet Union in 1990 and China in 1992. Furthermore, Seoul succeeded in entering multilateral organizations, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 1989 as a founding member, and the United Nations on September 17, 1991 (Kim 2010). Under Roh Tae-woo South Korean foreign policy clearly shifted from a narrow security-oriented posture to a more comprehensive orientation, seeking economic prosperity, international legitimacy, and prestige. Roh Tae-woo's actions and attitude represent South Korea's first real attempt to conduct middle power policy. At the same time, South Korea was also fast growing in terms of material capabilities, consolidating its new role and paving the way for its future global strategy.

The path laid down by Roh Tae-woo was followed by his successor, Kim Young-sam, with the goal of expanding further the number and scope of South Korea diplomatic and trade relations. While *Nordpolitik* focused mainly on Northeast Asia, Kim added a global vision to South Korea's foreign policy, in particular with the launch of the *segyewha* (Globalization) policy, at the 1994 APEC summit in Sidney. The main idea behind this new policy was to guide the globalization process and benefit from its economic aspects. In Kim Young-sam's vision globalization was a shortcut that could lead the country to build a first-class country in the twenty-first century (John 2015: 43–44). These goals were related not only to both domestic aspects of economic and social growth, but also to the new role of South Korea in a globalized world. Whereas Roh had designed his *Nordpolitik* facing a changing world in the middle of a delicate transition of the Soviet bloc, Kim's new policy was designed to face the new unipolar world order, dominated by the narratives of globalization and neoliberalism. *Segyewha* was a key component of South Korea's new diplomacy, through which the country would have taken "an active part in international efforts to tackle global issues such as international peace and security, disarmament and arms control, eradication of poverty, protection of environment and efficient utilization of natural resources" (Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo, quoted in Gill and Gill 2000: 77). In order to enhance its role in the international arena, in 1993 South Korean troops participated in its first peacekeeping operation in Somalia. In November 1995,

the country was elected as a nonpermanent member for two years of the United Nations Security Council. But the most important result in terms of foreign policy and international prestige for Kim's administration was the admission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in December 1996 (Saxer 2013: 400–1). Diplomacy has thus proven an effective instrument in liberating the country from the tight American-Korean relation that had dominated South Korean foreign policy for decades. It was also aimed at creating a new role in multilateral fora and becoming a sort of bridge between developed and developing countries, based on its own peculiar development path. This resulted in a self-perception of South Korea as a country that is able to play a more proactive role, not only in the region, but also at a global level. This continued during following administrations, in particular with Lee Myung-bak's "Global Korea" policy.

The devastating financial crisis that hit the country in 1997 did not reverse the course of South Korean foreign policy toward a more active role in the global arena. Still, Kim Dae-jung, the new progressive president, shifted Korea's foreign policy focus toward the region. His first priority was a new course in relations with North Korea, with a specific emphasis on dialogue and cooperation, in order to start a process of national reconciliation and to decrease permanently the level of military tension on the peninsula. The so-called Sunshine policy was precisely designed and implemented with the goal of improving inter-Korean relations through dialogue, economic cooperation, and cultural exchanges (Moon 2000). At the same time, Kim was a supporter of regional cooperation, especially when the financial crisis of 1997 demonstrated the vulnerabilities of economic interdependence without matching cooperative institutions and regional mechanisms. Regionalism became the key to prosperity and growth for South Korea, and to peace and stability in East Asia. Kim thus proactively pursued more effective regional cooperation and integration.

AFTER THE 1997 CRISIS, THE ASEAN+3 (APT) FORUM: THE TEN ASEAN COUNTRIES PLUS

After the 1997 crisis, the ASEAN+3—the ten ASEAN countries plus China, Japan, and South Korea—was created with the aim of increasing cooperation among East Asian countries, especially in financial and monetary policies. During the 1999 summit in Manila, Kim expressed his vision of creating a free trade zone among East Asian countries. In 1998 the South Korean government proposed to APT the creation of the East Asian Vision Group, which was complemented by the East Asian Studies Group the following year. In 2000, the ASEAN+3 countries laid the foundations for the so-called Chiang-Mai Initiative, in order to manage short-term liquidity problems and

avoid another financial crisis from happening. These initiatives were meant as founding stones of future regional institutions, in particular the East Asia Free Trade Area and the evolution of the APT into an East Asia Summit. Together with these two actions, the South Korean government took the initiative in establishing the East Asian Forum in 2003, as an international organization aimed at creating a network for regional integration (Saxer 2013: 401–3). Since the very beginning of his mandate, Kim's regional foreign policy remained attached to the new course of relations with North Korea. In order to effectively engage Pyongyang dialogue and cooperation had to be expanded from inter-Korean relations to the regional environment: socializing the regime into the regional system of international relations was considered necessary for breaking the existing dangerous cycle of isolation and hostility. Kim's efforts in enhancing regional cooperation were largely influenced by this goal of reducing tension with Pyongyang and embarking the peninsula into a process of inter-Korean reconciliation.

Continuing Kim Dae-jung's course, the succeeding progressive government of Roh Moo-hyun emphasized South Korea's role as a possible mediator or facilitator in Northeast Asia, demonstrating the characteristic of a traditional middle power. According to Roh's vision, the country could play a pivotal role in the regional development, becoming the "hub" nation for Northeast Asia, and a balancer role in the regional order, to prevent friction and conflicts. Roh Moo-hyun's idea of regional cooperation was also strictly connected to his inter-Korean policy, the so-called Policy of Peace and Prosperity, which effectively was a continuation of the "Sunshine Policy" with a stronger emphasis on economic cooperation (Kim 2005). These early moves aimed at creating and implementing a more independent foreign policy, with a role of regional mediator, resulted in a deterioration of American-Korean relations, still the cornerstone of South Korean security policy. Although Roh explicitly introduced elements of middle power diplomacy, the tension that this new approach created with the United States forced him to retrace from his original strategy. Under President George W. Bush the United States was suspicious of South Korean intentions to play a leading role in the region, especially in its idea of creating an economic and security community in Northeast Asia. The "balancer" role was interpreted as an attempt to distance South Korea from its traditional alliance with the United States. The differences between Seoul and Washington in dealing with Pyongyang proved an additional friction during these years: while the United States adopted a hardline stance against the North Korean nuclear program, Roh Moo-hyun emphasized the necessity of dialogue and cooperation within the framework of a more comprehensive approach, that would take into consideration not only the nuclear program but also other relevant aspects of inter-Korean relations, especially economic cooperation. Although the American-Korean

alliance never was in real danger during Roh's years in office, the increasing tension damaged the relation between the two allies, especially in terms of mutual trust. These differences between the emerging middle power and the consolidated great power hindered the possibility of success of this new foreign policy strategy. During his mandate, Roh Moo-hyun introduced the concept of middle power roles, but the regional focus led to a deterioration of the country's global role, as well as of the relation with its most important ally (John 2013: 17). In 2008 the report of the Presidential Commission on Policy Planning (2008) labeled the country as a "strong middle power." However, it recognized that in order to achieve the goal of "entering the ranks of advanced countries" South Korea would have to move from the regional focus and go back to the global perspective of the *segyewha* policy of Kim Young-sam.

SOUTH KOREA'S SELF-PERCEPTION AS A RISING MIDDLE POWER: THE "GLOBAL KOREA" STRATEGY

With the launch of President Lee Myung-bak's "Global Korea" strategy in 2008, South Korea explicitly started to pursue the role of a global middle power. Systematic use of the term was also present in the president's rhetoric (John 2014). The strategy had deep roots in the previous experiences of "coming-out" put in place by previous South Korean administrations, in particular with the *segyewha* policy of President Kim Young-sam. However, for the first time the country's self-perception as a middle power became an integral part of the government's foreign policy strategy. Lee's foreign policy was based on two main pillars: restoring the American-Korean alliance, undermined by previous progressive administrations, and reversing the course of the "Sunshine Policy," posing the issue of North Korea's nuclear program at the center of inter-Korean relations (Klinger 2008).

Within this framework, largely based on the traditional foreign policy priorities of the conservative party, the new administration also sought to achieve a "global role," positioning South Korea as an emerging middle power. The term *junggyun-guk* was explicitly introduced in the foreign policy discourse of both the government and policy experts, while the slogan "Global Korea" became one of the symbols of Lee's aspiration to increase the country's international influence, role, and status (John 2013: 20). Compared to his predecessor, Lee's vision of middle power diplomacy was significantly different: first, in reinforcing the alliance with the United States, Lee focused on aspects that did not cause frictions with Washington; second, the role of regional "balancer," a vital aspect of Roh Moo-hyun's strategy, was completely eliminated in favor of a role as a catalyst and facilitator regarding

second and third agenda issues; finally, the emphasis on regional cooperation, which in Roh's vision also included security aspects, was strongly limited, if not eliminated, and the focus of the country's diplomacy shifted toward non-security issues.

Lee Myung-bak's "Global Korea" strategy focused on increasing South Korea's contributions and efforts in international activities in order to improve the country's international standing and reputation and to exert influence on the international system (Cheong Wa Dae 2009: 27). His administration clearly expressed its intention to expand South Korea's participation in peacekeeping operations, taking practical measures aimed at increasing this commitment: in 2009, the Ministry of Defense created a standing unit of 3,000 personnel specifically devoted to these kind of operations and in December 2009, the National Assembly passed a Law on UN Peacekeeping Operations, providing the details on the definition of the operations and the dispatch of South Korean troops (Roherig 2013). The conservative administration showed initiative in development cooperation, taking advantage of South Korea's position and experience as a bridge between developed and developing world. In November 2009, the country entered the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), becoming the first former recipient to become a donor. In 2011, the country hosted the fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, during which the country sought to shift the developmental paradigm from aid-centered to a more effective system focused on the results of cooperation and on capacity development, in order to create self-sustaining growth (Ikenberry and Mo 2013: 73–94). South Korea played the same bridge-building role during the 2010 G20 Summit in Seoul, during which it played a leading role in setting the agenda, organizing discussions and reaching conclusions. The agenda reflected South Korea's emphasis on the importance of linking the needs of advanced and developing countries, particularly a global financial safety net and development strategies. As the first non-G8 country to host the Summit, the G20 can be considered as one of the strongest symbols of South Korea's transition to a "first rated country"—one of the main goals of the *segyewha* policy—and also of Lee's "Global Korea" strategy.

Under Lee's presidency South Korea carved out a new diplomatic niche in the environmental domain. In 2008 the president presented the "Green Growth" agenda as the new vision for the country's economic development and environment conservation. Between 2010 and 2012, the South Korean government started implementing this vision and played a leading role at the international level in creating consensus. In 2010, Lee's administration established the Global Green Growth Institute as a think tank, which two years later was converted into an international treaty-based organization. In October 2012, the city of Songdo was selected to house the secretariat of the UN

Green Climate Fund, a financial UN project to assist developing countries to mitigate and combat the effects of climate change. Hosting the headquarters of the Fund can be considered as a big achievement for South Korean multilateral diplomacy (Lee 2016: 10–11). Compared with Roh Moo-hyun, Lee's administration did not play a significant role in the regional security context, but favored a more conformist approach toward the American-Korean alliance and the U.S.-led regional and global order. Its focus on global and non-security issues allowed South Korea to maintain a strong relation with the United States and to achieve relevant results in terms of middle power diplomacy (Kim 2016: 5–6).

The 2012 election of Park Geun-hye led to a further change in South Korea's middle power diplomacy. Although Lee and Park were both conservatives, the new administration reduced the emphasis on middle power diplomacy and became more reluctant to attach this label to its activities. One of the reasons for this shift lies in Park's wish to distance herself from her predecessor, who had left office with a very low approval rating. In addition, the new president's vision for the country's foreign policy differed in many ways from the previous one. Park's policy was based on three pillars revolving around the concept of *Trustpolitik*. At the core of this policy there was a more conciliatory approach toward North Korea, aimed at restoring a minimum level of trust between the two parties after five years of strong confrontation and hostility, potentially leading to resume dialogue and cooperation. The second pillar was the so-called Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI), aimed at creating a regional encompassing dialogue on several issues, ranging from disaster management to nuclear safety and the environment. The third one was the Eurasian Initiative, a project aimed at increasing connectivity and logistics on the continent (Kim 2016: 6–7). These three projects were portrayed as concentric circles emerging from the Korean peninsula.

However, Park's strategy eventually failed to materialize. Relations with North Korea were deeply affected by the Pyongyang's renewed nuclear and missile activism and Park's *Trustpolitik* did not bring about any improvement in inter-Korean relations. At the same time, both NAPCI and the Eurasian Initiative remained vague projects without any practical outcome. Managing relations with China and the United States proved the biggest challenge South Korea's foreign policy during Park's administration. South Korea certainly was aware of the importance of enhancing relations with Beijing, both for its crucial role in South Korea's economic growth and for its ability to pressure North Korea. At the same time, however, Park did not want to create frictions with Washington, as had happened under Roh Moo-hyun. For this reason, during the first half of her mandate Park tried to strike a balance between these sometimes conflicting foreign policy goals. When, in early

2016, North Korea started a long series of new military provocations, Park Geun-hye decided to reaffirm the full commitment to the security alliance with the United States, at the expense of South Korea's relations with China, as demonstrated by the decision to deploy the American antimissile system THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) on South Korean territory.

Park's reluctance to continue her predecessor's policy of enhancing South Korea's international role, combined with the foreign policy issues that characterized her presidency, hindered the country's consolidation of its role as an emerging middle power. For the first part of Park's mandate South Korea's position was considered in the "middle" between the United States and China, while the previous activism, which avoided security issues and kept a global focus instead of a regional one, was drastically reduced and remained limited to the mini-lateral MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, Australia) group (Kim 2016: 6–7). Regarding the country's global projection, Park Geun-hye mostly focused on the economy and international trade, in line with her predecessors' approach. During her presidency, South Korea negotiated and signed new free trade agreements and partnerships (with Vietnam, Colombia, Canada, China, Australia, New Zealand) and pursued the so-called Sales Diplomacy, originally launched by President Lee (Kang Choi et al. 2014). The difficulties encountered during Park Geun-hye's administration reflect the challenges that South Korea has faced in recent years—and it is still facing today—in asserting its role as an emerging middle power.

CHALLENGES TO SOUTH KOREA'S ROLE AS A MIDDLE POWER

Over all, then, South Korea's foreign policy after democratization process can be characterized by a gradual, but steady tendency to expand the scope of its foreign policy. This ambition was enabled by the opportunities offered by a changing international environment to achieve leadership in multilateral contexts, and was buttressed by domestic changes, particularly democratization and a solid economic growth. Still, this growing potential developed under a persistent security threat represented by North Korea. This insecure environment reinforced a dependence on the United States for the defense of national security and affected the broader projection of the country in the regional and global environment. The gradual development of South Korea's middle power role should be understood in light of the limitations that stem from the country's basic uncertainty regarding its security.

During the *Nordpolitik* years (1988–1993), the threat from North Korea seemed to have decreased because of the DPRK's relative weakness following the collapse of Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the DPRK's nuclear program

emerged as a new main security concern increasing tensions in the region and South Korea's insecurity. Roh Tae-woo's strategy can be considered as the first attempt to link Seoul's security concerns with its new foreign policy: Roh sought not only to create a favorable environment for dialogue but also to isolate North Korea, taking advantage of post-Cold War conditions, in order to increase South Korea's negotiating power. When, in 1993, North Korea threatened to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty and restarted the reprocessing of plutonium for military purposes, Pyongyang proved a security threat not only for South Korea, but also for the global nonproliferation regime. This first "nuclear crisis" represented a partial failure of Roh Tae-woo's cooperative approach toward the North. The negotiations to solve the crisis involved North Korea and the United States, with Seoul relegated to a secondary role. The *Agreed Framework* of 1994, that temporarily solved the North Korean nuclear crisis, gave South Korea the opportunity to focus on foreign policy issues other than security. This trend is reflected in the scarce attention of the *segyewha* policy toward traditional security. During these years South Korea's administration started to envision a new global role for the country, more in line with the level of economic development and prestige achieved by the country.

The progressive decades that followed coincided with a reshaping of the country's foreign policy approach in many areas. During these years, the tension between regional cooperation and global aspiration became clear, as well as the frictions within the American-Korean alliance. During the "Sunshine Policy," inter-Korean relations had become the main priority for the South Korean government. Relations between the two Koreas enjoyed a period of low tension and witnessed an increase in economic and political cooperation. When the second nuclear crisis erupted in 2002–2003, the North Korean nuclear program returned to be a major security threat for all the main powers in the region. Nevertheless, this increase in tension did not affect the positive and cooperative interactions that had been taking place on the peninsula since 1998. However, the new approach pursued by the two progressive administrations had consequences for the country's entire foreign policy. In order to create a more inclusive environment, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun refocused South Korea's foreign policy toward the region, and regional cooperation in particular, limiting the aspirations to play a larger role at the global level. The idea of fostering greater regional cooperation and integration, and even more the evocative project of creating an economic and security community in East Asia, was aimed at enhancing South Korea's regional role and status, and at creating a favorable and more inclusive environment for North Korea. These efforts clashed with American interests in the region and the United States's priority of keeping South Korea as a "faithful ally." During these years, the alliance was shaken not only by the divergences in dealing

with North Korea, but also by Seoul's aspiration to play a balancer role in the region. This conflict not only compromised the chance of success of the new progressive diplomacy, but also sharply divided South Korean public opinion along the lines of the ideological division between conservatives and progressives, paving the way for the reappraisal of foreign and security policy of President Lee Myung-bak.

Lee's efforts focused on reinforcing the American-Korean alliance as the cornerstone of South Korea's security policy, and on projecting a new role and image of the country in the global arena. In order to align the country's policy with American priorities, Lee decided to take a tougher stance toward Pyongyang and to strictly connect inter-Korean cooperation to the nuclear issue. This radical change in the management of the relations on the peninsula led to a sudden increase in tension between the two Koreas and to a return of confrontation and hostility after almost a decade of improvement. These developments created a more insecure environment for South Korea. Nevertheless, the path of "Global Korea" as the new international projection of the country has developed in parallel with the growing security threat from North Korea. Lee Myung-bak decided to connect these two aspects of the country's foreign policy, in a different way from what had been done by his predecessors. Roh Tae-woo's *Nordpolitik* was a strategy designed to benefit from the changes brought by the democratization and the end of the Cold War. From this perspective, the improvement in inter-Korean relations and in the South Korea's role in the region and in the international community were considered the consequences of the political, economic, and social advancements of the country. The connection between the security threat from North Korea and the new country's foreign policy was aimed at creating a favorable environment for inter-Korean relations and for a path of reform inside North Korea. While Kim Young-sam's *segyewha* policy paid little attention to traditional security aspects, this connection resurfaced during the progressive decade, echoing the *Nordpolitik*. Actually, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun emphasized the need to improve inter-Korean cooperation, not only in order to initiate a process of national reconciliation and eventually reunification on the peninsula, but also to create regional stability, addressing its main security concern. With Lee Myung-bak the renovated tension in inter-Korean relations turned into a further occasion for Lee's government to improve its image as a responsible middle power. South Korea, in fact, while reducing dialogue and cooperation projects with the North, started to shift the "North Korean problem" toward an international audience, seeking multilateral solutions to the nuclear issue and gathering widespread support for its policies. Unlike previous experiences, the nuclear issue started to dominate the debate about inter-Korean relations, while direct dialogue between Seoul and Pyongyang was sidelined in favor of this new internationalized approach.

Internationalization policies under Lee Myung-bak radically differ from those under his predecessor, aimed at easing tension with the North and at creating a favorable environment for inter-Korean dialogue. In this case, the focus shifted to the security threat posed by North Korea in terms of nuclear proliferation, not only to the South but also to the international community as a whole. From this perspective, the link between security issues and middle power diplomacy has been reinforced by the increase in tension on the peninsula, and similarly the role of Seoul as a responsible middle power seeking multilateral solutions to a global security concern, such as in the case of the second Nuclear Summit held in Seoul in 2012.

With Park Geun-hye, South Korea did not undergo a policy change as radical as that of 2007–2008. Nonetheless, her foreign policy focus once more marked a shift toward the regional perspective. In this case, the goal was to restart some form of dialogue with North Korea and to maintain increasingly favorable relations with China, especially economic and trade relations, without undermining the American-Korean security alliance. In order to pursue this new approach, Park attempted to separate South Korea's role on the global stage from regional and inter-Korean cooperation, with a renewed emphasis on the latter. The former continued mainly within the context of MIKTA and in international trade and the so-called Sales Diplomacy. At the beginning of Park's presidency, the government linked the North Korean security issue with South Korea's international projection, in particular through the NAPCI project and through an improvement in relations with China (that, in turn, could exert pressure on Pyongyang). The administration failed both in reducing tension with the North, thus creating a more precarious security environment, and in "internationalizing"—or "regionalizing"—the North Korean nuclear problem. The improvement in relations with China, which proved to be very effective for what concern the growth of economic exchanges and trade, did not bring considerable results in alleviating the country's security concerns. When the situation deteriorated even more with the nuclear and missile escalation of 2016, Park's administration decided to refocus its priorities toward the American-Korean alliance, thus sacrificing the limited regional activism of the previous year.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has problematized the concept of middle power in terms of a fundamental aspect of international relations so far neglected in this specific literature. We have started from the premise that security issues can represent a serious potential constraint for the global projection of a country, especially in the case of medium-ranked states that lack the hard power capabilities to

exert power directly at the international level. From this, we have analyzed the historical development of different components of the middle power role in the case of South Korea, alongside three dimensions related to its national security: the North Korean threat, the American-Korean alliance, and the tension between a regional and a global role. Although the trajectory of the country from the regional to the global level has been accompanied by a gradual development of a full-fledged middle power role, security issues appear to have hindered and at times limited the scope of Korea's *middlepowermanship* in various ways.

In the first years after democratization, domestic and international conditions aligned to provide the first democratic government with an opportunity to implement a new foreign policy agenda, that was not limited to managing security threat from North Korea and reinforcing the American-Korean alliance, but also allowed the pursuit of a new global role for the country. Kim Young-Sam's globalization policy, for example, could be developed only after immediate security issues had been (temporarily) alleviated by the 1994 Agreed Framework, and within the broader regional unipolar balance of power based on American predominance which characterized the 1990s. Conversely, the regional focus of the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations was motivated by an underlying rationale to regionalize the North Korean issue and include Pyongyang into a broader framework of cooperation and dialogue. Security concerns continued to play a crucial role in designing the country's broader foreign policy, also regarding its middle power diplomacy. However, these two progressive administrations decided to pursue a strategy that was aimed at reducing security concerns through dialogue and cooperation, instead of military deterrence, and at finding a more independent regional balancing role for the country. With the election of Lee Myung-bak the country's self-perception as a middle power started to permeate the government's foreign policy agenda, symbolized by the "Global Korea" strategy. In addition, Lee decided to refocus toward the American-Korean military alliance, to ensure the country's security, and then expanded the internationalization of its foreign policy to the global level, with an explicit effort to pursue a middle power agenda with a focus on non-security issues. Lastly, Park Geun-hye attempted to design and implement a middle-way foreign policy, not only confirming the importance of the American-Korean relationship but also pursuing an improvement in the relations with North Korea and China and a more balanced role for the country in the region. For this reason, she proved to be more reluctant than her predecessor in explicitly pursuing a global middle power agenda. However, when the imperatives of security resurfaced, Park decided to abandon these efforts and reaffirmed the centrality of the American-Korean alliance, at the expense of a more independent foreign policy.

The case of South Korea offers the opportunity to analyze the link between security issues and a middle power role under extreme conditions. In contrast with what has been assumed in traditional studies, South Korea has displayed the behavioral characteristics associated with this class of states although it never was a neutral state nor at a safe distance from major sources of conflict. The internationalization of a main threat to its national security, which nonetheless represents a concern for the international community itself, has enabled South Korea to present itself as a responsible middle power, seeking multilateral solutions to a global security concern, and to use the related political capital to foster successful bargaining on secondary issues.

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Part III

"IT IS BETTER TO BE A BIG FISH IN A SMALL POND"—REGIONAL POWERS

Chapter 6

From Regionalism to *Realpolitik*

The Rise and Fall of Turkey as a Middle Power in the Middle East

Aylin Gürzel and Eyüp Ersoy

Due to the multifaceted transformations taking place in the international system, the requirement for better and effective global governance has imposed itself upon all the actors of global affairs. In this context, middle powers have taken initiatives in order to adapt to the imperatives of global governance. This chapter focuses on the foreign policy orientation and associated governance practices of Turkey as a Middle Eastern middle power during the pre- and post-Arab Spring periods.

During the various administrations of the Justice and Development Party (JDP/AK-Party) (2002–present) Turkey's material and ideational capabilities in world politics have increased. Turkey's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita has recorded a remarkable increase from US$3,660 in 2002 to its highest level of US$12,542 in 2013. Its highest level was recorded at US$14,933 in 2017, after a four years' period of decline. At the same time, Turkey's military spending more than doubled from US$9,050 billion in 2002 to US$18,662 billion in 2013. In 2018 Minister of National Defense Nurrettin Canikli announced another considerable increase in Turkey's defense budget.[1] Unsurprisingly, the *emergence* of Turkey has since been a *leitmotif* in discussions of Turkish foreign policy. This chapter investigates to what extent Turkey's regional foreign policy since the JDP came to power in 2002 has been informed by normative status-seeking endeavors and to what extent such policies have affected Turkey's middle power status in the Middle East.

Regional dynamics proved an incentive for the JDP leadership to draft a new vision of Turkey's role both regionally and internationally. Turkey's

new aspiration to assume leadership in regional and global issues has defied not only its traditional allies in the West, but also Turkey's regional competitors. At the beginning of the Arab uprisings Turkey considered itself a source of inspiration and a model worthy of emulation for the newly emerging governments in the Arab world. Nonetheless, "the Turkish model" encountered serious shortcomings as, for example, both various regional governments and a sizeable portion of the Arab public did not consider Turkey a "good" model. Arab states have questioned whether Turkey "really [was] a model for Arab pro-democracy revolutionaries to look to, as they struggle to establish democratic political systems in the ashes of decades of dictatorship, amid political and economic marginalization."

The basis of Turkey's regional emergence, at least until the Arab Spring, has been the JDP leadership's ability to foster dynamic economic growth, stable political conditions as well as a proactive foreign policy that balanced Turkey's Muslim identity with its Western orientation and partnership with the United States . Despite Turkey's long membership of the Western alliance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and various other European organizations, it has shown assertiveness and confidence in pursuing an increasingly autonomous foreign policy. As a consequence, there have been doubts whether Turkey might be pursuing a "Neo-Ottoman" agenda particularly toward the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (Danforth 2016). This policy has challenged Western foreign policy toward the region, frequently resulting in self-contradictory policies. Indeed, it has been suggested that this "tension between Erdogan's Islamist zeal and his forced pragmatism helps explain Ankara's patchwork foreign policy in the Middle East and beyond" (Erdemir and Tahiroğlu 2017).

This chapter assesses the geopolitical, economic, and cultural dimensions of Turkey's role as a middle power in the Middle East. It highlights both the potential for, and limits to, Turkish regional influence. First, Turkey's defined roles and relevant practices in its engagements with regional actors will be described. Next, the chapter will assess Turkey's agency as a middle power in the Middle East before the Arab Spring, by examining Turkey's power capacity in terms of hard and soft power. Its main claim is that the relative success in Turkey's proactive regional engagements in this period drew on the adoption of a value-based normative foreign policy approach informed by moral principles. Third, the chapter will account for the "tragic" turn to power politics in Turkey's regional policy that occurred after the Arab Spring, when Turkey engaged in power politics, coercive diplomacy, strategic alliances, securitization, and the exercise of hard power. Throughout the chapter both domestic and international explanations of this particular foreign policy strategy will be addressed.

TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST BEFORE THE ARAB SPRING: PROACTIVE REGIONALISM

Middle powers' decisions regarding their respective regions are affected by internal and external considerations that can be of an ideational or material nature. Prior to the Arab Spring, Turkey conceived of the Middle Eastern geopolitical structure not only as a challenge to Turkey's interests, but also as an opportunity to project its influence regionally and internationally. Even though conflicting policy responses toward the Arab Spring, particularly the Syrian civil war, have frustrated Turkey's proactive regionalism, Turkey "sitting at the center of these crisis zones, is a country that until a few years ago maintained a policy of having no problems with its neighbors" (Friedman 2015). As the civil war in Syria expanded, however, Turkey has been drawn into the conflict along with other regional and international actors making it deviate from its previous proactive regional foreign policy.

Since 2002 the worldviews of Turkey's foreign policy elites have reshaped the country's domestic and foreign policies (Altunışık 2009). Through a new set of foreign policy principles the JDP aimed at normalizing its relations with regional states. In this new period, Turkey's Muslim background became the basis of the formulation of the interests that shaped the country's foreign policy strategies and national role conceptions. In addition, emerging economic and societal actors inside Turkey during the JDP administration helped to reshape existing conceptions of Turkish national interests. These societal actors, predominantly of conservative persuasion, favored Turkey's engagement with its Muslim neighborhood. However, security perceptions held by state officials and the domestic public had been based on skepticism and latent hostility toward regional state and non-state actors. Turkey's governing elites thus embarked on a regional policy in order to help transform such. In this context, Turkish foreign policymakers sought to normalize Turkey's relations with regional countries such as Syria and Iran through a so-called zero problems with neighbors policy. Ahmet Davutoğlu was the policy's architect, emphasizing how the JDP administration since 2002 had established constructive, proactive, and neutral policies toward the Middle East without damaging good relations both with Western countries and with other Middle Eastern states, primarily Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Turkey's relationship with the Middle East was thus presented as complementary to its engagements with other regions.

Accordingly, in the period preceding the Arab Spring, Turkey sought maximum cooperation with its neighboring countries through economic interdependency. To this end, Turkey established high level strategic cooperation councils with several regional neighbors that would convene on a regular

basis in order to promote coordination in political and economic policies and would institutionalize interactions. Most prominently, the Turkey–Syria High Level Strategic Cooperation Council was established on July 29, 2009, convening four times before a rupture in bilateral relations occurred. Turkey also abolished visa requirements for citizens of various Middle Eastern states to foster social relations and commercial transactions. Davutoğlu claimed that in order to have regional as well as domestic peace, Turkey needed to engage actively in order to contribute to the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts. Turkey's new vision, based on soft power and political dialogue, seemed rewarded by the international community, when Turkey was elected nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2009–2010 tenure. The last time Turkey sat at that table had been in 1961. Turkey aimed to engage proactively in regional conflict resolution as testified by its mediation efforts in direct peace talks between Israel and Syria, and between Iraq and Syria (Davutoğlu 2010). Also during the early phase of the Syrian crisis Turkey attempted to perform mediating role: as chief advisor to the prime minister, and later as foreign minister, Davutoğlu went to Syria sixty-two times, visiting Damascus three times after the outbreak of the unrest in March 2011 in an attempt to convince Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to take steps toward urgent reforms.

Prior to the Arab Spring, Turkey acted as a facilitator by arranging meeting venues to enable conflicting parties to have direct talks to avoid pitfalls of misinformation and misrepresentation. Turkish policymakers believed that Turkey had to play a role in the settlement of regional conflicts insofar as regional stability advanced Turkey's material interests as well as its regional and international status. Accordingly, as part of the JDP's proactive foreign policy principles, Turkish policymakers became involved in the nuclear deal with Iran (Gürzel and Ersoy 2012). Although Turkey aimed at playing a constructive role in Iran's nuclear framework deal as a mediator between Tehran and the international community represented by the P5+1 countries, Iran continued perceiving Turkey as a security concern because of Turkey's NATO membership and its embracement of NATO policies. For instance, in September 2011 Turkey had agreed to host a NATO early warning radar system in eastern Turkey close to the Iranian border (Kibaroğlu 2013).

Conversely, a substantial increase in Turkey's material capabilities was a conducive parameter for the exercise of proactive regionalism in its approach toward the Middle East. In the period before the Arab Spring, Turkey went "from a financial crisis to having one of the fastest growing economies in the world" (Gürzel 2014). In 2008, after the start of the global financial crisis, Turkey boasted an impressive economic record while other states encountered difficulties in weathering the crisis. As an emerging

economic power Turkey adopted a more assertive role in regional and international platforms, such as the G20. The JDP leadership set ambitious economic goals to be achieved at the centenary of the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 2023, such as belonging to the world's ten largest economies. The policies of the socially conservative, but economically liberal JDP government offered political stability and economic prosperity not only domestically, but also regionally (Öniş 2212). In this period the JDP's domestic achievements in addition to its foreign policy record gave rise to praise for the "Turkish Model" in Middle Eastern politics (Kirişçi 2011). Still, the discourse of the "Turkish Model" was subject to criticism even in its most popular period (Altunışık 2008). Nevertheless, the JDP continued to promote Turkey's proactive role in regional geopolitics in its foreign policy discourse.

Turkish foreign policy toward the Middle East before the Arab Spring was characterized by proactive foreign policy, preventive diplomacy, peace efforts, institutionalization, and soft power. This coincided with the JDP espousing a policy of "zero problems" with Turkey's neighbors in order to enhance what Ahmet Davutoğlu had called its "strategic depth." In the late 2000s, Davutoğlu's well-intended policies predicated on a regionalist outlook seemed to yield auspicious results. The lifting of visa restrictions throughout the region was an example of the proactive foreign policy that the JDP pursued in a relentless manner. Moreover, new markets opened up to Turkish businesses. Turkey's commercial transactions with, and financial investments in, regional countries progressed rapidly (Tür 2011). Business associations, such as the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD), representing the conservative business circles in Turkey, were particularly active in improving economic ties with Iran despite associated financial risks caused by U.S. and UN sanctions against Tehran. Furthermore, Turkish official development assistance to Middle Eastern Muslim countries through the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA in Turkish acronym) increased substantially. Turkey's soft power and economic interests mutually supported each other in Turkey's approach to the Middle East: Turkish television programs, such as soap operas, manufactured products, educational services, and development assistance, both official and nonofficial, all contributed to the advancement of economic interests in addition to increasing its soft power in the region. Regarding the pre-Arab Spring period, it could be contended that "Turkey tried to solidify its long desired role as a rising power by increasing its influence in its neighborhood" (Gürzel 2014: 95). This policy of proactive regionalism was to be revised with the onset of the Arab Spring in the Middle East, when *Realpolitik* was to become the policy of necessity.[2]

TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER THE ARAB SPRING: THE PRIMACY OF POWER POLITICS

The first days of 2011 witnessed the unexpected outbreak of successive popular uprisings in the Middle East against several authoritarian regimes in the region, soon dubbed "the Arab Spring" (Brownlee et al. 2105; Bayat 2017). The initial sense of ecstasy stimulated by the fall of repressive governments in several Arab countries heightened sanguine expectations about a new dawn in the Middle East, only to be superseded by a stern realization of the progressive evolution of regional conflicts into unrelenting chaos (Cook 2017). The ensuing instability in the Middle East disrupted existing patterns of regional interaction inducing intra-regional and extra-regional, state and non-state actors to modify and adjust their outlooks, discourses, and attitudes according to quickly changing circumstances. In stark contrast to the preceding period, Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East was now characterized by the primacy of power politics: precedence was given to coercive diplomacy, strategic alliances, securitization, and hard power.

At first, Turkish foreign policymakers were optimistic about capitalizing on the opportunities brought about by the seemingly promising early development of the Arab Spring without having to take recourse to power politics (Dal 2013). For example, framing Turkey's initial approach to the developments in the region in normative terms, former prime minister Davutoğlu declared in March 2013 that "realpolitik is no answer to the challenges posed by the Arab Spring," calling for "peaceful and gradual political transformation, such that the new regional governments could be shaped by the popular demands of their citizens" (Davutoğlu 2012). However, with the unsuspected metastasis of upheavals into protracted conflicts involving a range of violent state and non-state actors struggling to safeguard and advance their perceived security interests, Turkish foreign policymakers concluded that their abiding conviction to remain on "the right side of history," that is, espousing a value-based normative foreign policy approach informed by moral principles, would entail staying on the wrong side of strategy. Accordingly, *realpolitik* became the answer in Turkish foreign policy toward the Arab Spring, which involved "establishing a Turkish sphere of influence in the former Ottoman geography by exploiting the power vacuum after the so-called Arab Spring" (Hoffmann and Cemgil 2016: 1282; cf. Pope 2010). Although the ultimate aspiration of creating a Middle Eastern *Pax Turca* appeared to remain the same, the new approach involved a drastic revision of policy priorities and strategic instruments according to the textbook of power politics (Özpek and Demirağ 2014). Soon, Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East was characterized by the frequent application of negative inducements in Turkey's relations with relevant state and non-state actors: coercive diplomacy (including

the threat to use of force), punitive sanctions, strategic alliances, overseas bases, unilateralism, hard power projection with military interventions, and an emphasis on deterrence capabilities.

Nonetheless, Turkey's efforts to enhance the measure of its influence over the preferences of actors, the course of developments, and the outcomes of interactions in the complex setting of the Middle East through increased involvement have only led to its further marginalization and isolation in regional geopolitics (Erskine and Lebow 2012). One early example concerns Turkish policy toward civil strife in Libya in 2011. Initially, Turkey expressed seemingly steadfast opposition to any external intervention in Libya by NATO members, even "insinuating that France and the US were unduly motivated by Libya's oil reserves" (Ayata 2015: 100). Subsequently, in an unexpected *volte-face*, Turkey altered its policy, called on the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi to quit in May 2011, and endorsed the Libyan opposition (National Transitional Council) as well as the NATO operation (Erdogan 2017: 79–107). Still, following the high profile visit of then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to the country in September 2011, Turkey was to become gradually marginalized over developments in Libya, which were to evolve into a full-fledged civil war.

A similar cycle of energetic involvement, incremental disengagement, and eventual marginalization can be observed in Turkey's relations with several regional actors, most notably Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In its relations with Saudi Arabia, for example, Ankara initially formed a pragmatic alliance with Riyadh regarding the Syrian civil war, and eagerly supported Riyadh's military intervention in Yemen (Phillips 2017). Despite the practical cooperation in regional affairs, Turkey's relations with Saudi Arabia have been strained for two reasons: not only did Turkey support Qatar in its ongoing dispute with Saudi Arabia, but it also assisted the Muslim Brotherhood, which Saudi authorities had declared a terrorist organization. These foreign policy positions effectively brought the Turkish-Saudi entente to an end. It is therefore no surprise that recently Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has accused Turkey of forming a "triangle of evil" with Iran and extremist groups, that is, the Muslim Brotherhood, in the Middle East (Time 2018).

For Turkey, the primacy of power politics in its foreign policy did not succeed in securing a primary position in the Middle East; worse, it seems to have culminated in Turkey's unintended and unwilling retrenchment in regional geopolitics. Turkey has become marginalized in a number of regional developments, such as the civil wars in Libya and Yemen, and its relations with several major actors in the region, such as Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, continue to remain highly strained, if not completely severed. Only in its bilateral relations with Qatar, Turkey appears to have been able to sustain a strategic partnership based on common interests and shared

preferences in the Middle East (Başkan 2016). In brief, in the tumultuous strategic environment of the Arab Spring, Turkey has relinquished its erstwhile strategic principle of "zero problems with neighbors" in favor of power politics with the unintended consequence of its regional marginalization and isolation (Askerov 2017).

This paradigm shift from an idea-driven approach to a utilitarian *Realpolitik* in Turkish foreign policy toward the Middle East can be observed in the most conspicuous manner in Turkey's policies toward the Syrian civil war. Since 2011, this conflict has arguably become the elemental condition affecting Turkey's approach to the region. Upon the spread of popular protests to Syria in the spring of 2011, Turkey "held out hope for a peaceful solution and maintained dialogue with the Assad regime" (Tür and Kumral 2016: 109). Turkish foreign policymakers concentrated their efforts on persuading the Syrian leadership to address the unfolding demonstrations through accommodating measures, such as granting greater rights and freedoms to the Syrian public, but did so to no avail. The critical juncture in Turkey's final decision to shift to uncompromising power politics in its dealings with the Syrian regime appeared to be, in retrospect, the meeting of the then Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on August 9, 2011 (Altunışık 2014: 136). Having become convinced of the intransigence of the Syrian leadership, Turkey initiated an unprecedented regional policy of active interventionism: "for the first time since the creation of the republic in 1923, the Turkish government [was] openly calling for regime change in a neighboring state" (Phillips 2012: 139). The underlying strategic rationale was that "a swift regime change in Damascus and the assumption of power by pro-Turkish Syrian factions (most importantly, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood) would position Turkey as the dominant player in the Levant" (Hokayem 2012: 10).

Turkey's changed approach toward the Syrian civil war has taken shape parallel to the constantly changing conditions of relevant actors both inside and outside Syria, the ultimate strategic objective being a regime change. Turkey held few options to target the Syrian leadership directly. An early punitive measure was the application of a host of sanctions against the Syrian regime in November 2011 in order to, as the Turkish government asserted, "curtail the capacity of this [Syrian] administration to engage in cruelty against its people" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). Bereft of ample coercive capability against the Syrian regime, Turkey invoked the responsibility of the international community, earnestly seeking "to build a 'coalition of the willing,' for which it sought support from its traditional allies" (Han 2013: 67). Because of an equivocal American position, Turkish policymakers instead opted for increased engagement with regional partners, and formed alliances of convenience with Saudi Arabia and Qatar. At

the same time, Turkey simultaneously initiated an undisguised proxy war against the Syrian regime, enlisting, organizing, supporting, and arming the Syrian opposition, primarily the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Turkish foreign policymakers at first appeared oblivious to the grave threat the jihadist militant organization Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) would pose to the security of Turkey and its regional interests. Nonetheless, ISIS's capture of Turkish consular staff in the Iraqi city of Mosul in June 2014 and successive terrorist attacks within Turkey in the following period caused a profound transformation in Turkey's attitude toward the jihadist terrorist organization (cf. Saymaz 2017).

Conversely, the determined military involvement of Russia in the Syrian civil war in September 2015 was a momentous event complicating the execution of Turkey's *realpolitik*. Finally, the emergence of violent non-state actors claiming and defending autonomy in certain territories of Syria during the civil war was another complicating circumstance for the attainment of Turkey's strategic objectives (Dal 2016; Lawson 2016). Against the jihadist militant group ISIS and the armed Kurdish group the Democratic Union Party (PYD), both declared by Turkish authorities as terrorist organizations, Turkey conducted two successive military operations inside Syria dubbed Euphrates Shield (August 2016–March 2017) and Olive Branch (January–March 2018), respectively.

The application of power politics, nonetheless, has failed to deliver the intended objectives of Turkish foreign policy in the Syrian civil war. There is almost universal unanimity over an early observation that "the unfolding tragedy in Syria clearly has displayed the limits of Turkish influence over its neighbor" (Taşpınar, 2012: 139). In the end, Turkey's Syria policy is simply "a case of failure" (Öniş, 2014: 209). Turkish foreign policymakers have made a series of miscalculations in their assessments about several dimensions of the civil war since the onset of popular demonstrations in Syria. Initially, for example, they "overestimated their ability to effect change in Syria. Once the opposition took up arms against the [Syrian] regime, Ankara, like Washington, assumed that Assad would be gone in six months" (Barkey 2014–2015: 117). In general, "the overconfidence of Turkish policymakers discouraged them from making a rigorous assessment of available information, an accurate identification of intentions and a reliable assessment of capabilities and interests of various actors [involved in the civil war]" (Demir 2017: 113). As a consequence, while Turkish foreign policymakers used to complain about "the erection of what Davutoğlu identified as 'artificial borders' following World War II" in favor of greater regional integration in the Middle East (Arkan and Kınacıoğlu, 2016: 395), Turkey was ultimately forced to erect "a 764-kilometer (475-mile) concrete wall along its border with Syria" (Daily Sabah 2018).

TURKEY AS A MIDDLE POWER IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE CHALLENGE OF MIDDLE POWER POLITICS

In response to the perceived opportunities presented by the Arab Spring, Turkey as a middle power in the Middle East had drastically revised its foreign policy outlook. The former foreign policy vision toward the region foresaw Turkey "as a wise country (*akil ülke*) in the eyes of the international community through its adoption and defense of international norms, values and principles" (Karacasulu 2015: 31) inasmuch as the Turkish leadership frequently referred to the transformation of Turkey into "the virtuous power" in regional as well as international diplomacy (Tepperman 2013; Gül 2014). This vision of value-based normative foreign policy informed by moral principles was substituted with *Realpolitik* that was considered a wiser option for the realization of the ineluctable prospect of regional dominance. While prudence was also a virtue, it was renounced in the new vision of power politics, and Turkey opted for revisionism in the Middle East. In the early phase of the Arab Spring, Turkish policymakers were highly confident about Turkey's prospects of achieving regional dominance. In April 2012, the then Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu appeared greatly self-assured in declaring that "a new Middle East [was] about to be born. We [Turkey] [would] be the owner, pioneer and the servant of this new Middle East" (Hürryet Daily News 2012). A new Middle East was indeed born, but Turkey was far from owning it. This adverse outcome is the result of external and internal as well as material and ideational causes pertinent to the selection and execution of *realpolitik* in Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East.

The exercise of power politics in Turkey's regional strategy toward the Middle East has encountered prohibitive setbacks in part deriving from the flawed judgments of Turkish foreign policymakers about the preferences, capacities, and behavioral patterns of relevant actors of influence at the supraregional and regional levels. At the supraregional level, Turkey's unilateral instinct to implement autonomous policies in the Middle East eclipsed an accurate assessment of the stakes of extra-regional actors in regional developments as well as in not practicing a variety of engagements of their own. In April 2012 Foreign Minister Davutoğlu confidently declared that for Turkey "the era of policies [such as] 'wait and see' and following behind big powers has ended," and that "Turkey would not become involved in any policy that did not originate from Ankara" (Hürryet Daily News 2012). Still, in Libya in 2011, Turkey had to follow NATO's military operation. In Syria, it implored NATO allies, primarily the US, for a similar military intervention to oust Bashar al-Assad until the indecisiveness of the Obama administration regarding the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime in August 2013 (Bentley 2014). In Syria and in the Middle East in general, Turkey has been

involved in an increasing degree in policies that have originated from Moscow, especially subsequent to the Russian interference with the Syrian civil war from 2015 (Dannreuther 2018).

At the regional level, however, Turkish foreign policymakers have been oblivious to the disconcerting implications of Turkey's revisionist tendencies in the Middle East for the authoritarian governments of the region. Accordingly, Turkey's initiatives for rapprochement with regional actors have been received with a discrete degree of skepticism. More importantly, the application of a power politics strategy caused Turkey to forge alliances with selected regional partners at the price of having been obliged to take sides in specific disputes among regional actors. Alliance politics have presented Turkish foreign policymakers with a number of unpleasant policy choices. For example, a closer partnership with a regional actor runs the risk of alienating this actor's regional adversary, a pattern repeatedly observed in Turkey's relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia. Until recently, Turkey forged a close alignment with Saudi Arabia to secure diplomatic and financial support of Riyadh as well as its Gulf partners for its Syria policy, and accordingly endorsed a pragmatist discourse of Iranian expansionism based on Shia sectarianism in the Middle East. Also, in an official visit to Bahrain in February 2017, President Erdoğan publicly "accused Iran of resorting to Persian nationalism to split Iraq and Syria" (Rezaei 2019: 204). The Iranian government, in response, has promoted a vicious discourse in the official and semiofficial national media against Turkish involvement in Syria, accusing, Turkish armed forces of providing assistance to "terrorists under its command" (Masgregh News 2018). Despite the prevalence of discursive acrimony in Iranian media, Turkey had to intensify cooperative efforts with Tehran about the Syrian civil war within the framework of the "Astana process," launched only one month before Erdogan's speech in Bahrain, while observing rapid deterioration of its relations with Saudi Arabia due to its intimate partnership with Qatar and its support for the Muslim Brotherhood (Magued 2018). Saudi Arabia has espoused an equally vicious discourse in its official and semiofficial media against Turkey, similarly accusing Turkish policymakers of providing assistance to terrorism represented this time by the "Ikhwan terrorist organization" (Al-Riyadh 2017). In brief, fluctuations in the strategic reconfiguration of the Middle East have proved only challenging for Turkey to practice impartiality and delicate balancing acts between regional adversaries. Second, close partnerships with regional actors have compelled Turkish foreign policymakers to compromise on the moral principles they have avowed, and Turkey has openly endorsed, refrained criticism, or remained silent on the policies of its partners that contradict the values and norms professed by Turkey. For example, Turkey has received a good deal of criticism in its endorsement

of the military interventions of Saudi Arabia in Bahrain and Yemen (Matthiesen 2013; Hill 2017).

The period that started with the shift from a normative approach to *realpolitik* in Turkish foreign policy toward the Middle East coincided with significant transformations inside Turkey that have equally frustrated an efficient implementation of its regional strategy. Developments in Turkey's domestic politics, security, and economy have arguably prevented Turkish policymakers from devising and performing effective responses to the challenges posed by the rapid changes in regional geopolitics. In domestic politics, Turkey's incremental democratic consolidation under the leadership of the conservative JDP constituted an essential component of its claim to serve as a source of inspiration for the peoples and states of the Middle East. Turkish foreign policymakers were of the opinion that, in the words of Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's most important soft power [was] its democracy" (Davutoğlu 2008: 80). Nevertheless, with the successive electoral victories of the JDP, an early observation that "the later phase of the AKP [JDP] era is a kind of limited or majoritarian understanding of democracy with new elements of exclusion built into the democratic system" has been to a large extent vindicated (Öniş 2013: 107). As a result of the growing domestic democratic deficit, especially with the introduction of the state of emergency measures in the aftermath of the abortive coup attempt of June 15, 2016, Turkey's democratic credentials have virtually lost their credibility. In 2018, Freedom House identified Turkey as "not free" while Tunisia was "free" and Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait were "partly free" in the Middle East (Freedom House 2018).

In domestic security external threats during the Arab Spring have revealed vulnerabilities in Turkey's defense policies and military modernization efforts. For example, deficiency in air defense systems has been a constant impediment to implementing Turkish military strategy in the Syrian civil war, prompting it to seek procurement options that caused additional problems of their own in Turkish foreign policy. More crucial has been the entanglement of the Kurdish problem inside Turkey with the developments in Syria, in particular the emergence of a self-governing entity in Syria's northeastern part, which is overwhelmingly populated by ethnic Syrian Kurds (Schmidinger 2018). More unsettling for Turkey is the authority of the PYD over these territories. The PYD is the Syrian branch of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has waged a separatist insurgency campaign against Turkey since the 1980s. The failure of Turkey to avert the emergence of the PYD and its subsequent control over northeastern Syria bordering Turkey has constituted a strategic stalemate for Turkey with regard to its domestic security in addition to its external security. Turkey's actions or inactions toward the Kurdish territories under the control of the PYD in Syria carry the constant risk of galvanizing its own Kurdish population and stirring social unrest inside Turkey. For example, Turkey's inaction during the assault of ISIS

against the Syrian bordering town of Ayn al-Arab, *Kobane* in Kurdish, in the final months of 2014 provoked violent protests among ethnic Kurds throughout Turkey on 6–8 September (Ciordia 2018).

Regarding the domestic economy, sustained economic growth was another parameter of the transformative role of Turkey in the Middle East undergirding the efficacy of its regional policies. Therefore, Turkish claims of regional leadership have been contingent upon the viability and sustainability of its economic development. Pursuant to the shift in the Turkish strategy after the advent of the Arab Spring, economic policies have become an integral part of the practice of power politics in Turkey's regional policies from punitive commercial measures such as sanctions to the allocation of financial resources to regional clients. For example, with the fall of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and the subsequent victories of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) that was affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood in the parliamentary and presidential elections in Egypt, "Turkey promised to provide a US$2 billion budget support package in support of the new Egyptian leadership, both to finance infrastructure projects and to contribute to its foreign currency reserves." Half this sum "was provided in September 2012 when a loan deal was signed between the two countries" (Altunışık 2014: 342). In the following period, Turkey's economy has started to show signs of distress with rising rates of inflation and unemployment, and a strong depreciation of the value of *Lira*, its national currency. Underlining the changing fortunes of Turkey's economic relations in the Middle East, facing a severe currency crisis, Turkey has recently sought financial assistance from Qatar, with Qatar promising to provide a $15 billion support package (Ewing and Gall 2015).

As a result, unfavorable developments in Turkey's domestic politics, security, and economy have implied the expiration of the "Turkish Model" in the Middle East (Dal and Erşen 2014). Eventually, "coupled with Ankara's loss of regional influence that has accompanied its involvement in the Syrian civil war," as one observer argued, "the positive image of a democratic, prosperous country has been replaced by authoritarianism in domestic politics, cronyism and corruption in the economy, and deadlock in foreign policy" (Taşpınar 2014: 49–50).

CONCLUSION

The emergence of Turkey as an active and assertive middle power in the Middle East after the advent of a new government with a new foreign policy vision in the first decade of the 2000s was habitually conceived and portrayed as a momentous development in regional geopolitics with far-reaching transformative implications for the states and the societies of the region. Turkish foreign policymakers espoused a value-based normative foreign policy

approach informed by moral principles that prioritized proactive regionalism, preventive diplomacy, peace efforts, institutionalization, and soft power in Turkey's engagements with regional actors. Buttressed by the auspicious transformations in Turkey's domestic politics, security, and economy that enhanced material capabilities at the disposal of Turkish foreign policymakers as well as the credibility of their ideational/normative claims, the practice of proactive regionalism elevated Turkey's regional posture to such an extent that "the Turkish Model" gained a widespread recognition in attesting to the transformative influence of Turkey in the Middle East.

The Arab Spring caught Turkish leadership by complete surprise, and compelled it to review and revise its foreign policy approach even though its proactive regionalism appeared to show promising signs of transformative influence of Turkey on regional geopolitics in the long run. Nonetheless, enticed by the ineluctable prospect of regional dominance to be achieved in a shorter period of time, Turkish foreign policymakers relinquished proactive regionalism in favor of a *realpolitik* approach characterized by the primacy of power politics assigning precedence to coercive diplomacy, strategic alliances, securitization, and hard power. Nevertheless, representing the challenge of middle power politics, Turkey's efforts to enhance the measure of its influence over the preferences of actors, the course of developments, and the outcomes of interactions in the complex setting of the Middle East through increased involvement have only led to its further marginalization and isolation in regional geopolitics. On the path to become an "order-instituting" actor in the Middle East, Turkey has faltered poignantly and retreated to become just a "disorder-navigating" actor.

The trajectory of the emergence of Turkey as an assertive middle power in the Middle East and its subsequent retrenchment illustrates that unwavering activism does not culminate in a foreordained rise for middle powers in global affairs. One crucial dynamic, as it appears from the Turkish experience in the Middle East, concerns the congruence between the foreign policy objectives and the capabilities required to realize them. Overestimating one's own capacity or setting overambitious goals are strategic miscalculations for any middle power to prudently avoid. For middle powers, or any actor in international relations for that matter, heeding the two Delphic maxims of ancient Greece can be deemed a strategic imperative: "know yourself!" and "pray for things possible!" (Huenemann 2018).

NOTES

1. Data from "GDP Per Capita (current US$)," *The World Bank*, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?end=2017&locations=TR&start=1960&

year_low_desc=false; "Turkey GDP per capita," *Trading Economics*, 2019. https://tradingeconomics.com/turkey/gdp-per-capita; "Turkey GDP per capita," *The World Bank*, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=TR; "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database," *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*. https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex; "Considerable Increase in Turkey's 2018 Budget for Defense," *Defense Turkey*, 2018. http://www.defenceturkey.com/en/content/considerable-increase-in-turkey-s-2018-budget-for-defense-2897#.XFL7SlUzbIU.

2. It is sometimes contended that the impediments Turkey has encountered in the EU membership process have conditioned its foreign policy approach towards the Middle East. However, closer relations with the Middle East was considered a foreign policy imperative in its own right in the new foreign policy paradigm (Sözen 2010: 110).

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Chapter 7

Iran from Revolutionary to Behavioral Middle Power

Understanding the Effects of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

Neda Shahnoori

The foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a middle power has to be seen in the light of its historical and geopolitical context. This chapter will present the historical background of these policies. Also, understanding Iran's foreign policy requires having an overall picture of the two dominant discourses present among Iranian policymakers: Realism and Idealism. While there has always been a debate whether Iran should be considered a regional or a middle power, this chapter argues that the so-called Iran Deal, or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), testifies that Iran can act as a middle power in an unstable region. The chapter will examine JCPOA's effects at three levels; the internal level, the regional level, and the international level.

Middle power is a contested concept. Canadian political scientist Robert Cox ironically observed: "[T]he middle power is a role in search of an actor" (Cox, quoted in Heynek 2004: 36). Different criteria for defining middle powers abound in the International Relations (IR) literature. Three main approaches can be distinguished: In the *functional* approach, the state is known by its capabilities in the international system. This approach identifies states by their different capability of exerting influence in international affairs in specific instances. Through this model, great powers can be understood as those states that exercise international influence regardless of circumstance. Small powers are states that are incapable of exercising real influence (Chapnick 1999: 73). In the *hierarchical* approach, the ranking of countries based on national power is one of the guidelines for categorizing the country. For instance, Riddell (1947) defined middle powers by "their sizes, their material resources, their willingness to accept responsibility, their influence and their

stability." Finally in the *behavioral* approach, which is more popular in the IR literature, middle powers are defined by their specific behavior in international politics. They are recognized by "their tendency to pursue multilateral solutions to international problems, their tendency to embrace compromise positions in international disputes, and their tendency to embrace notions of 'good international citizenship' to guide their diplomacy" (Cooper et al. 1993). Importantly, clear differences exist between traditional middle and newly emerging powers. Traditional middle powers tend to be stable democracies, whereas democracy in emerging middle powers is often far from consolidated, and in many cases only recently established with undemocratic practices still abounding (Jordaan 2003).

This chapter uses the behavioral model to study the process that led to the JCPOA, a policy that was based on multilateralism and respect for international norms. Iran is an emerging middle power that, like most middle powers, tends to play their most conspicuous roles within its own regions, where its immediate interests lie (cf. Schweller 2017). Categorizing Iran as a middle power is controversial. There is a belief that Iran's foreign policymakers are in control of its armed forces and that all the measures and decisions are directed toward increasing Iran's influence in the Middle East. This simplified image is commonly used to analyze Iran's intentions and practices in the international arena, but the history of Iranian foreign policy tells a different story. Iran has played the role of mediator in different regional disputes such as the 1992 Nagorno-Karabach conflict and the 1993 Tajikistan civil war. Also, Iran has substantially contributed to defeat of ISIL in Iraq, and has participated in the Afghanistan peace process in recent years. Also the JCPOA, which was concluded despite the pressures of domestic hard-liners in Iran, suggests our image of Iran may be incomplete.

IRAN'S FOREIGN POLICY: IDEALIST AND REALIST DISCOURSES

Of all foreign policy decisions the Islamic Republic of Iran has made in recent years, agreeing with JCPOA was the most important, marking its transition from isolationism to middle power activism. However, JCPOA mobilized many domestic players who strongly differed in their perspectives on Iran's nuclear energy policies. To understand the different approaches to Iran's foreign policy, it is necessary to recognize two main foreign policy discourses that have helped shape Iran's foreign policy since the 1979 revolution: Idealism and Realism. The Iranian revolution represented the Iranian people's dissatisfaction not only with the Shah's domestic policies, but also with his foreign policies: "The most important criticism of the Shah's foreign

policy was his practical alliance with the United States and this is the reason he was named an American Shah" (Ramezani 2001: 59). At the same time, there was hatred of U.S. politics as well as fear of Soviet influence. This double apprehension was the basis of the slogan "neither East, nor West; Islamic Republic," reflecting the dominant viewpoint on foreign policy, which was actually inscribed in tiles above the entrance to the Foreign Ministry. Iran's foreign policy followed independent, nationalist, and nonalignment values in order to balance between Eastern and Western blocs (Azghandi 2005: 11).

From the hostage crisis (1979–1980) until the end of the Iran-Iraq war (1988), the dominant foreign policy discourse was idealist or value-centered: revolutionary values such as world order opposition, fighting against oppression, and Jihad (war for God's religion) played a major role in directing Iran's foreign policy. The Islamic Republic presented a very aggressive interpretation of a nonalignment policy that challenged both Western and Eastern blocs. The government sought to export the revolution, highlighting its values and revisionism in international system (Jajik and Firouzabadi 2004: 72). Despite the fact that exporting the revolution was defined as promoting the discourse and its values with the aim of awareness and liberation of Muslims (Firouzabadi 2012: 128), Iran's neighbors perceived it as Iranian interference with their domestic affairs, and support for militant Shiite groups aimed at a revolt in their home countries. Their perception proved an enduring source of tension between Iran and its neighbors. Challenging the international system was another dimension of the idealist discourse. Iran's politicians considered the post–World War II international system as oppressive, and described international organizations as symbols of the system's oppression and inequality. Because of this, during the war with Iraq (1980–1088) Iran only sparsely cooperated with international organizations and often challenged their policies. This cold relationship was not limited to the United Nations (UN): Iran did not have a good relationship with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) either, considering its approach apologetic and conservative (Saniabadi 2001: 32).

Circumstances changed after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini and the end of the Iran–Iraq war. Under the Presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989–1997) Iran gradually changed its radical approach regarding international issues. The country's limited resources were needed to reconstruct its war-damaged infrastructure. Iran's policy to export the revolution was replaced with economic development policies. During this period, Iran was sought to improve relationships with its Arab neighbors and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), despite its dispute with the United Arab Emirates over the sovereignty over three islands, the peacemaking process between Israel and some of its Arab neighbors, and the American presence in the region (Ramezani 2001: 132). Iran's foreign policy emphasized cooperation rather

than confrontation, reflecting the replacement of revolutionary values with rationality and a move from an idealist to a realist approach.

Under the Presidency of Mohammad Khatami (1997–2005) Iran sought to eliminate international tension. Khatami prioritized the development of democracy domestically and the promotion of peace internationally. These policies appealed to the younger generation and resulted in the highest electoral participation rates since the Islamic revolution, leading to a massive victory for Khatami. Responding to Samuel Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis, Khatami presented an idea of dialogue among civilizations: "Humanity's path (to emancipate from tension, violence, war, and inequality) is to shift the paradigm of animosity to the paradigm of amity. That is why I chose the slogan of dialogue among civilizations" (Quoted in Soleimani 2009: 89). Up to this point, Iran's foreign policy focus remained limited to the Middle East and to newly independent countries from the former Soviet Union. Several foreign policy initiatives mark the Khatami government's reorientation toward reducing tensions in the region: holding the Islamic Summit Conference in Tehran (1996); the economic and commercial agreement with Egypt (1998); and Khatami's official visit to Saudi Arabia (1998). Iran's relations with the European Union (EU) also improved during this period. The so-called Comprehensive Dialogues between Iran and the EU took off in 1998. These dialogues focused on three main areas: international issues such as terrorism and human rights; regional issues such as Iraq and the Middle East peace process; and providing conditions for cooperation on issues such as drugs, refugees, energy, and investments (Khalouzadeh 2003: 51). Despite the improvement in Iran's relations with Europe, its relations with the United States remained difficult and complicated. In an interview in 1998, Khatami talked about a "tall wall of mistrust between the two countries" (BBC Persian 2006). In fact, internal obstacles to developing a relationship with the United States were as tall as the mistrust wall between the two nations.

In 2000 Khatami was elected president for another four years with 22 million votes. Khatami represented the realist discourse on foreign policy. The political faction that supported him was called Reformist, to be distinguished from the principalists who represented the old, idealist discourse. The two factions represented different social groups who enjoyed support from different powerful actors within Iran. As reflected in the votes, the reformists' power came from the people, whereas the principalists' power stemmed from traditional clerics, military figures, and Tehran's bazaar (as an active political player). Both Khatami's domestic policies (especially promoting social freedom) and foreign policies (reducing tensions) encountered fierce resistance and disagreement to the point that it was said that the government faced a massive crisis every nine days (BBC Persian 2005). Then, *nine eleven* changed the international atmosphere. In 2002, President George W. Bush

labeled Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the "axis of evil," and, soon after, the United States intervened in Afghanistan and Iraq. The subsequent securitization of the Middle East, in addition to governmental inefficiency, strengthened the idealists' discourse and discouraged people from reform and voting.

Iran's foreign policy under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005–2013) was called "Aggressive Idealism" because it replaced dialogue with confrontation. His approach to international issues was ideological and aggressive (Dehshiri 2011: 53). The reason behind his foreign policy perspired in the words of Minister of Foreign Affairs Manuchehr Mottaki: "In foreign policy based on a smile we witnessed a kind of surrendering and abandonment of interests which was not acceptable for us" (Sadeghian and Mousavi 2017: 15). Ahmadinejad viewed the international system as unequal and, once more, made exporting the revolution one of the main themes of Iranian foreign policy. Not only did he voice his religious beliefs, but he also tried to promote them actively. Only one year into his presidency, he wrote letters to George W. Bush, Angela Merkel, Jacques Chirac, Romano Prodi, and Pope Benedict XVI asking them to change their approach and to consider Iran as an equal (Bagheri and Shafei 2014: 207). Ahmadinejad's foreign policy had an eastern outlook in its promotion of good relations with Russia and China. Although economic reasons were also part of it, Iran sought to establish alliances with these countries in order to counter American dominance. It also found new allies in South American countries such as Venezuela, Cuba, and Bolivia, portrayed as part of a "resistance axis" against "American imperialism" (Eivazi 2008: 12). Delegitimizing international organizations was another element of Ahmadinejad's foreign policy. Despite the fact that Iran's Nuclear Case was discussed before the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), he dismissed UNSC resolutions as a piece of torn and meaningless papers (Bagheri and Shafei 2014: 217).

Ahmadinejad served two terms as president. His reelection in 2009 was widely disputed and caused extensive demonstrations, with protests against election manipulation. The regime suppressed the protests, house-jailed its leaders, and never seriously investigated manipulation of the election. Ahmadinejad's domestic policies and his private conduct helped expand the gap between him and the principalists and even between him and Iran's supreme leader. This, combined with the economic pressure caused by inefficient government economic policies and international sanctions, combined with the limitations on social freedom, once again contributed to a situation in which the Rationalist discourse could gain strength.

After having assumed office in 2013, President Hassan Rouhani changed the tone of Iranian politics. On a national level, Rouhani's government sought economic development; internationally, it pursued constructive relations with the world. The key themes describing Rouhani's foreign policies

are a reduction of the tension between Iran and the world community; the establishment of peaceful relations with Iran's neighbors; and trust building with international organizations (Resaei and Torabi 2013: 136–39). During Rouhani's term, Iran faced two major issues: first, international tension over Iranian nuclear power was reaching its critical point; second, Iranian oil exports had practically reached a standstill, posing considerable financial challenges to the country. Rouhani's administration assessed that resolving most of these problems required an international agreement on Iran's nuclear policies. His approach was to present a Nuclear Deal as a win-win solution. In his 2013 interview with NBC he defined this approach: "The meaning of a win-win solution is that the negotiating countries should respect and recognize and accept the legitimate, peaceful nuclear rights of Iran. And on our side, to bring about the necessary confidence among the opposing parties that our program is peaceful" (NBC News 2013). Eventually, the long process of reaching an agreement and the impact of President Donald J. Trump's withdrawal from Iran deal in 2018 would put great pressure on Rouhani's government. The Iran Deal proved to be the quintessence of Iran's rationalist foreign policy and has directly influenced Iran's national and international political programs.

REACHING AN AGREEMENT

The concluding of the JCPOA was a turning point in the confrontation of the two approaches of idealism and realism that had competed for directing Iran's foreign policy since the Iranian 1979 revolution. Iran's nuclear policy emerged as an issue when President Khatami was in office. It turned into a crisis during the Ahmadinejad presidency, and it was resolved under Rouhani's administration. In August 2002 a report, released by an Iranian anti-government organization, claimed that Iran was engaged in activities relevant to the development of nuclear explosive devices at three different sites. Three months later, a CNN documentary showed the existence of such facilities. Decision-making about the nuclear issue was assigned to the Supreme National Security Council with Rouhani presiding. The issue emerged in the context of an increasingly complicated situation in the Middle East since the 2003 Iraq War, adding to the complexity of the situation in neighboring Afghanistan since 2001. In Iran, the nuclear program was turned in to a heated discussion during the election campaigns at the end of Khatami's Presidency. The principalists' slogan "Nuclear Energy is our Indisputable Right" came to dominate the public landscape. Rouhani lamented the fact that debating the nuclear issue "has become larger than it should in the public opinion, thereby negatively affecting the economy" (Herzog 2006). The pressure of

the Iranian hard-liners on Rouhani was so severe that he later suggested that continuation of the negotiations would have been difficult, had it not been for Ayatollah Khamenei's support. Indeed, in his speech on November 2, 2002, Ayatollah Khamenei had stated that "Iran chose an option wisely that allowed the inspectors of IAEA to investigate our activities while maintaining the nuclear achievements so that the lies of America and Israel (about our peaceful nuclear technology) will be revealed" (Rouhani 2011: 546).

In the early phases of JCPOA negotiations Iran faced two types of countries: the G3, which included the United States, Canada, and Australia, and the EU3, comprised of Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Italy and the Netherlands also sought to participate but Iran preferred to keep the number of countries involved limited to the great powers (Rouhani 2011: 645). The agreement between Iran and the EU-3 was signed on November 14, 2004. Although, initially, this so-called Paris Agreement had positive effects, Iran and the EU3 were unable to reach an agreement on long-term arrangements. In March 2005 Iran asked to resume some of its uranium enrichment activities under close monitoring of IAEA. The EU3 delayed responding until in August 2005 they submitted a proposal to Tehran that contained vague language and lacked a guarantee that Iran would not be attacked. Iran rejected the proposal (Joyner 2016: 65).

With the change of the Iranian Presidency the composition of the nuclear negotiating team changed as well. Negotiations with the great powers were replaced by negotiations with medium powers like Turkey and Brazil. The aggressive Idealist discourse represented by Ahmadinejad viewed Iran's nuclear issue from a different standpoint. At the beginning, his administration cancelled the agreement with the European parties due to the prolongation of negotiations and unfulfilled Iranian demands. Iran reestablished the Isfahan UCF complex and the heavy water reactor at Arak. In a speech in 2010 Ahmadinejad compared Iran's nuclear program to a train with its breaks and gears removed, riding a one-way track (Armin and Alizade 2006: 16). Ahmadinejad's confrontational policy resulted in international sanctions that would cripple Iran's economy.

Iranian nuclear policies passed through three stages during the Realist Rouhani Presidency. During its first two years, it sought to reach an agreement, despite the fact that some officials inside Iran seriously opposed the process. Their basic distrust of the United States made them consider negotiations with the United States to be futile. They believed that the Iranian nuclear issue merely served as a pretext to bring about regime change in Iran. Ayatollah Khamenei addressed the same issue in thirty-five different speeches between 2005 and 2018 and considered the pressure on Iran's nuclear program merely as an excuse to undermine Iran's government. The criticism of direct Iranian-American negotiations was so extensive that the fifteen

minutes' walk of Iran's secretary of state with his American counterpart (Javad Zarif and John Kerry) at the negotiation site turned into a controversy within Iran. Opposition continued also after the Iranian nuclear deal was eventually concluded. Opponents of the deal within Iran, who had chosen to be called "worriers" ("Delvapasan"), stated that the English and Persian text of JCPOA were inconsistent. When the official translation of the text was published, they claimed that some terms contained specific legal senses that were subject to extended interpretations. In addition, they objected to the privileges given to other parties and believed that Iran had accepted peanuts in exchange for giving away its nuclear rights. Some of these opponents also believed that JCPOA contained a confidential document that had not been made available to the public. The opponents' pressure to cancel the deal intensified after President Trump announced and effectuated American withdrawal from the agreement. The opponents stated that Iran now had a perfect opportunity to withdraw from a deal that had not been in Iran's interest in the first place. They argued that Iran's bank exchanges had been not normalized during the interval between the conclusion of the deal and American withdrawal from the agreement and that major international businesses had refrained from investing in Iran. At the same time, so they claimed, Europe would be sufficiently powerful to maintain the deal and would eventually give in to American pressure to cancel the agreement. Such objections were not confined to political parties within Iran: indeed, some anti-regime activists outside Iran were seriously opposing the deal. For example, an organization known as Iranian Islamic Associations, which had been established by Abolhassan Banisadr, the first Iranian post-revolution President, wrote in a statement that "[w]hat was approved in Vienna after 12 years of secret negotiations, is another document of surrender that flouts national sovereignty of Iran" (Poursaeid 2015: 15).

In 2017 Rouhani was elected to a second presidential term. In the presidential debates, he promised Iranians the economic benefits of JCPOA, and foreign investments that would develop Iran. The American withdrawal from the agreement thwarted these expectations. The psychological atmosphere following the concerns about reimposing unilateral sanctions against Iran, resulted in a worsening of the Iranian Rial exchange rate and a dramatic rise in inflation. Subsequently, protestors took to the streets in some cities of Iran in 2018.

The opponents to JCPOA can be divided into two groups. Some opponents exploited JCPOA to continue the electoral campaign of the previous year. To them, JCPOA became a tool to show the administration's inefficiency and thus to delegitimize the government. Their ultimate goal was to remove Rouhani's administration either through resignation or impeachment. Other opponents derive their position directly from the clash between the two

paradigms of idealism and realism that divide Iran's foreign policy elite. Idealists considered JCPOA to be a deal by virtue of which Iran limited some of its nuclear rights, but regained the right to sell oil. Thus, JCPOA was merely a deal addressing a single theme that could not be used for other foreign policy issues. However, realists considered JCPOA as opening the gates to the world. If the deal proved a success, it could be used as a model for other issues such as settling the crises in the Middle East. Perhaps the main reason why the idealists opposed the deal was their worry that the government would seek additional JCPOAs and thus abandon Iran's hostility toward the United States, which had been part and parcel of Iran's political identity for so long. In sum, it seems that JCPOA, portrayed as the decision of the realists among Iranian politicians, contributed to the disintegration of domestic political forces and turned into a tool for the idealist faction to topple Iran's realistic approach to foreign policy, particularly after American withdrawal from the agreement.

IRAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Iranophobia has been widespread in the Arab world since long. The origins of Iranophobia stem from various factors: first, the fear that Iran would export its revolution by propagating Shiism; second, the tensions resulting from juxtaposing Iranian identity to Arabic identity; third, geopolitical factors like Iran's population size; finally, fear that Iran would intend to establish a new Safavid Empire (an empire based on Shiite identity intended to annex the Arab territory) (Mehdiza and Mirhosseini 2017: 157–60). Nevertheless, until the scale of Iran's nuclear program was revealed, several countries in the region retained a pragmatic attitude toward the Islamic Republic: Iran was not completely isolated from consultations on the region and maintained normal trade and security relations with Arab countries. Relations worsened as a result of Ahmadinejad's aggressive foreign policy and, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, the American focus on the military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program. As a result of the securitizing of its nuclear program, Iran was broadly considered as a country with a revisionist and revolutionist ideology that aimed at destabilizing the region. It was perceived as an enemy that supported terrorist groups, built ballistic missiles, and sought to reach nuclear technology. In other words, Iran was pictured as a rogue state.

The Arab countries held security and environmental concerns about Iran's nuclear program. Regarding security, they believed that Iran achieving nuclear technology would disrupt the balance of power in the Middle East. This could be restored in three ways only: first, an all-out effort to stop Iran's nuclear program; second, achieving nuclear technology themselves;

third, build a coalition against Iran. Initially, Saudi Arabia, in reaction to the agreement between Iran and P5+1, issued a cautious declaration, stating: "This agreement could be a first step towards a comprehensive solution for Iran's nuclear program, if there are good intentions. The solution should lead to removal of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear, from the Middle East and the Gulf. Such solution should be followed by important steps that would guarantee the right of all states in the region to use nuclear power for peaceful purposes" (Al Arabiya 2013). Other security concerns involved Iran's involvement in the crises of Yemen and Syria and its growing influence in Iraq and Lebanon. For this reason, the optimism toward limitation of Iran's nuclear program was replaced rapidly by the concerns about Iran's regional influence. The greatest security concern, however, was fear that JCPOA would normalize the relations between Iran and Western countries, as a result of which Iran's strategic capability in the Middle East would increase considerably (Mohseni and Khalout 2015). The foreign policy of U.S. president Barack Obama (2009–2016) intensified these worries. The Obama Administration viewed its opening to Iran as part of a broader effort to bring stability to the region, and saw an Iranian commitment not to pursue nuclear weapons as a benefit to its allies in the region, such as Saudi Arabia. But the Saudis, without a seat at the negotiating table, feared that Washington would ratify Iranian hegemony in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and the Persian Gulf in exchange for a nuclear deal (Gause 2013).

Saudi Arabia welcomed President Trump's 2018 decision to withdraw from the international nuclear agreement with Iran and to reimpose economic sanctions. Saudi Arabia's Foreign Office accused Iran of destabilizing the region: "Iran used economic gains from the lifting of sanctions to continue its activities to destabilize the region, particularly by developing ballistic missiles and supporting terrorist groups in the region" (Reuters 2018). The rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia intensified when Saudi started its own nuclear program in 2018 (World Nuclear News 2018). Saudi Arabia plans to build sixteen nuclear power reactors over the next twenty-five years at a cost of more than US$80 billion. By 2032, 15 percent of Saudi Arabia's energy should be provided by nuclear plants (Arab News 2018). Although building the "Arab Bomb" by one or more Arabic countries or even the Arab League as a nuclear deterrence against Iran has so far remained only an idea, Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammad Bin-Salman stated that "Saudi Arabia does not want to acquire any nuclear bomb, but without a doubt if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible" (Reuters March 15, 2018).

Hence, it seems that forging an alliance against Iran has been the preferred tool of the Arab countries to restore the regional balance of power. The strong ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia, based on a perceived "common threat" from Iran, are now part of a new regional arrangement. Iran and Russia

filled the power vacuums in the Middle East left by Obama's foreign policy. Trump's administration, although loud and seemingly tough, has not yet come up with a comprehensive policy for the Middle East, or Iran. In fact, for Saudi Arabia Iran's nuclear activities are as important as Iran's regional influence. To them, JCPOA enhanced rather than contained Iran's influence in the region. In sum, the expected improvement of Iran's image in the Middle East as a result of JCPOA actually reinforced long-existing Iranophobia, because of the threat that normalization of relations between Iran and western countries could pose to other states in the region.

IRAN AND RUSSIA

When Iran's nuclear program was put on the international agenda in 2002, China and Russia had suggested Iran that only European countries could resist American pressure over this issue. Indeed, in case European countries did not support Iran, even Russia would not be able to resist American pressure. Over those years, Russia always stressed the need for a peaceful settlement of the dispute over Iran's nuclear program, and under Dmitri Medvedev had supported six UNSC resolutions condemning Iran. Historically, Iranians have been pessimistic about Russian intentions, remembering specific salient historical events: the annexation of seventeen northern Iranian provinces by Russia in the nineteenth century; the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 aimed at splitting Iran into three zones; the (Anglo-Soviet) invasion in 1941; and the role of the left-wing Tudeh party in the 1953 coup against the nationalist Mossadiq government. To many Iranians, Russia is an untrustworthy political partner that will not hesitate to stab them in back. At the highest level of government, however, such pessimism is absent (Trenin 2018).

In public debates in recent years Iran and Russia have been associated with the conflict in Syria rather than with issues concerning JCPOA. After his return to the presidency in 2012, Vladimir Putin set out to restore Russia's relations with the Middle East, which had been neglected and damaged under Medvedev. Only two months in his new term, Putin, meeting with his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, stated Russia's interest in developing good relations with Iran, calling the country a "traditional partner." In September 2014, Foreign Secretary Sergey Lavrov designated Iran as a "natural ally" in the struggle against the religious extremists of the Middle East. In the Syrian conflict, Iran and Russia experienced their first military cooperation. In August 2016, Moscow used Iran's Hamedan airbase to bomb targets in Syria. In Iranian public opinion complaints surfaced that Russia's use of the Hamedan airbase violated Iran's constitution that prohibited the presence of foreign militaries on its territory. Nevertheless, Iranian Parliamentary

Speaker Ali Larijani declared that "[t]he flights [of Russian warplanes] haven't been suspended. Iran and Russia are allies in the fight against terrorism"; the Hamedan air base, he claimed, was only "used for refueling" (Borshchevskaya 2017). The Iranian-Russian alliance in Syria proved an uneasy one: Iran preferred not to be portrayed as Russia's land force, just like Russia wanted to avoid the impression to serve merely as Iran's air force. Nevertheless, the two countries ultimately succeeded in preventing Syrian President Assad's opponents from reaching their objectives.

The idealist faction of Iran's foreign policy elite considers Syria as an important part of the "Axis of Resistance." For the hard-liners close to Ayatollah Khamenei and the Islamic Revolution Guardian Council (IRGC), the roots of the regional geopolitical crisis—especially the conflict in Syria—are existential. In their minds, the Syrian conflict has less to do with Syria and rather more with the objective of the United States and its regional partners to undermine Iranian power. Thus, it is highly unlikely that the Supreme Leader and the IRGC will give up on Syria—or, more broadly, on the axis of resistance (Mohseni and Khalout 2017). Iran and Russia have different motives for fighting in Syria. In fact, Russia only pursues its geopolitical interests and lacks any ideological view on the Middle East. Because for Russia Iran is a regional actor like Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Turkey, it does not intend to interfere in the relations between these states by acting as a balancing power. For this reason, it neither promotes an Iranian departure from Syria nor does it prevent Israeli forces from attacking Iran's positions in Syria. While Russia acknowledged Iran's and Hizbullah's role in achieving the very victory announced by Putin in 2018, it never supported Tehran's ambition to control Syria via the Assad regime and the Alawites (Popescu and Secrieru 2018). Thus, the "unconditional brotherly love" that some Iranian policymakers expect from Iran's relationship with Russia was not reciprocated (Sveshnikova 2018: 58).

Importantly, JCPOA is not the reason behind closer relations between Iran and Russia. JCPOA only facilitated the conditions for building a pragmatic relationship between the two countries. After Iran and the P5+1 had reached the final agreement, Putin said: "We are confident that the world today breathed a sigh of relief" (Reuters July 14, 2015). Russia immediately ended the ban of delivery of the s-300 missile system to Iran, which was completed in April 2015. Russia also took the opportunity to lift economic sanctions against Iran by offering multibillion dollar loans to Tehran. Trump's decision to pull the United States out of the multilateral nuclear deal did not affect these economic ties. While more than fifty international firms have already announced their intention to leave the Iranian market (particularly in the energy and financial sectors), Russia and Iran continue expanding their economic relations, using local currencies for mutual trade.

IRAN AND THE UNITED STATES

JCPOA was never expected to solve all problems between Iran and United States. Still, the direct negotiations between two countries were a historical opportunity and could be considered a starting point for trust building between the two nations. Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA closed this window and ushered in a new era of tension in U.S.-Iranian relations. Engagement with the United States is an issue transcending routine decisions in Iranian foreign policy and can be decided upon solely by Iran's Supreme Leader. President Trump's foreign policy toward Tehran made Iran's Supreme Leader announce explicitly that negotiating with the United States was a wrong deed, prohibiting Iranian officials from further engagement with the United States. In his speech on August 3, 2018, he announced that "[t]he JCPOA negotiations were wrong. I also made a mistake concerning the negotiation and allowed the officials to experience it due to their insistence. They crossed some redlines I had set . . . Ayatollah Khomeini prohibited negotiations with the USA and now I also prohibit it" (Isna August 3, 2018). In 2009, four years before the start of official negotiations between Iran and the P5+1, President Obama had written his first secret letter to Iran's Supreme Leader (The Guardian June 24, 2009). After the protests against the outcome of the disputed Iranian presidential elections in June of the same year that was known as the Green Movement, Iran's Supreme Leader revealed Obama's secret letter and criticized the double standard the United States pursued toward Iran in supporting the protestors and sending friendly letters (BBC November 8, 2014). In fact, the protests in Iran in 2009 were so effective that some believe that they made Obama postpone pursuing a policy of change toward Iran (Castiglione 2013).

Negotiations between Iran and the United States started when the Rouhani administration announced that it was going to change the course of Iran's foreign policy. Rouhani stressed the new features of Iran's foreign policy: moderation, reducing tensions, logical realism, pacifism; seeking improvement in the relations with countries in the region; reaching out to Iran's traditional partners in Asia and Europe; and, finally, modifying relations with the effective, great powers based on Iran's national interests (Bagheri and Shafei 2014: 348). The last item was an implicit reference to the United States and reflected Rouhani's intention to manage conflicts between Iran and the United States through dialogue and mutual respect, "speaking respectfully and not using sanctions" Bagheri and Shafei 2014: 348). This new approach to foreign policy removed a major hurdle to reaching an agreement: the UN removed Iran from provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The imminent threat of war was thus removed and Iran's oil exports soared to pre-sanction levels. After the conclusion of the agreement, Rouhani said: "It

is possible to remove the building blocks of distrust one by one" (Deutsche Welle Farsi July 14, 2015).

Iran's hard-liners who were against entering any sort of agreement with the United States started to accuse Rouhani and his foreign policy team of surrendering too many of Iran's rights to the West as part of the nuclear deal. After the conclusion of the deal, hard-liners in Iran's military have made several shows of strength. They fired two missiles marked "Israel Must Be Wiped Out" shortly after the agreement was signed. The message of this missile was not only addressed to the world community, but also was a warning to Rouhani. As explained above, many regional actors fear a normalization of relations between Tehran and Washington. Consequently, today, improving U.S.-Iranian relations seems more difficult than before. Iran is a piece in the U.S. foreign policy puzzle of the Middle East. Reaching an agreement on Iran's nuclear program does not reduce the world community's concerns regarding Iran's missile program, its regional influence or its treatment of human rights. Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA directly affects future U.S.-Iranian relations. Rouhani considered renegotiations with the United States to be futile: "Iran will not renegotiate what was agreed years ago and has been implemented," Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said, adding: "Let me make it absolutely clear, and once and for all: we will neither outsource our security nor will we renegotiate or add onto a deal we have already implemented in good faith" (Reuters May 3, 2018). Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA sent the message to American allies in the region that the United States remains true to its traditional policy of containing Iran's power in Middle East.

IRAN AND THE EU

After President Trump's decision to leave JCPOA, the EU took the responsibility to save the agreement. American officials portray the return of unilateral American sanctions as an incentive to change Iran's behavior (Tehran Times November 5, 2018). This is not how the hard-core Idealists Iran's foreign policy elite perceive the issue. For example, to them, negotiation, especially with the US, equals surrender. Also, they interpret a desired change in Iran's behavior as the objective to achieve regime change in Iran. Some members of the moderate (realist) faction tend to agree with them on the latter issue. This group of officials believes that the principal U.S. objective is to increase public dissatisfaction by imposing unilateral sanctions. "Reducing the legitimacy of the system is their final goal. When they say getting rid of, regime change in their own words, how does regime change happen? Through reducing legitimacy, otherwise, a regime doesn't change," Rouhani said (Reuters October 14, 2018). Perhaps the economic pressures

will not change Iran's regime, but they clearly undermine the position of the moderates and reformists with the risk of isolating them totally from Iran's political arena. The collapse of JCPOA would mean the failure of the moderates' political and economic program and will affect chances in the upcoming parliamentary elections in 2020. The moderates seek to counter this tendency by pursuing the "looking east" policy and by strengthening Iran's cooperation with the EU.

With the critical and comprehensive dialogues, the EU and Iran's moderates have a tradition of cooperation that dates back twenty years. The EU has several motives to stay committed to JCPOA. The Iran deal is the confirmation of the efficiency of European effective multilateralism in reducing tensions. "The JCPOA is a key element of the global nonproliferation architecture and a significant achievement of multilateral diplomacy endorsed unanimously by the UN Security Council through Resolution 2231."[1] The approach completely differs from President Trump's unilateralism. His decision to walk away from the Iran deal coincides with the intensification of transatlantic disagreements over trade and investment, NATO, the Arab-Israel peace process, and the proper stance on Russia. Furthermore, saving JCPOA is an opportunity for the EU to maintain its historical role in the Middle East, although the EU is not a key player in the Syrian conflict limiting its actions to humanitarian actions and air strike operation against ISIS. The Arab-Israeli peace process is currently facing serious complications, in particular the American decision to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem and the continuation of new Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

Nevertheless, the EU continues to be an effective actor in the issue of Iran's nuclear program. The EU sees JCPOA as a key element of the global nuclear nonproliferation architecture and as crucial for the security of the region (European Council 2017). The Middle East is a region characterized by instability and turmoil. JCPOA addresses one of these problems. Other problems, such as violent extremism, require collective regional responses including Iran. Trade and economic relations can be another motive of EU efforts to save the deal. In 2017 the EU was Iran's third-largest trade partner, following China and the United Arab Emirates, respectively. EU exports to Iran grew at an annual rate of 31.5 percent while imports from Iran grew 83.9 percent during 2016–2017. From 2013 to 2017, the annual growth rate for imports was a staggering 89.7 percent, while growth of exports was 18.7 percent (The Hill July 5, 2017). The EU has taken some steps to protect JCPOA, opening an effective financial channel with Iran and updating blocking regulation to protect EU businesses from sanctions. Although the EU's leaders remain unified in their political support of JCPOA, many European firms have little confidence that European policymakers will create the conditions necessary to protect them from U.S. secondary sanctions.

Within Iran many actors, especially the idealist faction, criticize Iran's continued observation of JCPOA provisions with European countries. They claim that the EU is not strong enough to preserve the deal. JCPOA is already dead and Iran is trapped in a losing game: while the EU ensures Iran's continued compliance with JCPOA, the United States reimposed its sanctions. The critics argue that Iran is thus simultaneously compromising its nuclear rights and suffering sanctions. Between three policy options—confrontation with the United States; compromise with the United States; and maintaining the status quo—Iran has chosen the last course of action. Thus, the threefold strategy of the moderate Rouhani administration to manage the crises is to continue complying with JCPOA, working with the EU, and to wait for Trump to leave office. Therefore, it can be said that JCPOA has deepened the EU-Iran relationship, although, specific issues, such as human rights in Iran, may imperil the current relationship.

CONCLUSION

JCPOA entails a different meaning for different political factions within Iran. The idealists considered JCPOA as a goal in its own right: Iran limited some of its nuclear rights in return for the lifting of international sanctions and the right to sell oil. For the Realists, JCPOA was a way to reach out to both domestic and international audiences. JCPOA would enable a national dialogue between the government and civil society to solve the dispute over the 2009 presidential election. Regionally, it could serve as a model to settle the regional conflicts based on dialogue, mutual respect, and multilateralism; internationally, it could prove a vital ingredient in improving American-Iranian relations. However, reviewing JCPOA's domestic, regional, and international effects, it seems that the pressure of the forces opposing JCPOA has been so great that no such objectives are likely to be achieved soon. Domestically, the economic expectations from JCPOA were unrealistic. Indeed, President Trump's withdrawal from JCPOA and reimposition of unilateral sanctions even worsened Iran's economic conditions. The deal which could boost the moderates in Iran's politics turned into a tool to undermine the administration. Regionally, JCPOA increased the concerns in the Middle East regarding the normalization of Iranian-Western relations. Saudi Arabia sought to balance increased Iranian power by forging closer relations with Israel. Its purchase of significant numbers of American weaponry shows Riyadh's concerns over Iran's rise and expansion in Arab world and beyond and the price Saudi Arabia is willing to pay for its security. Internationally, JCPOA did not have much effect on Iranian-Russian relations. The close relationship between Iran and Russia mainly stems from their coinciding

interests regarding Syria. The American withdrawal from JCPOA fed the distrust between two countries and eliminated the opportunities to improve the relations. Conversely, JCPOA has not only strengthened the mutual relationship between Iranian moderates and EU, but has also mobilized the idealists against the moderates.

Iranian moderates, led by Hassan Rouhani, tied their political future to the success of the Iranian nuclear deal. However, playing the role of a behavioral middle power, they are facing serious challenges. Iranian conservatives have never proposed an alternative for JCPOA. However, the options on the table range from a return to nuclear activities to a complete withdrawal from the deal, even from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). In the region, President Trump's equivocal Middle Eastern foreign policy makes it difficult to anticipate Iran's next move. Iran considers itself as a part of the solution to Middle Eastern problems, and believes that no crisis can be solved by putting pressures on Iran or by removing the Iranian factor out of the regional equation. Iran has frequently stated that it will remain in the deal as long as the deal will serve its interests. JCPOA's survival thus depends on the triumph of rationality and multilateralism in international relations.

NOTE

1. "Joint Statement by France, the UK, and Germany on the Iran Nuclear Deal." November 2, 2018.

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Part IV

NORMATIVE LEADERSHIP—NICHE POWERS

Chapter 8

"The Bigger of the Smaller States"

Dutch Foreign Policy in Constant Search of a Relevant Role on the World Stage

Bertjan Verbeek

The historical debate surrounding the foreign policy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands since its creation in 1814 can be captured in four debates[1]: the first concerned the presence of three constant factors accounting Dutch foreign policy, summarized as peace, profits, and principles (Voorhoeve 1979). Dutch foreign policy strove to create conditions that would guarantee its territorial security as well the possibility of open economies; in addition, it would voice international legal and moral concerns, generally taking what we would nowadays call a cosmopolitan outlook. The second debate concerned Dutch postwar foreign policy, focusing on its presumed Atlanticism. Atlanticism implied a tendency to follow any American lead without questioning and to put Atlantic concerns before any other foreign policy issue (Van Staden 1976). New historical evidence suggested that on and off the Netherlands adopted a more independent role within the Atlantic alliance (Hellema 1990). The third debate raged in the 1990s around the position of the Netherlands after the Cold War in the context of (economic) globalization (Hout and Sie Dhian Ho 1996). Possibly, the tragic events in Srebrenica in 1995 reflected the dilemmas the Netherlands was facing in a new global environment. A fourth debate characterized early 2000s when multilateralism was redefined as having to serve more narrow Dutch interests as well (De Volkskrant 2006).

Although much debated, these debates have been seldom put in terms of International Relations approaches such as Foreign Policy Analysis or Neoclassical Realism. Indeed, the debate surrounding globalization has mainly been conducted by the foreign policy community in terms of policy guidance; the debate about Atlanticism has mainly been a debate about the historical

record (1945–1990); the analytically most relevant debate, about the three constant factors, has never led to a debate in terms of IR theory. It remained inclusive whether the pursuit of peace, profit, and principles reflected three "logical" policies given the geopolitical situations in which the Netherlands found itself since 1814; or whether we should conceive of the "three Ps" as social constructs resembling different role conceptions. Indeed, theory-guided analyses of Dutch foreign policy are still rare compared to historical perspectives. Important exceptions include Breuning's role conception analysis of Dutch development policies (Breuning 1995), the project at Leiden University in the 1980s to trace the domestic determinants of Dutch foreign policy (e.g., Everts 1985), the continued attention to Dutch public opinion on foreign policy (Everts and Isernia 2001); theoretical conceptualization of Dutch foreign policy making in the context of globalization and Europeanization (Hout and Sie Dhian Ho 1996; Verbeek and Van der Vleuten 2008); and scattered theory-driven analyses of cabinet decisions on foreign policy (e.g., Kaarbo 2016; Kaarbo and Kantor 2013; Metselaar and Verbeek 1997; Oktay 2018).

As a consequence, although policymakers as well as academics happily discuss the position of the Netherlands in the international political system, the theoretical underpinnings of this debate still need strengthening. This chapter will primarily focus on Dutch foreign policy since World War II. It starts from the premise that changing geopolitical and economic conditions in the international political system require relevant foreign policy actors to develop a national role conception which gives meaning to the constraints set by the system and serves as a guideline to maneuver in the system and which thus helps set priorities. At the same time, different narratives may compete for becoming the national role conception, implying that domestic actors are constantly engaged in redefining this role. Such narratives are themselves cast in deeper lying (possibly conflicting) notions about identity shared by larger segments of the population (cf. Cantir and Kaarbo 2016; Hopf 2002). In a globalized world events and actors are relevant in this constant competition between narratives. Within this perspective we expect the Netherlands to face difficulties in defining a role because of discrepancy between its small geopolitical clout (since the end of colonialism) and its considerable economic and financial clout. After the end of Cold War, Voorhoeve labeled the Netherland as a "pocket-sized middle power" (Voorhoeve 1990), a term which somewhat indicates the Dutch dilemma: it longs to be taken seriously by the great powers, and thinks it is entitled to a rank close to being a middle power. For sure, it certainly does not see itself as a small power (in contrast with Sweden's self-perception; see Eriksson's contribution to this volume): indeed, during its annual budget presentation in September 2019 the Rutte III government defined the Netherlands as a middle power (De Volkskrant

September 17, 2019). This mental baseline has consequences for its role conception and subsequent policies, as we will see below.

THE GEOPOLITICAL CHESS BOARD (1585–1945)

Historically, changing geopolitical circumstances have usually set the markers within which Dutch foreign policy had to be conducted. The difficult terrain of the territories that in 1581 had officially rejected Spain's King Philip II as their legitimate sovereign had made it difficult for the Spanish army to impose a decisive defeat on the irregular collection of troops of the independent Dutch Republic (Parker 1976). The Spanish occupation of Antwerp in 1585 invited the Dutch blockade of the trade city's lifeline, the river Scheldt, and the exodus of entrepreneurial Calvinists and Jews from Antwerp. Combined, these factors contributed to the rise of Amsterdam as a global commercial and financial center thus laying the foundation of the Dutch seventeenth century trade empire. In addition, the Republic's survival and growth was based on the genius of army commander Prince Maurice of Orange who around 1600 had introduced a revolution in military organization (Parker 2007). All in all, for most of the seventeenth century its status as leading state in the world political economy was undisputed (Wallerstein 1974). In 1795 the Republic's competition with France and the UK combined with internal strife over the exact role of the House of Orange led to the short-lived "Batavian Republic" that was modeled after the ideals of the French Revolution. Eventually, Napoleon incorporated the Netherlands into his Empire.

At the Congress of Vienna, the great powers agreed that none of them was supposed to have control over the estuaries of the Scheldt, Meuse, and Rhine rivers and decided that an independent state comprising present-day Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands was the best guarantee. In line with the principles of the Congress of Vienna, the great powers preferred a monarchy for the new state and promoted the House of Orange, the main representative of which had already proclaimed himself sovereign ruler with the help of the pro-Orange faction in the former Republic. As a bonus, the Netherlands was allowed to reobtain its colonial possessions in East Asia and the Caribbean. Given the reasons why the major powers created the Netherlands, it was only logical that strict neutrality would be the new Kingdom's foreign policy, which it would remain until the German attack on Western Europe in May 1940. Neutrality made The Hague seem a sufficiently uncontroversial place to hold international peace conferences and, later, to house the Permanent Court of Justice (now ICJ).

That does not mean that the Netherlands conducted an entirely peaceful foreign policy: it fought a short war to prevent Belgium from seceding in

1831, until threats of French intervention made it halt. It employed military force to "pacify" various parts of the Dutch East Indies as part of its policy to formally colonize the archipelago. It also came close to siding with the Boers in the Anglo-Boers wars in South Africa around 1900. Developing the Dutch East Indies into a formal colony proved highly important economically. As a side effect, it promoted the development of a sizeable navy and standing army, both of which contributed to the idea that if the Netherlands no longer was a great power, it certainly was no negligible quantity either. This seemed confirmed in the Netherlands' participation in the 1922 international naval agreement on naval power in the Pacific (involving Japan, the Netherlands, the UK, and the United States) and its recognized role in the Allied defense of South East Asia in 1942.

Neutrality was not only a simple geopolitical given. It was backed up with the development of a specific discourse singling out the position of the Netherlands: first of all, as a champion of international law and international organization: witness the location of the Court; witness the Dutch participation in the first peacekeeping mission in the Saarland in 1934. Second, as a colonial ruler that claimed to rule benignly over, and to the benefit of, the indigenous population, thus responding the rise of nationalist feelings in Asia after the Japanese defeat of Tsarist Russia in 1905. However, the German occupation of the Netherlands (1940) and Japanese conquest of the Dutch East Indies (1942) ended the leading notion of neutrality. After the war, the geopolitical tables had turned once again.

THEORY: FROM ROLE CONCEPTION TO NATION BRANDING

Foreign policy is a (more or less) conscious act by a (set of) actors representing a sovereign state directed at the state's external environment. As such it is the product of decision-making. Actors involved in foreign policy making are assumed to have a set of implicit or explicit goals. Both the definition of the objectives and the process leading up to foreign policy decisions are rooted in a conception of the state's position in the international political system and of the nature of that system. This is the case irrespective of whether the dominant foreign policy decision unit is a single individual (e.g., a dictator), a small group (e.g., a cabinet), or a set of interrelated organizations (e.g., departments, political parties) (cf. Hermann 2001). Such conceptions can be called national role conceptions (cf. Cantir and Kaarbo 2016; Holsti 1970; Walker 1987). They serve as a filter of incoming information and define the range of possible options. Also, they provide prescriptive rules as to how to

behave properly in specific situations in world politics, based on expectations both from domestic and international audiences.

Such conceptions, however, have to compete with other conceptions (cf. Brummer and Thies 2015): first of all, different actors in the international system may have different ideas about the position and role of the sovereign state; these possible discrepancies, as described by Giacomello and Verbeek (2011: 21, table 1.1), are a potential source of misperception, and potentially conflict between states: states that used to be recognized as, but are no longer considered, a great power by other states, have difficulty finding a new role particularly if their self-image still corresponds with their previous status. France, Russia, and the UK are major examples of such role conflicts. Also, the Netherlands has been relegated from great power to middle and small power status and had to grapple several times with a realignment of its self-image with expectations from other states.

Second, the objectives central to the national role conception may conflict with more narrow objectives of actors within the state that have a stake in its foreign policy: these could be departments defending or expanding their turf; or political parties seeking to cater to their voters; or lobby organizations promoting specialized interests. Third, national role conceptions are subject to change, when the balance between different competing narratives about the state's role changes. Still, such competing different narratives need to remain consistent with deeply shared notions of national identity (cf. Barnett 1999). Changes in such notions of identity may also change, either gradually or by shock (e.g., after a major [inter]national event).

A national role conception essentially is a social construction: it refers to a shared meaning that actors give to the real world they are facing. In world politics role conceptions have to relate to power and reputation: irrespective of the validity of rationalist explanations of world politics, actors who act upon role conceptions have a notion of power: often, they follow the classical indicators of realism: geography, demography, natural resources, and economic and military strength. Perceived differences in power produce different ideas about predictable behavior in the system given a state's agreed-upon status. Shifts in the balance of power are the cause of misperception and miscalculation. In terms of role conceptions problems are bound to occur when a state's act does not match the attributed status and it seeks to "punch above its weight." Reputation from this perspective thus is related to the social constructivist notion that not only actors within the state have a shared idea about the state's proper role, but also other states have a shared notion of the state's status, which may either coincide or conflict with the state's own conception.

Over the past years, on the constructivist wave, IR theory has embraced the notion that power is not exclusively based on material resources (cf. Haas

1982; Nye 2000): soft/smart power has become the term to describe behavior that is ultimately based on making oneself attractive to the other: such attractiveness is based on the specific values a state seeks to strive for. Such values are not only often professed explicitly in statements and speeches, but are also communicated via culture, sports, and behavior that seems inspired by universal norms (e.g., humanitarian aid). Such attractiveness promotes a situation where one state starts to "want what another state wants" because it seems to be the right thing to do. Soft power brings enormous advantages especially for middle and small powers that lack the material resources to engage the great powers. It also enables states to become frontrunners in specific niches of world politics, for example, development, global warming, health, and water management. At the same time, such soft power also produces serious hindrances to these same states because consistency ("practice what you preach") becomes the major yardstick to judge one's international reputation by. States thus sometimes face serious role conflicts because of their soft power strategy.

States have developed elaborate programs to promote the likability and persuasiveness of one's foreign policy outlook and the actual preferences that they claim follow logically from them. We call such programs public diplomacy. Whereas in the past this remained the prerogative of the Foreign Office, firms that are specialized in nation branding are now hired to help develop and realize such programs. Various ranking of nation brands nowadays exist (see also the contribution of De Rooij to this volume).

FOREIGN POLICY I: THE COLD WAR—IN SEARCH OF A NEW ROLE (1945–1989)

Reorientation

During the Second World War the Dutch government in exile anticipated a major change in world politics, and hence in Dutch foreign policy. The German occupation of the Netherlands had shattered the idea that neutrality would preserve the integrity of the Kingdom. Any successful foreign policy would require a new strategy based on alliances. The global economic crisis of the 1930s, having brought international trade to a standstill, had taught the lesson that free trade had to be promoted. Also, given the United States's warning that it did not join the war effort in order to preserve the British Empire, the Dutch government felt it had to pacify the nationalist movement in the Dutch East Indies, which had been thriving since the Japanese victory in the 1905–1906 war against Tsarist Russia that had sparked an anti-colonial movement throughout Asia. In 1942 in a radio speech Queen Wilhelmina

spoke of new future postwar colonial relations based on an idea of more rights for the Indonesian population.

Importantly, the Netherlands did not envisage a small state role for itself in the postwar settlement. In the negotiations that would eventually produce the United Nations and the Bretton Woods system, it sought to introduce a separate category of middle powers in the UN system with specific rights (cf. McIntyre 1954). These countries feared that Roosevelt's Four Policemen idea (eventually becoming the veto wielding Permanent Five in the Security Council) would effectively create a situation in which the great powers would dominate the new organization (cf. George 1980). Obviously, the Netherlands considered itself a legitimate candidate for the middle power status. Maintaining this claim, however, required holding on to its colonial possessions, particularly in Asia. The Indonesian declaration of independence, days after Japan's capitulation, caught the Netherlands by surprise.

Decolonization

The very fact that no Dutch troops were on the ground and that it took the UK quite some time to occupy the string of islands, disarm the Japanese army, and hand over authority to Dutch authorities, meant that the Netherlands had no effective control over the territory and that the newly proclaimed Indonesian Republic successfully ruled over large chunks of territory by the end of 1945. What followed were four years of violent conflict and negotiations (cf. Spruyt 2010: 146–65). The United States put pressure on the Netherlands to accept negotiations under UN flag. Two major military operations in 1947 and 1948 further escalated the conflict into a war of decolonization until American pressure made the Netherlands reluctantly accept the outcome it wished to avoid: immediate recognition of independence (December 1949) of the entire archipelago (apart from West New Guinea, a final settlement for which had to be agreed upon by subsequent negotiations). Eventually, in 1962 the Netherlands agreed to hand over West New Guinea to an interim UN administration for 9 months before it would become part of Indonesia in 1963 (McMahon 1981). This occurred only after 13 years of frustrating negotiations, a military escalation between Indonesia and the Netherlands (including several smaller naval battles), and, yet again, American pressure (Metselaar and Verbeek 1997).

The colonial conflict is relevant because it reveals important aspects regarding middle power status and roles. Clearly, the Netherlands considered itself a middle power and wished to hold on to Indonesia in order to preserve that status. This was strongly felt by the foreign policy elite which, it should be kept in mind, constituted of only a small group of individuals at the time. They included those in the overseas and war ministries, who

played an important role alongside the Foreign Office staff. However, it soon became clear that other states, crucially the United States, did not reciprocate the Dutch claim to middle power status. Indeed, securing middle power status in the UN system had already proven unsuccessful. Further, the Dutch claim that the "Indonesian question" was a matter of internal politics was not accepted at the UN level. On top of that, from the beginning the United States exerted considerable pressure to accommodate a solution that included Indonesian independence, eventually threatening to withhold Marshall aid (Van der Eng 1988). By then, of course, events in Europe had made the United States indispensable for effectuating the other Dutch primary foreign policy goal: security from Germany as well as the Soviet Union, through an alliance. A similar pattern surfaced in the decade leading up to the handing over of West New Guinea thirteen years later. In both cases the American position was that Indonesian independence proved a better counter weight against rising communism than the continuation of Dutch colonial rule (Koster 1991).

However, middle power status was not the only motive why the Netherlands tried to hold on to its colonial possessions. For one, during the tough years of economic recovery it needed its income from colonial exports in order to afford the expensive American dollars to purchase essential goods in times of war debts and austerity. The military operations of 1947 were meant to occupy those territories that were vital for such exports. In addition, the Netherlands was facing a conflict of narratives about its role in the East and thus in the world. Dutch society was increasingly divided over the Indonesian issue: protestant and catholic political parties (counting for about half of the parliamentary seats) had fully embraced the narrative that the Netherlands was behaving in an ethical laudable fashion and was preparing Indonesians for independence in due time. Indeed, radical Catholics, opposed to the dissolution of the empire, broke away when Indonesia's independence seemed near. The communist party (then representing 5–10% of the electorate) was the only party that represented the narrative that colonies were abject by principle. The sizeable social-democratic party (representing 28% of the electorate) preferred Indonesian independence but feared that their opposition would threaten the construction of a welfare state that they had compromised on with their catholic and protestant coalition partners (Fennema 1995). A similar repetition of narrative exchanges took place during the West New Guinea conflict. Some players preferred to keep on to the territory as an indicator of international status (departments of Defense and Foreign Office) or as part of a mission to emancipate the indigenous people (religious parties). Others judged that the time had come to abandon the claims for global reach and to accept that the Netherlands was a small, dependent European country (social-democrats, communists).The decolonization era thus prompted a redefinition

of the dominant narrative coinciding with the reorientation versus the Atlantic alliance and European integration.

Atlanticism and European Integration

Parallel to its colonial adventure the Netherlands faced decisions regarding its economic and territorial security. Its abandoning of neutrality made it an active proponent of the 1948 Treaty of Brussels which proved a smaller precursor to the North Atlantic Treaty (NAT) a year later. At the same time, it sought to actively participate in the European Community for Coal and Steel ECCS, and, later, the European Economic Community (EEC), although again also pushed by the United States, and also seen as a means to control future German influence in Europe (Lundestad 1986). The successful development of the NAT into NATO and the subsequent deepening of European integration in Euratom and the EEC in the context of the Cold War consolidated the narratives that conceived of the Netherlands as a state that no longer held a global status claim and that depended on the United States for its security and increasingly on Europe for its prosperity. These competing narratives occasionally clashed: in the 1950s, the Netherlands effectively threatened to reduce its contribution to NATO if allies were not more supportive in its attempts to deter Indonesia from attacking West New Guinea; the Netherlands preferred the UK joining the EEC, partly because of the two countries' trade ties, partly because it considered the UK a counter weight to France and Germany.

Meanwhile, the narrative that had guided Dutch colonialism (preparing indigenous population for independence by building infrastructure and by education) was redefined in terms of a new policy of development assistance directed at all poor, newly independent states. This was accompanied by the creation of a new institutional framework in which governmental and non-governmental organizations would develop a common framework for formulating and implementing development policies. Such NGOs had often been rooted in the old religious missionary organizations from colonial days, but were now supplemented with nonreligious NGOs (cf. Verbeek and Quarles van Ufford 2001).

Toward the End of the Cold War: Competing Narratives

Around the mid-1960s, therefore, Dutch foreign policy rested on a national role conception in which a truly global role had been abandoned and in which three narratives competed for dominance: Atlanticism, European Integration, and Development Assistance. Atlanticism reflected the idea that territorial security comes first and is ultimately guaranteed by American leadership in

NATO. A collateral thought is that economic prosperity is served by American leadership in GATT and IMF. The European Integration narrative presents the idea that peace in Europe is best guaranteed by cooperation between former enemies. The Development Assistance narrative is based on an idea of ethics: there is a moral duty (whether on religious, humanitarian, or socialist principles) to reduce inequalities in the world. Atlanticism is strongly present among the DGPZ section of the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defense, supported by center-right parties but also sections of social democracy; European integration is carried by most political parties (and specific vested interests such as the Department of Agriculture), but the narrative obfuscates different emphases, notably about the degree of the supranational character of European integration. The Development Assistance narrative is carried by the center-left parties, Christian-democracy as well as the smaller religious parties and is supported by relevant NGOs and the DGIS section within the Foreign Office.

Most of the time, Atlanticism would be the dominant narrative of the Dutch national role conception. In public debate it has sometimes even been called the Atlantic reflex: automatically the Dutch government would interpret a foreign policy issue in terms of what it implied for the Atlantic alliance and American leadership. The Atlanticist narrative did not carry automatic weight in terms of trade and European integration. On the one hand, because of Atlanticism the Netherlands would be reluctant to create a European army and preferred to see European security to be imbedded in NATO. On the other hand, the Netherlands would resist pressure from the United States (and the Group of 77) on EEC (and later EU) to open up its trade borders for (effectively more efficiently producing) exporters from the United States and the Third World. The Development Assistance narrative developed quickly in a general tendency to profess foreign policy that was based on ethical principles, leading to support for resistance movements and opposition against dictatorships. Still, the Netherlands would often face problems resulting from conflicts between these narratives: its opposition to U.S.-supported dictators prompted tension with its Atlanticist proponents; its criticism of Indonesian leadership in terms of human rights policies produced the deterioration of Dutch-Indonesian relations and damaged Dutch exports; its support for resistance movements invoked criticism from the United States.

Still, at important moments, the Netherlands would attempt to maintain an independent position even within the Atlantic alliance, but preferably by trying to keep all sides happy. The most important of such moments undoubtedly was the intra-alliance conflict over the Cruise and Pershing II missiles (1979–1985), which was preceded by heavy debates and protests surrounding the proposed introduction of the neutron bomb (1978). As many societal actors (in two mass demonstrations of unprecedented size) remained

unconvinced of the need for the introduction of such weapons, the Dutch government stalled for time by agreeing within NATO to adopt the missiles but at the same time announcing it would not effectively deploy the missiles on Dutch soil until negotiations with the Warsaw Pact on arms control would prove to have failed. The cruise missile issue proved the toughest role conflict because it was so effectively politicized by a wide specter of grass root organizations which had political clout through a minority faction in the leading coalition. Eventually the détente initiated by Reagan and Gorbachev saved the Dutch government from having to come clean. The Dutch attempt to satisfy both NATO and domestic opponents gave rise to a debate of "Hollanditis" as contagious disease among allies (Laqueur 1981), in which some authors suggested Dutch policies to represent its much craved second power status (Eichenberg 1983: 143).

In Sum

All in all, then, after the Second World War the Netherlands first sought to maintain (or regain) its status as a global middle power. This was formally snubbed when the UN was created and effectively when the Netherlands tried to hold on to its colonial possessions in Asia at all costs. This prompted a reorientation of the dominant narrative in the mid-1960s resulting in a national role conception that rested on three narratives: Atlanticism, European Integration, and Development Assistance. Because these narratives occasionally clashed, the Netherlands gave different preferences to different narratives at different times. But, all in all, the Atlanticist narrative proved durable and dominant. Of course, this is only logical given the overall context of the Cold War. Fear of the Soviet Union and nuclear war remained shared by many actors in Dutch foreign policy. Hence, the state of disarray and the strong need for a new narrative, once Berlin Wall fell, the Cold War came to an end and a new narrative was needed to define the Dutch role in world politics.

AFTER THE COLD WAR: A MIDDLE POWER SEEKING LEADING ROLES IN NICHES?

The end of the Cold War coincided with an increase in the process of economic and financial globalization (Strange 1996) and the related intensification of the European integration process (Moravcsik 1999). Subsequently, new challenges had to be faced: conflicts had remained frozen during the Cold War, ethnic conflict, migration, global warming, as well as a new form of terrorism, which exposed the vulnerability of hitherto relatively safe western societies. Importantly such external events affected domestic politics in

a structural fashion: the end of the communist threat created an ideological vacuum (rather than Fukuyama's end of ideology [1989]) which bereft mainstream Christian democratic, liberal and social-democratic parties of their legitimate position as the "indispensable governing parties"; moreover, the new media ensured that citizens were exposed to external events increasing the demands the public posed to politicians. They demanded solutions to problems of terrorism, migration, global warming, and ethnic conflict. With the intensification of globalization and European integration, many felt they were on the losing side and increasingly saw financial globalization and EU supranationalism as problems in their own right rather than as solutions to a problem. This became clear in the rejection of the European Constitutional Treaty in 2005 and the EU-Ukraine Treaty in 2016, both in (nonbinding) referenda (Startin and Krouwel 2013; Van der Brug et al. 2018). The 2000s then were characterized by a discussion and possibly redefinition of Dutch national identity that has been feeding into the competing narratives that define a national role conception.

This is not how the 1990s started out: the end of the Cold War prompted a formal redefinition of world politics and of the Dutch role in it. These were epitomized in three major government studies: two were written at the behest of Minister of Development Assistance Mr. Jan Pronk, entitled *A World in Difference* and *A World of Conflict* (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1990, 1993). The third study, at the behest of Defence Minister Mr. Relus ter Beek, provided the military's organizational answer to new realities (Netherlands Ministry of Defense 1993). In essence, the reports argued that world politics was no longer hierarchically organized as it was during the Cold War: then, ideology-driven territorial competition formed the constraints within which economic cooperation, development assistance, and environmental policies took place and in which, roughly speaking, the great powers largely affected the outcomes. The post–Cold War world was a world of many inequalities where conflict would arise from economic, social, and environmental reasons. It was thus essential to recognize the interdependencies between such causal factors. In such a world, the Netherlands had to develop a foreign policy which would eradicate the root causes of conflict by designing its trade, development, and security policies in such a way that long-term perspectives and their interrelatedness were taken into account. Tackling the root causes of conflict required special attention to human rights. It also demanded a professional army capable of effective peacekeeping. This perspective proposed an overhaul of the foreign policy process in which departments would not be separate and competitive, but experts would work together in project teams that focused on interrelated policy factors. This approach was adopted but not altogether proved successful as departmental differences often continued to prevail (Collet 2015).

Nevertheless, this perspective seemed a comprehensive foreign approach to address the new international political system. In terms of role conception, the Netherlands chose to seek a leading role in specific niche areas, particularly in peacekeeping, development assistance, global environmental policies, and human rights. Backed up with a public diplomacy frame (see below), by practicing what it preached in these niche areas the Netherlands expected to be ascribed status beyond a small state. Such ascribed status would then help with being more effective in these selected niche areas. In the EU the Netherlands, despite supranational rhetoric, pursued a strategy of deepening of economic integration rather than political and military integration. It thus supported expansion in order to weaken the relative position of the largest states in the EU. In terms of role conception it sought to perceive itself the "biggest of the smaller member states," thus claiming what one might call middle power status within the EU.

In terms of security the Netherlands imposed budget cuts on defense that met its new role conception: it slashed the army (the Soviet threat being gone) and preserved an essential portion of navy and air force. The army was compensated with an airborne elite brigade. It was held important to maintain defense units "in the highest echelon of war": Dutch F16s fighter/bombers and Apache helicopters as well as its naval flotilla were to demonstrate that the Netherlands could seriously contribute to military operations within or outside NATO. Indeed, one motive of choosing the F-35 *Joint Strike Fighter* (JSF) to succeed the F-16 was that the JSF would provide to best guarantee to continue contributing seriously to alliance operations, in order to ensure continued American diplomatic approval. The airborne brigade was specifically meant to be used in peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. Indeed, these troops were deployed to, for example, Bosnia-Hercegovina (Srebrenica, 1993–1995) (Airborne Brigade), in the Kosovo war (1999) (F-16s), to the Horn of Africa (to combat pirates) (Navy) and to Mali (2016–2018) (special forces and Airborne Brigade). Many also participated in UN-led post-conflict situations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

At the same time, however, the Atlantic reflex was never far away: the Netherlands contributed in various ways, although often not as a full-fledged member of the coalition, to the Persian Gulf conflict (1989–1990), the Gulf War (1991) (both formally under banner of the now-abolished *West European Union*), the war in Afghanistan as well as the battle against ISIS. It also contributed to post-conflict reconstruction missions in Afghanistan (2006–2010 [Uruzgan], 2011–2013 [Kunduz]), Iraq (2003–2005), and South Sudan (2015–present). In several of these cases, the Netherlands was partly motivated by the need to secure general approval from the United States while avoiding official membership of the coalition. Nevertheless, the country tried to secure leadership positions in certain global issue areas by

supporting extensively international organizations and by supporting projects and organizations on the ground. Specific focus was directed to UNDP and UNEP. Especially in the UNEP, Dutch expertise was invoked and promoted in the field of water management.

Dutch attempts to obtain global status as a middle power were particularly felt in the country's bids to be elected nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council and UN Human Rights Committee, as well as its efforts to join the meetings of the G20/22, and its attempts to be a decision maker in international financial institutions (see below). In its public diplomacy the Netherlands would hammer on its sustained support for UN organizations, its more than average contribution to UN and EU peace missions, its proactive policy to combat global warming, its relatively large GNP and its formidable record in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Until 2016 it was one of the top countries exporting FDI as well as one of the largest recipients of FDI (UNCTAD 2018).

Public Diplomacy

After the Cold War the Netherlands constructed a narrative that would serve a structural public diplomacy campaign intended to build the soft power to attract support from as many other member states as possible without alienating too much its key allies in NATO and the European Union. A good example is the *Low Country High Profile* campaign, that was the basis for the Dutch campaign leading up the United Nations Assembly vote in 1998 that secured Dutch Security Council membership in 1999 and 2000 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1998a). The campaign underlined four key features: the Netherlands as a leading contributor (both in absolute and relative terms) to UN organizations' budget (particularly in development assistance) and to UN peacekeeping operations (both in kind and in money); Dutch initiatives to foster sustainable development; Dutch activism in humanitarian assistance; and, importantly, the branding of The Hague as "City of International Justice." Since then, the Netherlands has particularly presented water management as a major contribution to managing global warming and food security in order to promote sustainable development. Both are presented as two (out of four) spear heads of development policies based on typical Dutch expertise (Government of the Netherlands 2018).

At the same time, the Netherlands had to fight off several challenges to the image it liked to take hold. Since the end of the Cold War it had faced four such bruises: first, the idea that the Netherlands is a country which is not only permissive on the use of drugs, but also a major hub in international drugs trafficking and production. The 1998 public diplomacy campaign sought to convey the message that the Netherlands was strict against hard

drugs, that soft drugs was not more harmful than alcohol or tobacco and that Netherlands did not violate any international agreement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1998b). Second, the Netherlands grappled with the genocide on 7,000 Bosnian men in 1995 by the Bosnian-Serb army in Srebrenica, which had occurred after the forced departure of Dutch UN troops in the so-called safe area. The image of the Netherlands as a reliable UN peacekeeper was clearly tarnished by these tragic events. To a considerable degree this was the product of self-blame, leading in 2002 to the resignation of the Dutch government, after the publication of an official inquiry into the matter. Nevertheless, by increasing its efforts to UN or EU missions (e.g., to post-Dayton Bosnia-Hercegovina) and to multilateral interventions such as in Kosovo 1999, the Netherlands sought to redeem its (self-)image. In this context, the pride of international recognition of the Dutch-invented triple-D approach (Development, Diplomacy, Defense, or "the Dutch approach") of Dutch peacekeepers in Afghanistan since 2001 has done much to restore its status. Third, in 2010s the Netherlands increasingly had to defend its fine economic record when U.S.-led international organizations started shaming Dutch tax regulations. The Netherlands succeeded in avoiding being shamed as a tax haven until March 2019 when a special committee of the European Parliament concluded that the Netherlands "display[s] traits of a tax haven" (European Parliament, March 26, 2019). Finally, during periodic reviews at the UN Human Rights Committee the Netherlands has been criticized several times (2008, 2012, and 2017) for treatment of young asylum seekers and anti-minority attitude, thus threatening the Dutch image as a defender of human rights.

Such public diplomacy efforts were meant to reinforce the traditional "hard power" arguments presented to make clear that the Netherlands simply is no ordinary small state: it has since long been one of the twenty largest economies in the world and has long been leading in Foreign Direct Investment. In addition, its armed forces, although relatively small, display a level of sophistication. Indeed, its navy sets it apart from small states' military (see the contribution of Gherardi to this volume). By appropriating money to specific global institutions it seeks to protect its position at the bargaining tables: in 2010, the government announced a quintupling of the Dutch IDA contribution from 50 to 282 million euro with that specific aim in mind. For the similar reasons, the government seeks to maintain a 3 percent share in the World Bank.

Preserving Middle Power Position

Combining hard power and soft power arguments the Netherlands has sought recognition beyond small statehood. The Netherlands seeks this recognition in various ways: participation in G20/22 setting; recurring membership of the

UN Security Council and UN Human Rights Committee Board; and preserving significant positions in international financial institutions.

G20/22

In 2007 the G20 started to convene at the highest political level. Ever since, the Netherlands has sought to be part of this international policy coordination institution. In 2009 Minister of Finance Wouter Bos officially pleaded for formal inclusion of the Netherlands into the G20 on the basis of the size of its economy and financial sector. This plea was never honored. Indeed, the Netherlands had to lobby every year to be invited as an observer to the meetings of the leaders of the world's biggest economies. For some time, American support of Dutch attendance depended on continued Dutch participation in peacekeeping in Afghanistan. The Netherlands succeeded eight times (including the 2019 Osaka meeting), but was rebuked six times (between 2010 and 2015). Particularly France's refusal to invite the Netherlands in Cannes in 2011 was very painful as it reflected France's fear that the Netherlands would side with the Americans in reforming the IMF (which was on the table that year). At the same time, the Netherlands often participated at the level of individual ministers (esp. Finance, sometimes Agriculture). Occasionally, Queen Maxima was invited in her capacity as honorary Chair of the G20's *Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion* in years that the Dutch government had not received an invitation (e.g., in Mexico 2012 and Turkey 2015).

UN Security Council and Human Rights Committee

The Netherlands led two successful campaigns in 1998 and 2016 to be elected as a member of the UNSC representing the caucus of West European and other states. In 2016 the final vote resulted in a tie between Italy and the Netherlands, prompting an agreement between the two countries to split the membership with Italy occupying the seat in 2017 and the Netherlands in 2018. The Netherlands frequently seeks election as member of the governing body of the UN Human Rights Committee representing the same caucus. Since the founding of the Committee in 2006, it succeeded being elected two times (2008–2010; 2015–2017) and has announced its candidacy for the 2020–2022 term.

International Financial Institutions

Based on its financial and economic weight, the Netherlands has long striven to be part of the governance of international financial institutions. Holding a 1.77 percent share in the vote in the IMF, it had long been allowed to be part of in the twenty-four members Executive Board. The vice director casts vote for fifteen European countries, or 5.43 percent of the total votes (including

the 1.77 held by the Netherlands). Since new emerging economies had to be accommodated in the Executive Board, the Netherlands now alternates this vice directorship with Belgium every four years. After the 1997–1998 Asian financial crisis the Netherlands was invited to join the Financial Stability Forum's Steering Committee (since 2009 labeled the Financial Stability Board [FSB]). Dutch Central Bank governor Mr. Klaas Knot has been vice chair of the FSB since December 2018 and will take over the chair in 2021.

CONCLUSION

The national role conception, as espoused by the foreign policy elite, thus seemed to have paid off reasonably well. The Netherlands succeeded to combine some kind of special global status beyond small state power with and thanks to leadership in specific niche areas. Two developments, however, seem to threaten the efficacy of this national role conception: one includes new changes in the international political system that will require the Netherlands to reassess the plausibility of its dominant outlook on the world; the other includes changes at home threatening a redefinition of national identity that may no longer accept global interdependencies as the leading narrative and this may cause a rift between, on the one hand, the foreign policy elite and, on the other hand, the general public.

First, geopolitical and geo-economic changes: on the brink of the twenty-first century's third decade the Netherlands is facing a new challenge to its role in world politics: the shift of the center of the world political economy from the North Atlantic to East and Central Asia and the subsequent geopolitical competition between China, India, and the United States have raised the issue of the future of Europe after Brexit, and with it the future of the Atlantic alliance. Nevertheless, in the middle run Russian challenges to the European status quo may still put Europe center stage for a while. The growing number of sizeable economies in the world, often states with a population and army far larger than the Netherlands, has increased the competition for recognition as middle power. Brazil, India, and South Africa (as members of the BRICs group), but also for other upcoming economies, such as Indonesia or the Philippines, come to mind as such challengers of the status quo. On the one hand, we see that such states are offered positions in institutions such as IMF, World Bank, and G20, often at the expense of the prestige of previously important smaller states such as the Netherlands. Indeed, the Netherlands has been considering to invest more in OECD as an indirect seat at the table of the great powers, in order to make up for a future smaller role in World Bank and IMF (Van Hulst 2016). Also, China is rapidly constructing a structure of international institutions that may rival the American-led Bretton Woods

system, connected to its *One Belt One Road* narrative. This may affect the prestige that great powers attribute to the Netherlands. Finally, in the European Union, particularly driven by the prospect of a British exit from the EU, the Netherlands is seeking to play a role as the biggest of the small states. This role was symbolically represented by the fact that in the Netherlands insisted on having one vote in the European Council more than Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal, and Hungary (thirteen vs. twelve). Since the announcement of Brexit, it has sought to play a leading role in the so-called Hanseatic group within the EU which, anticipating the loss of an important ally (the UK), an attempt to form large enough a coalition to put a break on French-German plans to give more clout to EU controlled budgetary policies and EU banking regulation policies.

Second, changes at home: domestically, a debate on national identity has been raging since the end of the twentieth century that could affect the role conception of the Netherlands as well as the role other states might attribute to the Netherlands. The integration of migrants, dissatisfaction with European integration and the effects of economic globalization as well as dissatisfaction with the way the Dutch political elite dealt with such issues, combined with serious debates about Dutch military engagements in Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, prompted a climate that favored populism at the left and right side of the political arena. The turmoil of two political murders in the early 2000s and the rise of various populist parties prompted a renewed debate on Dutch history and identity, in which a new consensus on both pride and criticism of the past had to be forged in order to build a new national narrative. The outcome is yet uncertain given the heated debates on the moral and sometimes legal responsibility of the Netherlands for its past (e.g., colonial war; Srebrenica; slave trade; slave plantations in the Caribbean), and on the remnants of this past in present-day society (e.g., traditions in celebrating Saint Nicholas day or in driving a Golden Carriage with colonial insignia to the opening of Parliament).

It is as yet uncertain how these changing circumstances at home and abroad will translate into the narrative used in Dutch foreign policy and into the way other states will look upon the Netherlands in the international political system. This chapter, however, has shown that the Netherlands has succeeded before in avoiding to be redirected to the ranks of small states: first, after the loss of its colonial empire, and then again, after the predictable context of the Cold War changed into an uncertain twenty-first century.

NOTE

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Chapter 9

Sweden

Small State, Middle Power, or Moral Superpower?

Johan Eriksson

Is Sweden a "small state," a "middle power," or perhaps best described as a "moral superpower"? The question is warranted since radically different answers are floating around both in the academic literature and in the policy world. The question is also warranted if we seek to make sense of patterns over time—is there continuity or change? In 1995 Sweden dropped its past policy of neutrality and joined the European Union, shifting from its former global activism to a new "European identity." Since the EU entry, the orientation of Sweden's foreign policy has been rather mixed, ranging from the "European identity" of former prime and foreign minister Carl Bildt whom international media regularly portrayed as making Sweden "punch above its weight" (Milne 2014), to the more recent Social Democratic explicitly feminist foreign policy as well as the refocused attention to the United Nations, including the campaign that secured Sweden a temporary seat in the UN Security Council. Simultaneously, while insisting on being recognized as a military nonaligned state, Sweden supports the EU's solidarity clause and has reinforced military cooperation with NATO, including a host-nation support agreement. Hence, there is reason to conduct a more systematic analysis of Sweden's power and status in the world.

Before looking for answers to the question of whether Sweden is a "middle power," a "small state" or if some other concept more appropriately describes Sweden's standing in the world, we need to ask ourselves what purpose such labels serve. There are basically two thinkable purposes, both of which are of relevance here. The first is an attempt to categorize states in terms of size, capacity, influence, and behavior. This is the concern in the traditional literature on power politics—categorizing states as superpowers, great powers,

middle powers, and small states—which is helpful for identifying general distributions of power in world politics (Cooper 1997; Katzenstein 2003; Keohane 1969; Knudsen 2002).

The second purpose of using labels such as "small state" or "middle power" is to express state identity, whether self-imposed or superimposed by others (Andersson and Hilson 2009; Browning 2006; Tiilikanen 2006). A state identity perspective is elaborated particularly in foreign policy role theory, which was originally developed by K. J. Holsti half a century ago (Holsti 1970) and which during the last 10–15 years has had a resurgence (Aggestam 2006; Cantir and Kaarbo 2012; Guzzini 2012; Nilsson 2015). State identity may correspond to categorization in terms of capacity, influence, and behavior, but it may also deviate considerably, either through exaggerating or understating achieved power and status. Alternatively, state identity may be confused or only vaguely expressed. Hence, there is reason to consider both ways of addressing the small state/middle power question—in terms of capacity and behavior, and in terms of expressed identity.

As will be made clear below, the self-image of middle power seems to be much more common in, for example, Canada and Australia than in Norway and Sweden, where a small state identity prevails. Simultaneously, Sweden fulfills the traditional criteria of middle power status, and has also been termed a "moral superpower" (Dahl 2006), with reference to its traditional foreign policy activism, which rests on Social Democracy and the welfare state as a "model" for the world.

Let us take a closer look at these varying depictions and bring some clarity to them. Following this introduction, perceptions of Sweden as a small state and as a middle power are scrutinized. Subsequently, alternative projections are unpacked, including Sweden as a "moral superpower," as a "smart state," and as "norm entrepreneur." This is followed by a section that focuses on core foreign policy issues, specifically regarding Sweden's abandonment of neutrality, and close cooperation with NATO. In a concluding section, the disparate threads are pulled together in an attempt to clarify the pattern of continuity and change, focusing on oscillating combinations of realism and idealism.

SMALL STATE OR MIDDLE POWER?

In the international relations (IR) literature on middle powers, Sweden and other Nordic countries are often mentioned as an example of this type of state (Cooper 1997: 12; Behringer 2005; Patience 2014: 213–214; Stokke 1989; Ungerer 2007: 406). As discussed elsewhere in this volume, while "middle power" is a contested concept, there is consensus that it entails

a position of power and influence between great powers and small states (cf. Jordaan 2003).

Notably, however, the literature on middle powers has not gained much traction in the Nordic countries. Nordic international relations scholars almost exclusively categorize Sweden and the other Nordic states as "small states," without paying attention to the "middle power" concept (Haugevik and Rieker 2017; Knudsen 2002; Tiilikainen 2006; Thorhallson and Wivel 2006; exceptions include Brommesson 2018; Stokke 1989). It is noteworthy that this "small state" categorization is usually taken as a given, and that the Nordics clearly belong to this category—even if it is acknowledged that "small state"—just like "middle power"—can be defined in diverse ways. According to Nordic scholars, their countries are certainly not great powers or even regional great powers, even if such labels have historical relevance in this part of the world (Knudsen 2002).

Indeed, if a personal anecdote is allowed for illustration, I learned embarrassingly late that Sweden was considered a "middle power," when I was giving guest lectures at the University of Manitoba in 2004 and 2005. I learned that the self-perception of Canada in academia as well as in policy circles was as a "middle power" and that they considered Sweden to belong to the same category, along with Australia, Norway, the Netherlands (see chapter 8), and a few other states. I responded that the notion of "middle power" is alien in a Scandinavian context and that we consider our countries to be "small states." While I did not ponder over this question at the time, now that I have been commissioned to write specifically on Sweden for a book on middle powers, I think the use of the different concepts matter. Canada—a country with a very large territory, vast natural resources, a population size on par with, for example, France, and a seat in power groups such as the G20—seems to strive for recognition as a power that equals those assets. By contrast, Sweden—with a relatively small population, a territory squeezed between Norway and the brackish waters of the Baltic Sea, and no permanent seat in any of the global power groups—seems to be happy to act from an underdog position.

The small state concept is not specific only to the Nordic IR literature, but also prevails in the Nordic policy world. Swedish policymakers regularly reflect on Sweden being a small state. Illustrative of this is how former prime minister Fredrik Reinfeldt during President Barack Obama's 2013 visit to Sweden stated: (Washington Post 2013) "Just to remind you, you're now in Sweden, a small country with a deep belief in the United Nations."

Indeed, the small state literature, to which Scandinavian IR scholars are major contributors, is preoccupied with how small states can achieve international influence despite, well, being small. The wider small states literature holds that small statehood is not merely a weakness but that it may, under certain conditions, provide a pivotal position in international

affairs (Baker Fox 1959; Katzenstein 2003; Knudsen 2002). Small states are perceived to be nonthreatening, mainly because they cannot achieve a hegemonic position, and are usually open to collaborative efforts. Such perceptions can yield advantages in international negotiations, if seized upon (Björkdahl 2008; Howard Grøn and Wivel 2011; Nasra 2011; Thorhallsson and Wivel 2006; Tiilikainen 2006).

How, then, can the difference in perceptions of Sweden as a small state or as a middle power be explained? Before suggesting answers to this question, it is worth noting that Sweden's foreign policy capacity and behavior is depicted in very similar ways regardless of whether the country is categorized as a small state or a middle power. Whether called small state or middle power, studies on Sweden's standing in the world typically highlight how the country has emphasized multilateralism, international law and the establishment of international norms and global governance, engagement in peacekeeping and conflict resolution, and its support for democratization, free trade, and the global struggle to thwart climate change. Indeed, some of these features—especially the support for multilateralism and international norms that supposedly restrain great power hegemony—are neither specific to Sweden nor to the small state concept but are emphasized as characteristic of middle powers as well (Cooper 1997; Patience 2014: 214). Thus, it seems to be a clash of terms rather than of concepts.

In looking for reasons for this terminological confusion, two tentative interpretations are suggested here, which are not mutually exclusive. First, the middle power literature seems to be largely confusing influence with capability (and size). The long-term influence of Sweden on, for example, global disarmament policy, the human rights agenda, and pivotal participation in peace negotiations—seems to be taken as evidence of Sweden having the position of a middle power. Notably, Sweden's population of just over ten million is significantly smaller than, for example, that of Canada (thirty-five million), Australia (twenty-four million), or the Netherlands (seventeen million). Moreover, in terms of economic size (GDP), there are significant differences as well. According to the World Bank and the IMF, the economies of Canada and Australia, respectively, are more than twice the size of Sweden's. It is the economic size (not the foreign policy influence) of countries that provide them with an invitation to join the "big clubs" of world politics, such as the G20 and the G7. This is a clue to why scholars and policymakers in Canada and Australia perceive their countries as middle powers, while their counterparts in Denmark and Sweden identify their countries as small states.

Second, the difference in terminology rather than conceptualization may have to do with political culture and habit, or more generally with identity. Actual size and capabilities may certainly foster status as middle power or small state, as noted above. Yet, identity as a small state or as something else may also have a life of its own, at least partially regardless of capabilities and

size. In contemporary Russia, for example, a self-image as an unrecognized superpower (or even as an empire that deserves to be restored) is flourishing (Astrov and Morozova 2012). It has been argued that contemporary Russian revisionism and assertiveness is merely an instance of a broader trend—the return of geopolitics in Europe, which is found also in smaller and medium-sized countries such as Estonia, Italy, and Turkey (Guzzini 2012). We will return to the identity track in the subsequent section.

Whatever the reasons are for the difference in perceptions, it is unfortunate that the study of small states and middle powers largely remain separate bodies of literature. It is unfortunate particularly given the empirical and theoretical overlap, with a shared concern for what strategies are available to states that cannot achieve hegemonic status. There is certainly room for more integrative and comparative research here.

IDEATIONAL POWER: SMART STATE, MORAL SUPERPOWER, OR NORM ENTREPRENEUR?

For a good part of the postwar period, Sweden's foreign policy was considered "activist." This specifically concerned how Social Democratic governments, particularly under Olof Palme's leadership, openly criticized the military actions of super- and great powers, took an active stand to show solidarity with ethnic and secessionist groups around the world, and defended the independence of non-state communities and small states—particularly in the Third World. Palme's active foreign policy gained international attention especially when he openly criticized the U.S. military actions in Vietnam and showed support for the Vietcong and the communist North Vietnam regime (Bergman 2007; Bjereld et al. 2008; Ekengren 2011; Scott 2009). More generally, the "activist foreign policy" came to imply support for decolonization, generous foreign aid, and human rights.

Conservatives at home and abroad, however, criticized the "activist foreign policy" as being leftist and basically threatening the interests of the Western (U.S.-dominated) world order. Critics condemned Sweden as a "moral superpower" (Dahl 2006; Nilsson 1991; Ruth 1984). The critics were particularly annoyed about Social Democratic governments' missionary zeal, which arguably gave the impression that Sweden thought it was better than the rest of the world, more enlightened, and simply morally superior, claiming moral leadership. Critics also claimed this normativity showed that Social Democratic leaders did not understand the "realities" of international politics—that certain responsibilities, including military action, fall upon the leaders of "the free world." It was also claimed that Swedish Social Democratic leaders ignored the repressive actions of dictators in the Third World, while delivering sharp critique of governments in the West. These critics not only came

out as advocates of traditional geopolitical thinking, but also as supporters of U.S. leadership in world politics.

Interestingly, the bashing of Sweden as a "moral superpower" has continued to surface in contemporary debates on Swedish foreign policy, especially in conservative critique of the Social Democrats' refusal to join NATO (Dahl 2006), but also in critique of the "feminist foreign policy" launched in 2014 (more on this below), and in critique of Sweden's comparatively generous refugee policy (Erlanger 2018). While the epithet "moral superpower" is almost exclusively used as a form of critique, an exception is Ulf Bjereld—a Political Science professor who is very active in Swedish political debates, and who is also a member of the board of the Social Democratic Party. Bjereld claims the label can be used in a positive sense, to praise the moral preaching on human rights, democracy, feminism, and internationalism (Bjereld 2015; Björkdahl 2007a; Erlanger 2018). Moreover, when Sweden successfully campaigned for a temporary seat in the UN Security Council for the 2017–2018 period, Swedish public service portrayed it as a campaign for a "small state with moral superpower ambitions" (Bjernström 2017).

Supporters of the so-called Swedish model, based on the Social Democratic welfare state—which partly lies behind the "moral superpower" activism (Bergman 2007; Kuisma 2007)—also point out that Sweden usually gains top positions in global rankings of quality of life indexes, gender equality, tolerance, low level of corruption, and high levels of trust in public institutions (Andersson and Hilson 2009). The combination of Sweden's domestic model as an example for the world and internationalist activism has also given Sweden (and the Nordic countries more generally) the epithet of exceptionalism (Lawler 1997; Waever 1992). Most observers claim that this exceptionalism has waned, however, particularly since Sweden joined the EU in 1994 (Bergman 2007; Brommeson 2018; Browning 2007).

It is noteworthy that the reigning small state identity seems to imply a different logic than being a "moral superpower" or any other kind of normative power. In a 1995 report to a governmental commission of inquiry on Swedish EU policy, Bengt Sundelius argued that the small state identity prevented Sweden from gaining influence based on smartness, that is, the power of ideas (Sundelius 1995). Instead of striving to mobilize voting coalitions, or more generally to gain strength through bandwagoning with or balancing against the "strong," Sundelius (1995) observed that Sweden should seek influence based on the power of ideas and called this a move from "small to smart."

Sundelius reasoned that Sweden—at least within the EU—should abandon its tradition of speaking on behalf of small states, and especially of thinking about the limited capacities of being "small." Instead, Sweden should think hard about developing ideas that other states—both small and big—find relevant and instrumental. Sundelius's critique of small state thinking has some similarities with the conservative critique of Sweden as

a "moral superpower." Notably, however, both Sundelius's "smart power" and the Social Democratic "moral superpower" highlight the power of ideas over a foreign policy based purely on calculation of size and material interests. What specific ideas that are being pushed may differ and change over time, but it is still about a type of immaterial or tacit power that is very different from the flexing of muscles and mobilization of numbers. Focusing instead on policy-relevant ideas, well-packaged and presented at the right time, Sweden could gain influence in EU policymaking that is greater than expected from its size. The small state/great power logic implies that initiatives come from the great powers, and that small states must choose between showing loyalty, mobilizing opposition, or going for an exit option. The notion of smartness, conversely, implies that there is inherent power in ideas—regardless of whether a small state or great power presents the idea (cf. Björkdahl 2007a, 2008; Browning 2006; Sundelius 1995). Idea-based influence is also considered to be of greater significance in a community like the EU, given that many policies are adopted not through voting and other forms of muscle-flexing, but through deliberation and negotiation.

Nordic IR scholars have developed notions similar to or even equivalent with the "smart power" concept, most notably "norm entrepreneurship" (Björkdahl 2007a; Ingebritsen 2002) and "norm advocacy" (Björkdahl 2008). Christine Ingebritsen argues that Scandinavia's role in world politics is that of a norm entrepreneur, specifically regarding global environmental politics, conflict resolution, and aid policy (Ingebritsen 2002). In my reading, while the concepts of "smart state," "norm entrepreneurs," and "norm advocacy" are insightful, there is considerable overlap: they are all about the promotion and framing of ideas (including norms), rather than the mobilization of interests and strength in numbers.

IDEA-BASED SWEDISH FOREIGN POLICY: THREE CASES

While it goes beyond the scope of this short chapter to provide a comprehensive analysis of idea-based Swedish foreign policy, and whether it has been internationally influential, I will give three relatively recent examples, which may serve a heuristic purpose.

The Swedish Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Conflict

First, in the late 1990s, the Swedish foreign ministry developed an action plan for the prevention of violent conflict (Swedish Foreign Ministry 1999). This action plan was based on a study conducted within the ministry, led by

then State Secretary Jan Eliasson (later UN Deputy Secretary-General) and Anders Bjurner. The study involved diplomats and experts, including peace and conflict researchers who were temporarily based at the ministry. One of these researchers was Annika Björkdahl (now Professor at Lund University), who was simultaneously finishing her doctoral dissertation on the same topic, and who later published an article on the Swedish action plan as a case of norm advocacy (Björkdahl 2007b). The action plan emphasized, inter alia, five main goals (promotion of a culture of conflict prevention, identification of structural risk factors—some kind of early warning system, development of an international system of norms, strengthening of an international framework of conflict prevention, and strengthening of Swedish capacity for conflict prevention). The Swedish foreign ministry did not simply write a plan and then archived it—but actively campaigned for it, with the intention of making it a foundation for EU security policy. In Björkdahl's post-campaign analysis, it was argued that the action plan promoted a powerful idea that was "morally appealing and persuasive" (Björkdahl 2007b), yet the action plan was not fully implemented within the EU. Now, almost twenty years later, the policy of conflict prevention seems to have lost some of its significance even within the Swedish foreign ministry.

Swedish Initiative for a European Global Strategy

Second, in the summer of 2012, then foreign minister Carl Bildt took the initiative to launch a new global strategy for the EU. While the EU already had a European Security Strategy, launched in 2003 and updated in 2008, Bildt felt this was insufficient and of limited value. He claimed that the EU had become bogged down in day-to-day crisis management—unable to prepare for coming challenges, what seem to arise on the horizon. He also claimed that the existing security strategy focused far too much on security and threats, ignoring a wider array of global challenges and opportunities. Bildt managed to get his counterparts in Spain, Poland, and Italy on board of an initiative to mobilize a new Europe-wide debate, and to produce a new future-oriented global strategy. In so doing, Bildt and his three European colleagues decided to outsource the job of initiating debate and writing a strategy to the think tank community. The Swedish Institute of International Affairs (SIIA) became the Swedish partner in this European think tank project (Eriksson 2016).

A year later, colleagues from Stockholm, Madrid, Warsaw, and Rome not only presented a joint strategy report (European Strategy Project 2013), but had also concluded a series of workshops—with attendance from across Europe (and the United States) as well as from both the policy world and the international think tank community. The strategy report suggested inter alia that the EU should more strongly emphasize the core values of the union as a

foundation for all policy areas (liberal democracy, free trade, rule of law, etc.); that the external–internal nexus needs to be addressed, and that resources are pooled and more focused for better results. The report received considerable attention, and its conclusions were presented at a foreign ministers meeting in Brussels in the summer of 2013, but shortly afterward, leadership changed both at the Swedish foreign ministry and at the EU External Action Services.

The idea of an EU global strategy stayed dormant for about a year after the think tank project was concluded, but then Federica Mogherini, the then High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, brought it back on the agenda. In October 2016, the EU finally decided on a new global strategy (EU 2016). While the final strategy is obviously the result of negotiations among the member states, it is a reasonable interpretation that Bildt's initiative and the think tank project helped put the idea of a comprehensive global strategy on the agenda. Some specific ideas may also have been picked up from the think tank project, such as the emphasis on a broader view of global challenges and opportunities rather than (the previous) limited focus on security threats, emphasis on managing the external–internal policy nexus, and on reinforcing internal resilience.

Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy

The third example to be discussed here is the Swedish "feminist foreign policy," which was declared in September 2014 by the then newly elected government led by the Social Democrats. Former EU Commissioner Margot Wallström replaced Bildt as foreign minister, and her first act in office was to declare that Sweden now had a "feminist foreign policy." The development and implementation of this policy has been explicitly analyzed as a case of "norm entrepreneurship" (Aggestam et al. 2019; Bergman et al. 2016; cf. Egnell 2016), who argue that this implied a radical policy change, based on ideas and ideology rather than on narrow state interests. As stated by foreign minister Wallström: "It's time to become a little braver in foreign policy. I think feminism is a good term. It is about standing against the systematic and global subordination of women" (cited in Bergman et al. 2016: 323).

The foreign ministry quickly underwent a major internal reorganization, to be better prepared to formulate and implement the feminist foreign policy, for which there was a great need, given many of the initial reactions, most of which revolved around "what does this new policy imply?" An action plan was quickly put together, which in 2018 was developed into a "handbook" on feminist foreign policy. The handbook emphasizes six focus areas: (1) full enjoyment of human rights for women and girls who are migrating and fleeing from war; (2) freedom from physical, psychological, and sexual violence against women and girls; (3) participation of women in preventing and

resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding (4) strengthening women's participation and influence in "all areas of society"; (5) economic rights and empowerment of women and girls; (6) sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, girls, and young people in general (Swedish Foreign Ministry 2018; Egnell 2016: 575). In addition, the feminist policy has also been implemented in the armed forces, including gender policy guidelines, and the organization of Gender Field Advisors. Also, a special NATO unit called the Nordic Center for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM) was established (Egnell 2016: 577).

Robert Egnell claims that this is not a radical policy change, but that it rather shows continuity. Egnell argues that the feminist policy builds on a previous work on UN Resolution 1325, on women as participants and victims in post-conflict processes, and that it rests more generally on liberal and Social Democratic foreign policy (Egnell 2016). Egnell also claims that the substance of feminist foreign policy has been advocated before and elsewhere, with Hillary Clinton and former British foreign minister William Hague as examples (Egnell 2016: 565). However, Egnell agrees that for the first time a foreign policy is explicitly labeled feminist, and that it has clear substance. Whether the Swedish feminist foreign policy has been internationally influential is a different matter that deserves to be studied, and also whether it will be maintained over time.

The three examples of influential ideas should be of interest in their own right, for readers interested in the substance of contemporary Swedish foreign policy. They are also of relevance as they illustrate what kind of ideas have become influential, and how this comes about (cf. Björkdahl 2008; Ekengren 2011).

CORE SWEDISH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICIES: CONTINUITY OR CHANGE?

The analysis so far has shown how Sweden's standing in the world is perceived and identified in general terms such as small state, middle power, or moral superpower. The present section seeks to supplement this analysis with a few more focused observations of foreign policy substance—how Sweden positions itself on key issues, and whether there is change or continuity.

EU Membership and Abandoned Neutrality

When Sweden joined the EU in 1995, this effectively and explicitly ended the postwar era of Swedish neutrality policy or, as the doctrine was formulated more precisely: "military nonalignment aimed at neutrality in times of war."

As a new EU member, Sweden declared that the concept of neutrality had lost its meaning, but that the notion of military nonalignment still applied (Gustavsson 1998). The official abandonment of neutrality caused not only some tension in Sweden but also curiosity abroad. At home, neutrality had transformed from a temporary policy choice during the Second World War to becoming a foundation of Swedish foreign policy identity, if not a core element of Swedish identity more generally. In terms of foreign policy, neutrality was mainly associated with Sweden's position toward the East-West conflict during the Cold War. When the Cold War ended in 1990, it was no longer clear what Sweden was neutral in relation to. This led to what Ole Waever called a "Nordic nostalgia," where Sweden and other Nordic countries did not merely celebrated the Cold War's end, but worried about the loss of the "special status" that neutrality and a more general Nordic stance between East and West entailed (Waever 1992). As noted, Sweden's "solution" was to change its foreign policy doctrine from "neutrality" to "nonalignment." This was intended to declare that Sweden had joined an economic and political union, but that it maintained military independence.

EU membership and the explicit abandonment of neutrality stirred tension at home: indeed, 52.3 percent voted "yes" to EU membership, which indicates that the country, much like Norway and Finland which voted at the same time, was relatively divided on the issue. EU membership also caused tension within the Social Democratic party, and in some other parties (notably the Center Party). Especially among Social Democrats, there was harsh internal critique, and several members of parliament continued to talk about Swedish neutrality even years after Sweden had joined the EU. The Social Democratic government also launched a governmental commission of inquiry on Sweden's security policy from the Second World War until the end of the Cold War, which concluded that the policy of neutrality had "served us well," that is, had kept Sweden out of war (Ekéus 2002). Conservative critics, including Carl Bildt, openly criticized this interpretation. Bildt claimed it was not because of neutrality that Sweden's peace had been kept, but despite it. Sweden had been lucky, according to Bildt, and he claimed that the balance of power between NATO and the Warsaw Pact was the main reason for the stable peace. The debate was not about what Sweden's foreign and security policy should develop, but how Sweden's postwar history should be understood. This interest in recent history also guided research projects at the time (especially the large multidisciplinary project "Sweden during the Cold War," see Bjereld et al. 2008), which revealed previously kept secrets from Sweden's postwar history—to which I will soon return.

At the time of Sweden's entry in the EU, Sweden had also joined various post-Cold War regional initiatives, including the new Baltic Sea Region (Joenniemi 1993) and the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (Eriksson 1995). These

initiatives brought novel elements into the realm of foreign policy, including the participation of subnational political institutions and indigenous peoples. Notably, both initiatives were motivated by a clearly liberal (as opposed to realist) worldview: it was argued that nonmilitary cooperation and the opening of trade and cultural exchange across the former iron curtain could help foster a new form of regional security community (Eriksson 1995; Joenniemi 1993). Sweden was not a leader in any of these initiatives, however, but rather followed in the footsteps of Denmark, Germany, and Norway.

Sweden and NATO: Formal or Informal Membership?

During the entire postwar era, Sweden presented itself as a neutral state, and also enjoyed special status as such in international contexts. After Cold War's end, however, not only did Sweden abandon the official policy of neutrality, but the opening of archives also meant that many secrets of the Cold War were exposed. New research revealed that Sweden had developed wide-ranging secret military cooperation with NATO members, especially the United States (Dalsjö 2006; Holmström 2011). In practice, Sweden was part of the "informal supranational NATO structure" (Tunander 1999). The clash between the official neutrality policy and the informal NATO involvement implied hypocrisy, bluntly put (Sörlin 2016: 12). The secret relations and agreements were strong until the 1970s, but by the mid-1980s, the remaining plans were destroyed (Dalsjö 2006). According to Robert Dalsjö, the demise of the "lifeline" to the West was caused by a "gradually more dogmatic and strident official line" (Dalsjö 2006) in Swedish foreign policy, that is, what critics condemned as moral superpower behavior.

Dalsjö's explanation is not entirely convincing, however. The cancellation of relations was not a one-sided Swedish decision, but also based on decisions made in the United States. For a long time, diplomatic relations between Sweden and the United States were frozen (Leifland 1997), while secret military cooperation still went on. Moreover, Swedish "dogmatism" and harsh critique of U.S. foreign policy were much stronger in the 1960s and the early 1970s, during the Vietnam War. Thus, it seems that the Swedish incompatibility of words and actions—that is, hypocrisy—could survive for decades.

After the Cold War's end, Sweden's relations with NATO grew stronger and included Swedish participation in Partnership for Peace, and in military missions and exercises under NATO command from the Cold War's end until the Russian capture of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014—a period of almost twenty-five years—Sweden's relations with NATO were as contradictory as during the Cold War: "Integrate as much as possible with NATO but don't commit" (Eriksson 2003).

Russia's activism toward Ukraine, and its more generally assertive and occasionally openly aggressive stance ("hybrid warfare") in the Baltic Sea region, had major effects on Swedish foreign and security policy, however. Soon after the 2014 Ukraine crisis, the stance on NATO membership started to change, both among political parties and in public opinion. Previously, NATO membership was kept off the political agenda, and only the Liberal Party (with about 5–10% of the parliamentary seats) openly advocated membership. After the Russian annexation of Crimea, however, the Moderates, the Christian Democrats and the Center Party changed their formerly negative or passive positions to openly support NATO membership, hence joining their alliance partner and pro-NATO Liberals. As noted by Carl Bildt in an October 2018 blogpost: "Sweden already acknowledges that its territory would fall well within the theater of NATO operations should a conflict arise in Northern Europe, and this realization has increasingly factored into its own security policy and defense preparations" (Bildt 2018). The Social Democrats, the Left Party, the Green party, and the right-wing populist Sweden Democrats maintained their resistance against NATO membership, however. Thus, in just couple of years (2013–2015), the pro-NATO side in the parliament grew from 6 to about 40 percent.

The pro-NATO side has put forward two basic arguments, one of a rational, interest-based kind and the other of a moral kind. The first, rational-type argument is that Sweden allegedly is incapable of defending itself. In case of a Russian military attack on Sweden or any of its neighbors, which is the basic scenario the pro-side has in mind, Sweden will not prevail without foreign military assistance. Importantly, the pro-side holds that the existing pragmatic cooperation with NATO will not suffice (Tolgfors 2016). In case of war, they claim nonmember Sweden simply cannot expect NATO to come to its rescue. The other, moral argument, which is less common but still floating around in the debate, is that Sweden should show loyalty with its Western friends, which includes joining NATO and subscribing to its Article 5 on collective defense.

The no-to NATO membership side is more internally divided. Arguments here range from the pragmatic Social Democrats, who believe that the pro-side exaggerates not only the threat of war and Sweden's ability to defend itself, but also the risk that NATO and Sweden's neighbors would not provide support (Bergquist et al. 2014). The Social Democrats, as well as the more critical voices, also point to the fact that NATO is supported by a "nuclear umbrella," which many critics find unacceptable. Further to the left, anti-NATO opinion is an expression of both a general anti-military stance (expressed, for example, by the Left Party, and especially the small Feminist Party) and lingering anti-American sentiments. Notably, the right-wing

populist Sweden Democrats also take a critical stance against NATO, which is in line with their general nationalist and isolationist stance on international affairs (the Sweden Democrats also want Sweden to leave the EU). Public opinion also shifted: in 2015, shortly after the Ukraine crisis, the percentage in favor of NATO membership (38%) was for the first time bigger than those against it. In 2017, however, opinion against membership was again bigger, and the number of undecided had grown (Berndtson et al. 2018).

The Ukraine crisis and the new Russian "hybrid warfare" resulted in a new and more politicized debate on NATO membership, with advocates on both sides not only in party politics, but also in academia and even from the usually "neutral" diplomatic corps (Bergquist et al. 2014; Bildt 2018; Tolgfors 2016). The previous commandment of collaborating with NATO without seeking formal membership had now shifted with the entire center-right wing alliance advocating membership. In practice, however, Sweden has not taken steps toward formal NATO membership. However, it has deepened cooperation and integration with NATO, including implementation of a so-called Host Nation Support Agreement, which basically means that NATO forces can be invited to use Swedish harbors, airfields, and other infrastructure in times of crisis. The Swedish Armed Forces have also largely adapted to NATO's command and control structure, both in a technical and organizational sense. Moreover, Sweden has reinforced bilateral military cooperation with Nordic and other Western states and started rebuilding the armed forces. Today, there is strong parliamentary support for increased defense spending, and in 2017 the parliament decided to reactivate military conscription, which had been suspended in 2010.

Whether Sweden at some point decides to formally join NATO or not, it is likely that Swedish cooperation and integration within NATO's military structure will continue, particularly if Russian assertiveness and revisionism continue. Sweden is also a staunch supporter of and contributor to EU foreign policy, including the EU's stances on climate change, development, and conflict resolution.

CORE VALUES IN SWEDISH FOREIGN POLICY?

Consistency and consensus were for a good part of the postwar era core values in Swedish foreign policy. Notably, this had more to do with process than substance, but they still play a part, shown, for example, by the prevailing culture of negotiating policies within the parliamentary committees on foreign affairs, defense, and European affairs. Moreover, the Defense Commission is a peculiar Swedish institution, operating under the Minister of Defense, but consisting of representatives of the political parties in parliament. The key

role of the Commission is to help reach parliamentary consensus on Swedish foreign and security policy, both in terms of how the world is understood and what roadmaps Sweden should follow.

In terms of substance, there is also plenty of continuity and stability in Sweden's foreign policy. As noted, Sweden is a reliable contributor to the EU's foreign policy, as it is with most multilateral fora. Regardless of whether the Social Democrats or center-right coalition has been in power, Sweden has maintained a strong classical liberal profile on international issues—including a dedicated support for free trade, democratization and the strengthening of human rights around the world, conflict resolution (including conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and post-conflict resolution), and on climate change with emphasis on a global transformation from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

Nevertheless, aside from the politicization and domestic tension regarding NATO membership, there are some noteworthy differences and changes that can largely be explained by party positions. When center-right coalitions have been in power, Europe and the EU have been in focus, with the explicit intention of making the EU a global power. This position has largely been associated with Carl Bildt, both when he, as prime minister, talked about a shift from neutrality to a European identity and later when he, as foreign minister, advocated a global strategy for the EU. Center-right governments have also reinforced bilateral relations with the United States, including having invited both Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2012 (the first bilateral visit of a U.S. secretary of state in thirty-six years) and President Barack Obama in 2013 (the first ever official visit of a U.S. president). When Social Democrats have been in power, the EU has continued to play a key role in foreign policy, but emphasis on the UN has clearly been much stronger, in comparison with center-right governments. An example is how Sweden managed to get Jan Eliasson elected as Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, and when Sweden in 2017–2018 won a temporary seat in the UN Security Council.

It is likely that the oscillation between a UN/global and an EU/US focus will continue depending on whether Social Democrats or the center-right will be in power. However, since 2014 and especially after the 2018 parliamentary elections, the right-wing populist Sweden Democrats (who in 2018 won almost 18% of the parliamentary seats) have effectively formed a third "bloc" in Swedish politics. So far, both the left and the center-right have isolated the Sweden Democrats from direct influence on policy decisions, but it is uncertain what the future will bring. It is not impossible that some parties, particularly the Moderates and the Christian Democrats, might initiate cooperation with the Sweden Democrats and thus allow them some influence also on policy issues.

In case the Sweden Democrats or the general policies they advocate gain stronger support, Sweden's standing in the world might go through abrupt and radical change. If the program of the Sweden Democrats were realized, Sweden would leave the EU, cut cooperation with NATO, promote protectionism rather than free trade, put a stop to migration and the inflow of refugees, adopt an "ethnic" Swedish sense of nationality that ends the prevailing multiculturalism, cancel climate policies and stop the transformation to renewable energy, and possibly also adopt authoritarian policies that entail "politically loyal" news media, education, universities, courts, and public administration. That would effectively mark the end of historically and internationally established images of Sweden and make it similar to present-day Poland and Hungary, countries which are often praised by members of the Sweden Democrats (Erlanger 2018). Sweden is not there yet, and it might never get there, but the rise of authoritarian nationalism has certainly made its mark across Europe and the United States in recent years, and now also in Sweden.

CONCLUSION

Several scholars that have analyzed change in Swedish foreign and security policy have emphasized how Sweden moved from Cold War neutrality and international activism to post–Cold War Europeanization (Brommesson 2018; Browning 2007; Miles 2001). Others have focused more on the continuity of ideational Swedish foreign policy—whether called norm entrepreneurship, moral superpowerism, or smart foreign policy—including how Sweden has gained status and influence in European and global contexts exceeding expectations based on size (Bergman 2007; Björkdahl 2007a; Ingebritsen 2002). It remains unclear how these disparate observations relate to each other, however.

To bring clarity in the continuity and change in Swedish foreign policy, I suggest that what we are observing is oscillating combinations of realism and idealism. During the Cold War, Sweden combined realism at home with idealism on a global scale. This was shown, on the one hand, by the policy of nonalignment and neutrality, military conscription, the total defense concept, and the relatively large Swedish defense industry, intended to make Sweden independent of international procurement. On the other hand, Sweden was carrying out an internationally activist foreign policy focusing on issues and developments far away from Swedish territory.

After the Cold War, Sweden largely abandoned both positions, in favor of Europe-focused idealism: Sweden, like most other European countries, declared the risk of large-scale war very small (despite the civil wars in

former Yugoslavia), later on cancelled conscription, adopted a widened security which emphasized nonmilitary threats, and shifted focus from the UN to the EU, specifically regarding foreign aid, climate policy, conflict resolution, and human rights. This culminated with the Bildt-led initiative for a global strategy of the EU, presented in 2013.

In 2014, however, Swedish foreign and security policy has returned to positions similar to (but not identical with) those held during the Cold War. Once again, Sweden is combining realism at home with idealism abroad. At home, Swedish parliamentary support for NATO membership has changed from 6 to 40 percent, military conscription has been reactivated, defense spending has increased considerably, and Sweden has reinforced military cooperation both with NATO and bilaterally with Finland and other neighboring states. As noted, these moves have been taken in direct response to renewed Russian aggression and assertiveness. At the same time, when the Social Democrats regained power in 2014, they declared a shift in focus from the previous EU focus to a renewed emphasis on the UN, including the campaign for a temporary seat in the UN Security Council, and the feminist foreign policy.

These oscillating combinations of realism and idealism stem in part from adaptation to external developments—the ending of the Cold War, widening and deepening of European integration, and Russian revisionism. In part, Swedish foreign and security policy is also shaped by domestic forces. It has mattered whether the Social Democrats or a center-right coalition has been in power. Even if there has been a stable parliamentary support regarding EU membership, democracy promotion, free trade, human rights, and NATO cooperation—left-wing governments have tended to focus their idealism on global arenas, while the center-right have done so more within the EU. As noted, the elephant in the room, however, is the rise of right-wing populism—an international trend which is visible also in Swedish politics. If these forces gain political influence, particularly if they seize governmental power, Sweden's image as liberal internationalist would be lost. Then Sweden would join the growing club of nationalist, isolationist, and authoritarian (or at least "illiberal") countries. It remains to be seen if the divided liberal forces—on the left, center and right—will be able to fend off the rise of right-wing nationalism and isolationism.

The oscillation of realism and idealism in Swedish foreign policy also reinforces the critique of the traditional concepts of size-based categorization of states as "powers," whether small, middle, or great. The problem with these traditional, objectivist concepts is that they confuse power with influence, or more specifically size (and amount of capabilities) with behavior. The size and resources of a state do not necessarily determine the behavior and influence of states. "Small states" can resort to norm advocacy as well as balancing, both in the near abroad and far away. In her 1959 book on small

states, Annette Baker Fox wrote: "Virtue is no monopoly of the small powers, but wisdom is not an exclusive attribute of the great" (Baker Fox 1959: 188; cf. Sundelius 1995). Given our distinction between size and behavior (or between power and influence), notions such as "small state," "middle power," or "moral superpower" should be treated as expressions of identity rather than as objective depictions of power. Thus, it is a matter of tradition and choice what identity—or role conception—a state seeks to pursue, and how others perceive it.

Finally, it has been argued that many European states—whether small, medium-sized, or great—have experienced prolonged identity crisis after the end of the Cold War. Foreign policy identity crisis is defined as a situation where "a country's general foreign policy or its national-interest discourses face problems in their smooth continuation, because taken-for-granted self-understandings and role positions are openly challenged—and eventually undermined" (Guzzini 2012: 3). Sweden arguably went through an identity crisis as the political elite somewhat reluctantly abandoned the policy of neutrality, applied for membership of the European Union (Gustavsson 1998) and intensified military cooperation with NATO. Today, as Sweden has returned to a combination of realism at home and idealism abroad—this seems to have brought back a sense of familiarity with the situation, or "ontological security" if you like. Critics might argue that this implies a return to Cold War hypocrisy—as a hard-core realist security policy at home might not seem to match idea-based foreign policy on the global level. Such critique exaggerates the importance of policy congruence for identity, however. While occasionally being accused of hypocrisy and, for example, "moral superpowerism," states like Sweden seem to have a capacity for pragmatically and continually perform different and seemingly incompatible identities (and policies) in different international contexts. If a new identity crisis is looming, it will likely have more to do with the challenge of right-wing authoritarianism, nationalism, and isolationism than with the clash of realism at home and idealism abroad.

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Conclusion

Giampiero Giacomello and Bertjan Verbeek

Middle powers have become more important to world politics in the twenty-first century. As a consequence, International Relations (IR) scholars should pay more attention to the various roles middle powers play in global affairs—today as well as in the near future. Not only do more states have access to different sources of hard and soft power than in the past, but the proliferation of various global policy domains provides them with an opportunity to seek leadership in many different issue areas. This volume examines two major claims: first, the twenty-first century middle powers are likely to seek one of the three roles: a global middle power; a regional power; or a niche power. Second, the status of a middle power in the twenty-first century depends on specific elements of hard and soft power: effective hard power is increasingly related to the capacity to project power. As a consequence, more and more states are interested in developing a naval capacity that helps projecting power. Effective soft power is related to credibility, both at home and abroad. This requires middle powers, especially those seeking niche leadership, to be consistent in their foreign policies and to ensure that their foreign policies correspond with the values they profess to promote both domestically and globally.

THREE ROLES FOR MIDDLE POWERS

This volume advances the notion that contemporary world politics offers incentives to states to seek the status of a middle power by adopting one of the three roles: first, they can aspire to be a "smaller" great power in which role they point great powers different directions to go. This requires the "smaller" great power to achieve specific objectives at the global level (e.g., in global

institutions) or in issue areas with a global reach such as finance, trade, and energy. This was the case for Germany and Japan, which sought to become major players in global banking (see chapter 4 by Konoe). This also was underlying Germany's and Italy's policies to reform their defense system, which had as an additional objective to strengthen these countries' position vis-à-vis the great powers at the global level (as evidenced in the chapter 3 by Coticchia and Moro). It also was an instrument in South Korea's attempt to affect great powers' security policies in East Asia (as demonstrated in the chapter 5 by Milani and De Panz).

Second, a state may seek middle-power status in order to act as a *regional* pivot, securing that other actors, both state and non-state, in a given region will take its regional preferences into account. Because a regional pivot's behavior is likely to affect the great powers' global preferences, regional pivots are likely to have a global outreach also. Yet, regional pivots themselves do not primarily seek to reach global objectives. For instance, as argued by Gürzel and Ersoy in chapter 6, Turkey's foreign policy has been based on its aspiration to be a regional pivot in the region of the Middle East and transcontinental Near Asia. Turkey's regional choices required it to accommodate Russia, and to revise its loyalty to the Atlantic alliance. Its regional choices thus affected the great powers without Turkey actively seeking global influence. In her contribution, Shahnoori (chapter 7) shows that Iran's interest in ensuring that other states inside and outside the region would take its preferences seriously required it to alter both the dominant image as a middle power of itself and the image of Iran held by its environment: maintaining a nuclear energy program required Iran to abandon its self-image as a middle power that protected its revolutionary values across the region and propagate the self-image of a more open and pragmatic middle power. This change was met with mixed responses from actors in its domestic and external environments: domestically, it fueled the competition between two groups in the Iranian foreign policy elite; abroad, while other states first accepted Iran's new outlook, they became more doubtful, once the domestic rivalry within Iran over its foreign policy caused uncertainty about Iran's desired role as a middle power.

Finally, a state may seek to achieve middle power status by striving to become a *niche* power. A niche power assumes a dominant place in formulating the policies for a given issue area, such as human rights, environmental policies, or development aid. Such a position as niche power is often built on elements of soft power, public diplomacy, and even nation branding, as De Rooij, Eriksson, and Verbeek demonstrate in their chapters on Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands, respectively. Because soft power depends to a fair degree on credibility which may be thwarted by apparent inconsistencies between foreign policy values and foreign policy practices, niche middle powers walk a thin line. For instance, in his contribution De Rooij

shows that Norway's claim for environmental leadership was endangered by its whaling practices. The Netherlands' position of global moral leadership was weakened by allegations of being a tax haven and by criticism related to its colonial and racist past (and present). Sweden, conversely, succeeded in elevating its moral leadership to super power status.

SOURCES OF POWER

The second purpose of the volume was to investigate the nature of the sources of power that allow states to strive for middle power status. In terms of hard power, Ghermandi in chapter 1 suggested that in the twenty-first century naval capacity is an important element of the increased importance of the so-called power to project. Indeed, Italy, South Korea, and Japan have invested in their naval capabilities: Italy launched a second air craft carrier in 2009 and purchased of a number of Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) planes for the Navy's Air Force; South Korea boasts its new class of DOKDO amphibious assault ships; Japan has announced to convert two helicopter carriers into full-fledged air craft carriers that can carry JSF planes; also, the Netherlands decided to maintain a sizeable navy, and to invest in modernizing its submarine fleet in the coming decade. All these countries seem interested in developing or strengthening a blue-water navy. Turkey, announcing the future production of a homemade class of submarines, and Sweden, investing in stealth technology for its navy, invest in naval capabilities but seem more interested in covering their nearby waters. Germany is not joining the effort to reinforce its navy, as it is caught up in defense reforms and in its reluctance to assume a leading role in military affairs, as described by Coticchia and Moro in this volume (chapter 3).

The renewed interest in navies is partly related to mounting tensions, such as in the area around the Korean Peninsula (and South East Asia) where an arms race is rapidly unfolding and in the Baltics where Russia has displayed increased (naval) assertiveness. Partly, it relates to the importance of humanitarian missions in the national role conceptions of aspiring middle powers such as the Netherlands and aspiring global middle powers such as Italy. Effectuating such roles requires an investment in the power to project. Sometimes, the situation resembles a mix of traditional security and humanitarian considerations. This has been the case with the migration and refugee crisis in the Mediterranean in the 2010s which considerably affected Italy's naval policies (Tazzioli 2016). At the same time, aspiring middle powers also look to address foreign policy issues in different ways than by choosing for naval engagement: when combatting piracy near vital trade routes (such as the Horn of Africa and the Malacca Straits), many states (Belgium, France, Italy) allow

or predominantly rely on armed private security personnel on board of trade vessels instead of employing one's navy (Cusumano and Ruzza 2015).

Of course, naval power is not the only hard power element that contributes to building a capacity to project power. Rapid intervention units, such as the Dutch Airborne shock division and its supporting equipment, also contribute to strengthen the claim of middle power status. In the not so distant future, cyber technology and, later, artificial intelligence, may prove a new, effective way to project one's power and thus one's claim to middle power status (Giacomello 2014; Junio 2013). Some middle power states recognize the need to become active in this new domain (e.g., the Netherlands published a cyber-strategy white paper in 2018), other seem still puzzled by the development (cf. Austin 2016).

In terms of soft power, the volume underlines that soft power has generally become an essential element of international politics, although possibly more so for Western democratic states. Even countries seeking global middle power status have to reckon with developments that may undermine their soft power bases: Italy's foreign policy is partly cast in a self-sought role as an international peacekeeper and humanitarian agent. Failure to meet the first rule of soft power ("practice what you preach") may affect its global aspirations: Italy's tough migration and maritime border protection policies under the Salvini/Di Maio government (2017–2019) have negatively affected its European and global reputation. Similarly, Japan's global aspirations are affected by its continuing quarrels with its neighbors about its past aggression, and its past exploitation of "comfort women" and forced labor (cf. Hayashi 2008).

Niche powers, lacking sufficient hard power resources, tend to rely on soft power for establishing niche leadership. That does not mean they forego hard power investments: both Sweden and the Netherlands clearly invest in hard power, the former fearing Russian influence in the Baltics, the latter backing up claims for playing a significant humanitarian role. The Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden have succeeded in attaining niche leadership, but are vulnerable to any seeming inconsistency between their professed values and their actual policies: this happened to Norway because of its whaling practices, and the Netherlands because of accusations of being a tax haven and of not having properly faced its colonial and racist past and present. Interestingly, in such cases, the initiatives that produced tarnished reputations originated in the activities of transnational advocacy groups or international organizations but resonated because of the relative openness of these countries' domestic political systems. In less democratic middle powers, like Iran or Turkey, reputation and soft power seemed to matter less, although part of Iran's soft power vis-à-vis specific countries and social groups throughout the region seemed based on its role as protector of the values of the Iranian revolution.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

The increased role of middle powers in contemporary world politics should be an incentive to IR scholars to put middle powers high on their research agenda. This is the case for more traditionally oriented state-centered scholars as well as for scholars who depart from that tradition: neorealists and neoliberals should take into account that contemporary world politics cannot be understood by focusing exclusively on the most powerful states in the system. First of all, (aspiring) global middle powers have the resources and skills to gently push great powers in a specific direction. Also, great powers can no longer impose their preferences on regional actors: they need to heed the preferences of the regional pivots, as the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war has amply demonstrated for the Middle East. Finally, niche powers have the possibility of bending the preferences of great powers by targeting world public opinion. At the same time, critics of traditional IR approaches should not discard the middle power notion either, for instance, because it would resemble yet another state-centered phenomenon: middle powers, more than ever, do not enjoy the luxury of ignoring non-state actors. If middle powers increasingly rely on soft power based on reputation to pursue their policies, they expose themselves to those non-state actors that affect the mechanism of accountability both within the state and in the global arena.

The very fact that nowadays soft power matters more to middle powers than in the past testifies to the importance of constructivist approaches to understanding the twenty-first century middle powers: first, to a large extent, the notion of middle power is a social construction related to (debates about) self-image and of conferral of such status by other states. Most cases in the volume testify to the debates and competition that together produce a self-definition of a state's role in world politics. The chapters on Japan, Iran, South Korea, and Turkey particularly suggest how much a professed role as a middle power depends on the recognition of such status by other states. Second, to the extent that (aspiring) middle powers rely on soft power instruments to improve their states, constructivism is important in helping understand which shared notions about preferred values help boost such power.

At the same time, constructivists should pay more attention to the hard power consequences of exercising soft power: adopting a humanitarian role may imply the need to develop the "power to project," as evidenced in the case of Italy and the Netherlands. Similarly, it is important to identify the conditions under which middle powers are more susceptible to inconsistencies in the value narratives that constitute the basis of a country's soft power: this volume suggests that international organizations and transnational advocacy groups may play a significant role in this. At the same time, not all

middle powers seem equally sensitive to such pressure, as evidenced by the cases of Iran and Turkey in this volume.

What does this mean for the analysis of power relations in world politics from a more traditional IR perspective? One issue relates to stability; the other to the importance of domestic politics. Stability, a theme central to IR theory, should be affected by the more even global distribution of power that seems to be occurring nowadays because of the growing number of middle powers. From our analysis, it appears that the increase in the number of middle powers in Europe and Asia may exercise a more *stabilizing* effect. Nonetheless, some middle powers, in this volume notably Iran and Turkey, may actually disregard this stabilizing effect in exchange for being more assertive regional powers. The stabilizing effect requires governments to prize and foster the status quo in the long run. For example, the Turkish military intervention in Syria against the Kurds in northern Syria in the Fall of 2019 seemed motivated more by short-term prestige gains for the Turkish president rather than by subscribing to long-term regional stability.

At the same time, one should allow for the possibility that the increased role of middle powers in the twenty-first century is no more than an interlude between different rounds of great power clashes: the current fragmentation of power in the international system, not only between states, but also between states and non-state actors, may be part of a transformation of the system into a new bipolar (China? United States?) or multipolar (China? India? United States?) world. Under a new stable form of polarity, great powers may reign in middle powers, as the Soviet Union and the United States have done during the Cold War. Some of the chapters in this volume actually suggest that the room of maneuver for middle powers is still significantly limited by the great powers: The fortune of Turkey's and Iran's aspirations for regional leadership shifted when such aspirations faced the vital interests of Russia and, particularly, the United States. South Korea's regional policies were constrained by changes (in the preferences) of China and the United States.

With regard to domestic politics, the volume underlines the notion that middle powers generally have to walk a thin line between systemic and domestic pressures. The case of Iran in this volume offers the best example: Iranian foreign policy has been the product of the clash between two currents within the Iranian foreign policy elite: the realists and the idealists. Both currents encompass influential actors in Iranian politics that have specific domestic sources of influences and claim legitimacy on the basis of different narratives and subsequent national roles for Iran in the world. The shifts in balance between these groups and their impact on Iranian foreign policy are the product partly of domestic events (such as elections and protests), partly of international events (notably how actors such as the European Union, Russia, and the United States respond to Iranian foreign policy moves). Other examples

include the Netherlands and Norway: their foreign polices reflect the dynamics of a constant domestic battle between proponents of different role conceptions. The volume thus represents a call to IR scholars to examine middle powers as states likely to be caught between domestic and systemic pressures.

Liberal School's advocates of "Domestic Politics," or Waltz's Second Image (Waltz 2001/1959), have long debated with neorealists the relevance of a state's internal structure in influencing its foreign policy. Although willing to concede some relevance to domestic factors, neorealists yet never fully embraced the potential impact of such factors. The "Democratic Peace Theory" has not only made the dismissal of domestic politics simply impossible, but also finally put the political structure of the state in a central position (Russett et al. 1995). To a certain degree, the issue has been taken up by neoclassical realism (Lobell et al. 2009), but neoclassical realism still seems predominantly interested in great powers, whereas this volume would expect them to include middle powers as an important category for testing its theories.

Many observations in the contributions to this volume are thus consistent with the importance of domestic factors according to the Liberal School (Doyle and Recchia 2011) and the Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis tradition (Neack et al. 1995) as well as with the centrality of roles and ideas that are characteristic of constructivism. The international behavior of Turkey and Iran is fully consistent with what constructivists and liberals would be expecting from autocracies; similarly consistent are the role and actions by the middle power democracies examined in this volume. The details of the latter's behavior are different as their area of origin, whether Asia or Europe, does require attention to some regional specificities; yet, it is clear that they do share the common nature of being democracies, regardless of regional characteristics. However, also in democracies examples abound that "populist" leaders, operating under the same *Zeitgeist* and reinforcing each other's moves, may throw away long-lasting agreements or old alliances for their own domestic gains, which, in most cases, reflects the short horizon of the next election (see, for instance, Nai and Martinez i Coma 2019). This is what happened, among others, in the United States, the United Kingdom, and (almost) Italy: how do realist, liberal, and constructivist scholars explain this disarticulation of old international restraints and commitments if not precisely by stressing the domestic dimension, as we have done in this volume?

FUTURE RESEARCH

In the fragmented, multipolar post-Cold War world, many countries aspire to become (or remain) middle powers. As we have seen, because of its shifting

nature, it can be rather a challenge to preserve one's status as a middle power. One way to hedge against future loss of status for middle powers is to specialize as a niche power or as a regional pivot. Conversely, being a global middle power requires a balanced mix of various elements, which requires to frequently transfer the (relatively) limited resources from one sector to another, for instance, from education, research, and development to internal security, or from public health to budget discipline. All these issues pertain to the unstable status of middle power and are fundamental to improve the research into middle powers today.

As anticipated in the work of authors such as Hudson and Day (2019) and others (e.g., Mukunda 2012), we believe that more attention to the personality of individual leaders is merited in order to understand how great, middle, and small powers act in global affairs in the twenty-first century. As we argued in this volume, the "middle power dimension" will be a highly relevant element in such leadership studies. Middle powers, as they define themselves and act accordingly, have somehow more flexibility of action, in deciding where to operate (regionally or globally) and in what specific sectors, compared to small powers, which are bound by systemic constraints, and to great powers, the global role of which requires them to function at the top at all times. Because middle powers are a category of states that hover between systemic and domestic constraints and because middle powers may face non-state actors in their quest for, especially, niche leadership, studying the role important leaders of middle powers play, becomes vital. Hence, personality and psychology studies (see, for example, Hogan and Sherman 2020) of political leaders in middle powers should become a central feature of further studies on middle powers.

Because of the larger number of middle powers nowadays and their (relatively) ambiguous character, we surmise that today the size of the class of aspiring middle powers has increased since we first used this classification for Italy almost ten years ago (Giacomello and Verbeek 2009). Excluding those states that, for the time being, seem structurally barred from becoming middle powers (e.g., Luxembourg, Malta, Singapore, Sri Lanka, etc.) as well as those states that are unlikely to decline to the status of a small power (e.g., China, the United States, India, Russia and the like), the category of middle powers is already the largest in international relations. Inevitably, this category will solicit more and more interest from IR scholars. More cross-sectional research will certainly be needed for all those issue areas indicated above as well as in-depth studies of these countries' foreign policies. It is our intention that the series to which this edited volume belongs will play a central role in this debate. We surmise that the identification of three major middle power roles and the discussion of the nature of power presented in this volume will serve such a debate. In this volume, Germany, Italy, Japan, and South Korea

represent "smaller" great powers that not only seek to affect defense, banking, trade, and energy policies on a global level, but also attempt to change the setup of global institutions. Next, Iran and Turkey serve as examples of regional pivots for the Middle East and transcontinental Near Asia. Finally, the Netherlands and Sweden exemplify the role of niche powers, as their soft power allows them to punch above their weight in specific issue areas, that is, humanitarian policies, development aid, and environmental policies. Although the chapter on Norway serves to conceptualize the role of soft power, its empirical case of Norway reinforces the niche power argument. Future contributions to the series will develop further these three notions.

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