# NATIONAL IDENTITIES AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RICHARD NED LEBOW



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# *National Identities and International Relations*

Identity is the master variable for many constructivist scholars of international politics. In this comparative study, Richard Ned Lebow shows that states do not have identities any more than people do. Leaders, peoples, and foreign actors seek to impose national identifications consistent with their political projects and psychological needs. These identifications are multiple, fluid, and rise in importance as a function of priming and context. Leaders are at least as likely to invoke national identifications as rationalizations for policies pursued for other reasons as they are to be influenced by them. National identifications are nevertheless important because they invariably stress the alleged uniqueness of a people and its country, and are a principal means of seeking status and building self-esteem. Lebow tracks the relative appeal of these principles, the ways in which they are constructed, how they influence national identifications, and how they in turn affect regional and international practices.

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*To Carol*
*Who has waited patiently for an unshared dedication*

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# *Preface and Acknowledgments*

When writing *The Politics and Ethics of Identity* (Cambridge 2012), I expected to begin with individual identity and bridge to collective and national ones. I never got beyond the collective level, and certainly did not address it in any comprehensive way. It seemed appropriate, even necessary, to produce a follow-on volume that would focus on national identities and their implications for foreign policy and international relations. This study builds on the arguments of my earlier book but does more than simply extend them to national and international societies. I explore the similarities and differences – there are plenty of both – between the construction and consequences of individual and national identities. I use my analysis to offer a critique of how identity is used by many constructivists and suggest ways in which the relationship between national identifications, foreign policy, and international relations might be studied more productively.

I rounded up the usual suspects to read draft chapters. In this connection, I am indebted to Felix Berenskoetter, Carol Bohmer, Markus Kornprobst, Andrew Lawrence, David Lebow, Katherine Lebow, and Dorothy Noyes. I wrote the first draft while serving as Olof Palme Visiting Professor at Lund University. I am grateful to colleagues there, most notably Jens Bartelson and Caterina Kinvall, for their support and to the Swedish National Research Council for funding. I finished the manuscript in London, and want to thank my colleagues at King's College London and Pembroke College, University of Cambridge, for their companionship and intellectual stimulation. This is my sixth book since 2003 with Cambridge University Press, and I am once again indebted to my editor John Haslam and the staff of the Press for their support and professionalism.

# 1 *Introduction*

This book continues my investigation of so-called identity and its importance for politics. *The Politics and Ethics of Identity*, published in 2012, focuses primarily on personal identifications, although it also has something to say about collective identifications. Both have the potential to enhance status, wealth, and security, provide meaning in life, and help us come to terms with our mortality. In this volume, I analyze national identifications, the functions they serve for people, and their implications for foreign policy and international relations. By national identifications I mean not only the descriptions of states and their peoples generated by leaders and citizens alike, but also those generated by external actors.

National identifications that are internalized by people serve many of the same ends as individual self-identifications, which are, in effect, what they become. In writing about this process, Pierre Bourdieu argues that the state penetrates our innermost selves through its role in forming our language, lives, laws, identities, and feelings about the most intimate aspects of life.[1] His claim, while perhaps exaggerated, captures an essential truth because so many people identify strongly with their states and are influenced by them in ways they do not necessarily recognize. This phenomenon is even to some degree evident when people define their nationality as something distinct from, even in opposition to, their state.[2]

Identity is as central to the constructivist paradigm as power is to realism and wealth to liberalism. One of my goals is to show how deeply problematic the concept of identity is for foreign policy analysis – and for many of the same reasons that power is for realism. I believe in

[1] Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice* and "Identity and Representation: Elements for a Critical Reflection on the Idea of Region."

[2] McCrone and Bechhofer, *Understanding National Identity*, ch. 8, on the dual positive national identifications of the English, Scots, and Welsh.

the constructivist premise that we must reconstruct the world through the eyes of actors to understand their behavior. Many, if not most, people believe they have an identity. This does not mean that we have to accept its existence any more than we do that of the soul, so central to the belief system of traditional Christians. We do, however, have to acknowledge the important behavioral implications of such beliefs.[3] Toward this end, analysts must develop concepts that are intellectually defensible and methodologically useful for understanding how belief systems of all kinds influence behavior.

I question the centrality of identity for other reasons. The relationship between identifications and behavior is by no means straightforward. It is more uncertain and complex than generally recognized in the constructivist literature. In part, this is because there are multiple personal and national identifications that rise and fall in importance as a function of priming and context. Any identification, moreover, can have indeterminate implications for behavior because it usually lends itself to diverse readings. Multiple competing identifications may have opposing behavioral implications. To use identifications to explain or predict behavior we would need to know a lot more about when and how they form, the different ways people can understand the same identifications, and the conditions in which they turn to them for guidance.

Identifications are only one source of behavior. People act for many reasons that have nothing to do with their sense of who they are. They can be motivated by material or other appetites, status concerns, fear, or act out of habit. In *Constructing Cause in International Relations*, I document the important role of visual frames of reference in creating the imaginary of the territorial state and helping to make it a political project.[4] Even when self or national identifications feature prominently in a policy discourse, they may be rationalizations more than causes, giving rise to the need to differentiate between these two uses and identify the situations in which identifications are more likely to shape behavior.

The relationship between identifications and policy is further complicated by the well-documented potential of behavior at odds with the

[3] W. I. Thomas, *Child in America*, wrote in 1928: "[I]f people define situations as real, they are real in consequence."

[4] Lebow, *Constructing Cause in International Relations*, ch. 4.

self-identifications to prompt people to revise these self-understandings.[5] By bringing their images of themselves in line with their behavior they reduce dissonance. The arrow of influence points in two directions: self-identifications help shape behavior, and behavior helps shape self-identifications. Self-identifications also serve as rationalizations for actions motivated by other reasons. Rationalizations can nevertheless have important behavioral consequences when they encourage important audiences to frame a problem in a particular war. During World War II the American government encouraged people to think of themselves and their British ally as democratic countries, law abiding and respectful of the rights of others, in contrast to their fascist adversaries. To the extent that this self-identification was internalized, it made people more aware of the discrepancy between their values and their treatment of African Americans. Creation of the Nazi "other" may have given a boost to civil rights.[6]

The first substantive focus of this volume is accordingly the character of national identifications. Peter Mandler rightly notes that "Social scientists understand much better the process by which group identification takes place than they do what determines the content of group identifications or even the salience of a particular group identification in a given situation."[7] I address this problem, at least in part. I argue that national identifications, like their individual counterparts, are based primarily on roles, affiliations, relationship to bodies – territory and people in the case of states – and ethnic and state histories. The most attractive national identifications – and hence, those most likely to be internalized – are those that emphasize the alleged distinctiveness and positive qualities, if not superiority, of a state and its citizens. Identifications of this kind build and buttress self-esteem and, by doing so, provide the psychological foundations of nationalism. The exclusivity of any formulation of nationalism and nationality will depend in part on the ways in which claims of distinctiveness and superiority are constructed.

[5] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 3.82; Bem, "Self-Perception" and "Self-Perception Theory."

[6] I elaborate this theme in *Franz Ferdinand Lives!* chs. 3–4, and consider the counterfactual possibility of how civil rights would have been considerably delayed in the absence of World War II.

[7] Mandler, "What Is 'National Identity'?"

National identifications can build self-esteem directly and indirectly. Citizens feel good about themselves when they belong to a nationality or state they consider superior. They take vicarious pride in the accomplishments of their people or state.[8] Some psychologists theorize that affiliation with nations is also a means of coping with mortality.[9] For all these reasons leaders and peoples assert claims of distinctiveness and superiority and attempt to get them recognized by other actors in regional and international societies. Regional, and later international, society legitimized the role of great power. In the aftermath of World War II, the role of superpower gained widespread acceptance, and, for decades, the United States has been seeking recognition as a hegemon. States have also been allowed, if not encouraged, to carve out high-status roles as regional and middle powers. Switzerland and Sweden transformed the initially low-status role of neutral into a high-status one. Much of international relations can be characterized as a struggle for high-status roles and the privileges they confer, but also of transforming low-status roles into high-status ones. Needless to say, internal – that is, domestic – understandings of roles are not always the same as external ones, and these differences can become sources of tension and conflict.

In the modern age, the intensity of conflicts associated with national identifications and roles has been exacerbated by the greater degree to which people identify with their states. This invariably involves some degree of transference, a phenomenon well documented with regard to sports teams.[10] Individual self-esteem becomes a function, at least in part, of the success and failure of one's state and teams. As Carl von Clausewitz presciently observed in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, conflicts and wars were no longer between princes, but between peoples.[11]

There is a close but complicated connection between national identifications and foreign policy. This is the second focus of my book: how

[8] Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, develops and documents these claims.

[9] Ibid., chs. 3 and 8. For a general review of the terror management literature, see Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski, "The Cultural Animal."

[10] Dechesne, Greenberg, Arndt, and Schimel, "Terror Management and Sports Fan Affiliation"; Castano, Yzerbyt, and Paladino, "Fan Affiliation"; Castano and Dechesne, "On Defeating Death"; Castano, "In Case of Death, Cling to the Ingroup."

[11] Clausewitz, *On War*, ch. 26.

national identifications not only influence foreign policy and international relations, but also how they in turn help shape national identifications. This relationship is recursive. Success and failure in the competition for regional or international status – sought as an end in itself, but also for instrumental reasons – will affect the character and relative appeal of particular national identifications. Changes in identifications or their importance can in turn encourage, provide support for, or even require changes in foreign policy. For this reason, among others, domestic and foreign actors are keen to influence national identifications of their states and others.

There is another, circuitous but more profound connection between national identifications and foreign policy: changes in national identifications in multiple countries can affect the character of international relations, and vice versa. I approach this relationship through an examination of the principles of justice that sustain and justify political orders. I argue that national identifications represent claims for special treatment, and to do so successfully they must ultimately rest on a widely accepted principle of justice. Changes in the appeal of relative acceptance and understandings of the principles of fairness and equality have important implications for the appeal and utility of national identifications – and also for regional and international practices. Leaders interested in the instrumental benefits of national identifications will accordingly have incentives to reframe them in response. If enough leaders act this way, they have the potential to transform the character of international society and its practices.

I contend that there are only two fundamental principles of distributive justice: fairness and equality. Each finds two forms of expression. Fairness dictates that more should be given to those who provide more for the community, or to those who need more. Equality requires an even distribution of material and symbolic awards, or equal access to them in a fair completion. All orders excepting those based on fear incorporate one or both principles, although rarely, if ever, do they approach them in practice.

From ancient times until the Enlightenment, fairness was the dominant principle of distributive justice. By the nineteenth century, even conservatives like Talleyrand, Tocqueville, and Bismarck recognized that equality was rapidly becoming the dominant value and would have far-reaching implications for the practice of

European politics.[12] This value shift, I argue, is an important underlying reason why war and conquest have become increasingly unacceptable. It is wrong to explain these phenomena only with reference to learning from events, notably the two world wars and the threat of nuclear Armageddon.[13]

National identifications have been influenced by the principle of equality, but this has not stopped states from violating that principle and seeking special treatment from regional or international societies. There is a more general contradiction between the principle of equality and most national identifications. They almost invariably assert the distinctiveness and superiority of a people or nation. Claims of superiority and justifications for privileges based on them are really appeals to the principle of fairness and to hierarchy at the expense of equality. Elites who propagate these identifications and claims invoke all kinds of sleights of hand in an attempt to square the two principles, but rarely credibly in the eyes of other actors.

There are exceptions, of course. Not all national identifications defy the principle of equality. Herder thought all peoples distinctive but none superior; collectively, they expressed the diverse potential of humanity.[14] Some expressions of nationalism adhere to this principle to varying degrees. Others emphasize collective affiliations, as do postwar German efforts to define themselves as good Europeans. Identifications based on ideologies such as democracy are also collective in the sense of recognizing positive similarities between their states and peoples and others. Their leaders may still encourage the framing of "us" and "others" binaries, as do post–Cold War efforts by interventionist-prone Americans to create a "concert of democracies."[15]

[12] Talleyrand-Périgord, *Correspondence of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord and King Louis XVIII*, p. 289; Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II.2.1, p. 482.

[13] See Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, for one such explanation.

[14] Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit.*

[15] Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, "An Alliance of Democracies": Our Way or the Highway," 6 November 2004, http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2004/11/06globalgovernance-daalder; Richard Perle, "Democracies of the World, Unite," *The American Interest* 2, no. 3, 1 January 2007, http://www.the-american-interest.com/2007/01/01/democracies-of-the-world-unite/ (both accessed 7 July 2015); Davenport, "Just War Theory Requires a New Federation of Democratic Nations"; Robert Kagan, "The Case for a League of Democracies," *Financial Times*, 13 May 2008; Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens.*

My analysis accordingly has four starting points. First and foremost, and noted at the outset, is the rejection of the concept of identity on the grounds that neither individuals nor states possess one. So-called identities are really composites of multiple self-identifications that are labile in character and rise and fall in relative importance. They arise from diverse sources and have unpredictable behavioral implications.[16] States also have multiple identifications, not single identities. As with individuals, these identifications are based on their roles, affiliations, relationships to their bodies – territory and population in the case of states – and understandings people have of their past. Because national identifications have important political consequences, they are invariably contested. To the degree they are widely shared, they can be appealed to in support of policies made to appear consistent with them. Diverse actors accordingly propagate identifications consistent with their political goals or psychological needs and attempt to impose them on their states. They usually attempt to do this by influencing official or collective memories.

My second starting point concerns the principal difference between individual and national identifications. States have no psyche and accordingly no reflexive self. In the language of George Herbert Mead, they have a "Me" but not an "I." They are unable to construct identifications on their own or discriminate among those foisted on them by others. It is more appropriate to speak of state "identifications" than "self-identifications," and to recognize that these identifications are imposed on states, not only by leaders and other officials, but also by the media, public intellectuals, interest and ethnic groups, and external actors.

My third starting point emphasizes another important difference between states and people. In many, if not most, states, people live in relatively robust societies, and within them, in even more robust, subcultures. Regional and international societies are much thinner than most national ones and have correspondingly less ability to shape the identifications of their members. They have some influence in this regard, and exercise it primarily through the units they recognize as actors, the roles they legitimize, and their pairing of actors and roles.

International society differs from democratic domestic societies and most regional societies in its greater degree of hierarchy. Max Weber observed that larger and powerful states seek special privileges and "their pretensions may influence the external conduct of the power

[16] See Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1 for an elaboration of this claim.

structures."[17] This situation has not changed. Great powers exercise more influence than ordinary states, and leaders of great powers assert their right to rule on the basis of their ability to maintain order, which they describe as in the common interests.[18] The United States has attempted to push this claim and related privileges much further in its claim to hegemony and assertion of its beneficial consequences.[19]

My fourth starting point pertains to the nature of regional and international societies. They should be analyzed as societies, not as systems. States and nonstate actors interact within a cultural framework that legitimizes and assigns roles that create and sustain hierarchies and practices. In the final section to this chapter I elaborate this framing and offer a critique of the concept of system as it has been applied to international relations. The gist of the critique is that systemic analysis privileges the so-called structure of the system over the actors, and attributes their behavior to constraints and opportunities generated by the system. A social approach, by contrast, is bottom up and explains actor behavior with reference to their values and goals. Their interactions create expectations and practices, some of which may be institutionalized. They in turn influence actors. There is an ongoing interaction between actors and their societies, with changes in either one affecting the membership, roles, and practices of the other.

This volume carries forward the research program associated with *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, *Why Nations Fight*, and *Goodbye Hegemony!* It does so by highlighting the variation among states in their ability to respond and adapt to changing circumstances. Following the approach of these previous works, I frame the constraints and opportunities actors face more in reference to values and ideas than to power. To achieve standing and influence, states must convince others of their worth and of the benefits to others of the roles they seek and the policies they advocate. Influence accordingly depends at least as much on political choices and rhetorical skills as it does on material capabilities. Material capabilities count for little unless they are invested wisely to acquire the kind of resources appropriate to and useful for exercising influence in pathways recognized by

[17] Weber, *Economy and Society*, II, pp. 910–11.
[18] Clark, *Hierarchy of States*, pp. 1–3, 210, 217–18.
[19] Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*, ch. 1.

others as legitimate. National identifications can be critical resources or impediments in this regard.

This book aspires to make two general contributions to the international relations theory literature. It offers insight into international and domestic change by exploring national identifications, which I contend are one of the most important vehicles for such change. Of equal importance, it offers evidence of the utility of analyzing international relations in terms of influence rather than power, and of the social vs. material basis of influence.

## Book Outline

Ontological security is the framework adopted by many constructivists to study identity and its foreign policy consequences. Drawing on Anthony Giddens, ontological security assumes that people and states require a stable sense of self that is provided by an identity and associated organizational routines. Chapter 2 offers a critique of this research program. I distinguish states from people; the former have neither emotions nor psychological needs. Their leaders and people certainly do, and may project them onto states. This process of transference creates a powerful set of expectations about the domestic and foreign policies of states, but they are more complex in their character and consequences than theorized by proponents of ontological security.

Like people, states have multiple identities, and much of politics consists of efforts by leaders, domestic and foreign political actors, to impose identifications on states commensurate with their political and psychological needs. States accordingly have multiple, competing identifications, many incommensurate and in competition in the discourses of official and civil society. These identifications and their supporting narratives often appeal to and enhance the self-esteem and solidarity of different political actors and subgroups within a society. Competing identifications and the conflicts they generate can constrain or provide freedom for policymakers, depending on the circumstances. They can generate culture wars that lead to ontological *insecurity*.

Ontological security makes an unwarranted assumption about the relationship between stress and routines. Stress can encourage actors to take refuge in routines, but it can also provide an incentive to reject them. All governments rely on routines, but it is not evident that

psychological explanations, as opposed to organizational and bureaucratic ones, are necessary to account for them. In the conclusion to this chapter, I suggest ways in which research on so-called identity and foreign policy could be put on firmer political and psychological foundations.

Chapter 3 employs George Herbert Mead's distinction between "Me" and "I" to analyze the similarities and differences between individual and states. The "Me" refers to the understandings imposed on one by other actors, and the "I" to self-understandings. The two are often in conflict because people frequently dislike the way others categorize them. For most people there is an ongoing, negotiable relationship between these two selves.[20] We can properly use the term "self-identifications" because people assimilate socially constructed identifications, reflect on and modify them, and not infrequently invent their own. People do not feel good about negative attributions or identifications that they consider low in status, although research on stereotypes suggests that these identifications are often internalized.[21]

States are legal entities and imagined communities and do not possess a collective consciousness that can reflect on themselves and their situations. For this reason, they have no "I" in the sense that Mead defines it. States are composed of multiple institutions and actors. The latter include leaders, bureaucrats, politicians seeking office, media representatives, public intellectuals, pressure and affinity groups of all kinds, and ordinary citizens. These actors propagate and publicize diverse national identifications in support of their political goals and psychological needs.

The state might be analogized to a refrigerator on which family members use small magnets to attach snapshots, postcards, lists, notes, and other objects. By doing so, they personalize the appliance and make it reflect their interests, needs, commitments, and hopes. The refrigerator has no say in the matter. Many families have refrigerators with large enough doors to accommodate many different magnetized objects. Through these objects the family refrigerator receives an identity, really multiple identities, as there is rarely anything coherent or

[20] Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*.

[21] Goffman, *Stigma*; Moncrieffe and Eyben, *Power of Labeling*; Heatherton, *Social Psychology of Stigma*.

consistent about these attachments. There may be some controversy within families about what goes on their fridge. In states, this process is more conflicted because it has more serious purposes and consequences, and because many more actors are attempting to stick identifications on to the "body politic."

Chapters 4 and 5 analyze the nature and source of the multiple identifications imposed on states from within and without. Internal identifications build on roles, affiliations, relationship to territory and people, and historical experiences. Roles must be negotiated with other members of the regional or international society and are occasionally imposed by them. Changes in the character of any of these identifications often have implications for others.

Chapter 4 focuses on roles, and turns to role theory for a general understanding of their character and the functions they perform in society. I describe the more limited roles available to international actors and analyze the extent to which they are chosen or imposed and the freedom states have in shaping their performance. I look at how roles and their performance reflect and shape national identifications, and vice versa. I explore some of the implications of these relationships for international relations. Roles instantiate hierarchies and are created and sustained primarily for this reason. Those at the apex of the international hierarchy – great powers – defend their status and associated privileges on the grounds that they are essential for the common good, a claim not always accepted by other actors. By monitoring this debate, which includes claims by other international actors for status on different grounds, we can track consensus and dissent about values and practices and principles of justice, and thus the robustness of international society.

Chapter 5 examines affiliations, territories, and biographies. I describe the varied ways in which they are mobilized to create national identifications. As with individuals, these identifications are multiple, subject to change, sometimes reinforcing, and not infrequently cross-cutting. Their importance rises and falls as a function of context and priming. National roles, affiliations, relations to bodies, and autobiographical narratives do not exist in separate domains. They interact, and changes in one are likely to prompt, even require, modification of others. I explore this process and the relationship between identifications that are internally generated and those that are externally negotiated or imposed.

National identifications can confer important psychological benefits, but I associate them more with self-esteem than with ontological security. I identify and emphasize a different set of mechanisms linking national identifications to foreign policy. They derive in the first instance from the need to perform in a manner consistent with state roles and affiliations, to the extent that conformity with them is seen by leaders to confer practical and psychological benefits. Secondarily, they are a product of domestic struggles over competing national identifications. Leaders, or dissident factions within a government, often pursue foreign policies intended to strengthen their hand in these conflicts. I show how this framing of national identifications and foreign policy offers insight into conflict and cooperation.

Chapter 6 explores agency and how it differs for individuals and states. Role-playing is the most important vehicle for expressing agency, but there are fewer roles in regional and international societies than in domestic ones. Regional and international actors nevertheless have more choice in the performance of their roles as these societies are less robust than their domestic counterparts and correspondingly less able to constrain them. Most analysts of domestic societies consider the quest for high-status roles and rebellion against society to be polar opposites. The former are legitimate pathways, and successful actors are praised and rewarded. Rebellion invites scorn and punishment from other actors. Both forms of agency often have similar goals: the building or strengthening of national identifications, enhancing national self-esteem and solidarity, and increasing support for leaders and regimes. In international society, actors have frequently switched from one strategy and role to the other.

Realists define the status quo in terms of territory and material capabilities. At least as important are the norms governing who is recognized as an actor, the roles open to actors, and how these roles should be performed. Much of international politics consists of efforts to reinforce or alter these norms. This is most evident in struggles over roles (i.e., which ones are legitimate, what privileges and responsibilities they entail, and who is allowed to enact them). It is also apparent in contests over the nature of deviance, who should be categorized as deviant, and how, if at all, they should be stigmatized. The degree of consensus about roles influences significantly, I argue, the degree to which actors rebel and how they rebel. It also determines the extent to which rebels are labeled as deviants and are stigmatized, and how

effective the labeling and stigmatization are in making them conform to established norms.

Chapter 7 opens with a critique of the use of identity as a master variable by many constructivists. It encounters many of the same problems as do realist and liberal invocations of power. I then draw on the previous chapters to explore the problem of change in international society. I contend that it is best explained and forecast in terms of the evolving relationships among roles, national identifications, and principles of justice. I describe some of the still unfolding consequences of the shift in the modern era from fairness to equality as the dominant principle of justice. It deprived some roles of legitimacy and changed the ways others are, or should be, practiced. It has also had significant implications for the ways in which rising powers seek recognition as great powers, great powers exercise influence, and the conditions under which the use of force is regarded as acceptable or deviant. These changes in turn have had profound consequences for how states and peoples think of themselves. This recursive process is transforming international society.

## Society versus System

This book explores the relationship between self-fashioning and socialization at the state and international levels and the mechanisms that make both possible. Toward this end, it is helpful to recognize that international politics takes place within a society, not a system. Samuel Pufendorf used the term "system" in 1660 to describe international relations, by which he actually meant international society.[22] System came into wide use in the 1960s, due to the growing influence of systems theory and the desire of some international relations scholars to impart scientific rigor to their enterprise. David Easton's *The Political System* (1953) and Morton Kaplan's *System and Process in International Politics* (1957) were instrumental in introducing systems theory to American politics and international relations, respectively. Systemic analysis is, of course, central to Kenneth Waltz's theory of international politics, which analogizes international relations to markets and states to firms.[23] A systemic approach downplays or altogether

[22] Pufendorf, *Elementorum jurisprudentia univeralis libri duo*.
[23] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

ignores differences among actors; it assumes – falsely – that surviving units become functionally alike through processes of selection or adaptation. It also assumes that equilibrium is an inherent quality of the system, which is true of many natural systems but not of economics or international relations.[24]

For many reasons system is a concept inappropriate to the study of international relations. Real systems are natural occurrences or feats of engineering, and international relations are neither. The application of system to international relations is pure metaphor; there is no evidence that it selects for certain kinds of structures or behaviors or compels actors to consciously restructure in response to constraints and opportunities. In the security sphere, there is enormous variation in the percentage of income states spend on their military and the extent to which they enter into alliances with other states. These differences reflect internal state choices much more than they do responses to the constraints and opportunities of the international environment. Much the same can be said about economic structures and policies, and there is ample evidence of states making choices seemingly at odds with what scholars think likely to generate security or material well-being.

It is more accurate to consider international relations, and some regional relations, as taking place within societies. There is strong evidence for this organizing principle. Consider the balance of power. It functioned well in the eighteenth century, Hans Morgenthau believed, because it was a mechanism embedded in social norms. He quoted Gibbon's characterization of eighteenth-century Europe as "one great republic" with common standards of "politeness and cultivation" and a common "system of arts, and laws, and manners." As a consequence, "mutual influence of fear and shame" imposed moderation on the actions of states and their leaders and instilled in all of them "some common sense of honor and justice."[25] However much leaders wanted to increase their power at the expense of their neighbors, they limited their ambitions because they recognized the right of others to exist and the fundamental legitimacy of the international political order. When this consensus broke down, as it did from the first partition of Poland through the Napoleonic Wars, the balance of power no

[24] Lebow, *Constructing Cause in International Relations*, chs. 2–3.
[25] Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, pp. 159–66, 270–84.

longer functioned to preserve the peace or integrity of members of the system.[26] Other scholars follow Morgenthau's line of reasoning and describe the balance of power as the expression of a moral consensus and something that could be appealed to over the interests of individual powers.[27] We cannot understand how and when the balance of power functions by invoking anarchy and self-interest as realists do. Rather, we must examine the robustness of society, the degree to which it has developed a discourse about the balance of power and the extent to which it is regarded as a useful or necessary mechanism for preserving order.

More evidence is provided by the existence of multiple and legitimate roles in international relations, as roles cannot exist independently of a social order. Roles are consciously designed, and generally function, to sustain these orders and their hierarchies. They do so by making actor behavior more constrained and predictable. People – largely states in the case of international relations, but increasingly nonstate actors too – accept these limitations because of the material rewards, status, and other benefits that roles confer. Ancient Greeks thought that society and its roles made us human, and one of the reasons Hobbes imagined his state of nature was to demonstrate this truth. For the Greeks and Hobbes, in the absence of social order and its values and practices, people are driven by raw appetites and become a menace to themselves and everyone around them. Interstate relations are not nearly as ordered as intrastate relations are, but neither are they Hobbesian. The considerable degree of hierarchy and stability they possess is attributable to society and its social constraints and rewards.

There is ample evidence that international society is not anarchical but hierarchical, with a political and economic structure partially imposed and in large part negotiated by powerful states. Member states have come to acknowledge their common status and work out their rights and duties only gradually. In the eyes of some, international society "is a small club – 'a privileged, exclusive club.' "[28] Like many clubs, it is weak, with volatile membership and finances. States frequently violate its rules and norms, but more often conform to

[26] Ibid., p. 285.
[27] Anderson, *Eighteenth Century Europe*, pp. 211–12; Osiander, *States System of Europe*, pp. 125–26; Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, pp. 81, 169.
[28] Österud, "Narrow Gate."

them. As in any society, this variance seems explicable in terms of the "fit" between global and domestic norms, perceptions of substantive and procedural legitimacy, and the goals of actors.[29]

The modern era reveals a continuous clash between the great and lesser powers with respect to norms. Leaders of great powers continually assert their right to rule, or at least to lead, on the basis of need for order.[30] Less powerful states increasingly oppose them and the principle of fairness on the grounds of equality, which they insist must be the foundation of regional and international order.[31] American claims to the contrary, there has never been a hegemon capable of ordering the system. The current arrangements, initially put in place in the aftermath of World War II, are the result of a negotiated consensus among diverse actors. This was also true of the orders that followed the Napoleonic Wars and World War I. Much of international politics consists of efforts to strengthen or weaken these hierarchies, and much of these efforts focus on reformulating existing discourses or mobilizing new ones about principles of justice and their relationship to order.

Some theorize international society as an independent, or quasi-independent, level of interaction that mediates between actors and political systems at the national, regional, and international levels.[32] The English school introduced further distinction between international and world society. The former is the realm of the governments and their institutions and practices, and the latter that of nonofficial groups, movements, and the transnational network of nongovernmental agents. Representatives of the English school describe international society as "a group of states" that is "conscious of certain common interests and common values" and accordingly sees itself as "bound by a common set of rules" and operating within "common institutions."[33]

[29] Foot and Walter, "Global Norms and Major State Behavior." See Hurrell, *On Global Order*, for another take on compliance.

[30] Clark, *Hierarchy of States*, p. 210.

[31] Bukovansky, Clark, Eckersley, Price, Reus-Smit, and Wheeler, *Special Responsibilities*, pp. 5–11.

[32] Hont, *Jealousy of Trade*; Owens, "Historicizing 'the Social' in International Thought."

[33] Bull and Watson, *Expansion of International Society*, p. 1; Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, p. 1; Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, p. 6. The quotes are from Clark.

The distinction between "international" and "world" society reflects an uneasy compromise between realism and liberalism. The founders of the English school – Hedley Bull, Adam Watson, and Martin Wight – wanted to distinguish themselves from *Realpolitik* realists who dismissed the relevance of any social context in which states pursued their goals. To justify this claim – more ideology than practice – American realists deployed the concept of anarchy. The seemingly oxymoronic title of Hedley Bull's magnum opus – *The Anarchical Society* – nicely differentiated the English school from more traditional realists. At the same time, the English school wanted to keep its distance from the liberal idealists. In the interwar era they sought to reframe international relations in terms of "world society." Ian Clark rightly notes that the two kinds of societies now increasingly overlap.[34] This is most apparent in the recognition of nonstate actors by states and their role in such activities, formerly the preserve of states, as sponsorship, implementation, and verification. I will accordingly fold world society into international society, as the distinction between them has little to no empirical utility.

Representatives of the English school, among the first to write about international society, assume the existence of a thin international society that could be defined in universalist terms. They considered it a prerequisite for any kind of international political order.[35] Jens Bartelson takes the opposite tack and argues that international society was brought into being and shaped by international politics – that it was narrowed before it was expanded.[36] Other recent works stress the importance of colonies and empire in this regard.[37] This is something of a chicken-and-egg problem for me as I am less interested in the origins of either international society or international institutions than in their present-day relationship. Bartelson makes clear that the controversy is nevertheless important, because these opposing viewpoints provide intellectual foundations for different political projects.

[34] Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, pp. 6–7.

[35] Bull, *Anarchical Society*; Bull and Watson, *Expansion of Civil Society*; Vincent, *Human Rights and International Relations*; Linklater and Suganami, *English School of International Relations*; Wight, *Systems of States*.

[36] Bartelson, "Short Circuits" and "Towards a Genealogy of 'Society' in International Relations."

[37] Keal, *European Conquest and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*; Pagden, *Lord of All the World*.

The concept of society originated in a domestic context and dates back only to the eighteenth century. It reflects a growing awareness in Britain of the emergence of a social order independent of the state that appeared to be governed by its own rules. This is hinted at in the writings of John Locke but was not extensively theorized until the late eighteenth century.[38] In Germany, Hegel described civil society as *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, a space, outside the authority of church and state, dominated by commercial relations.[39] More recently, Ernest Gellner described it as the social space between the tyranny of kin and the tyranny of kings.[40]

In comparative politics and international relations, some theorists classify countries on the basis of the relative strength of their states and civil societies and use the resulting typology for purposes of explanation or prediction.[41] Even in societies with strong states, like France and China, civil society still exists and influences behavior. In China, there was no tradition of civil society until quite recently. Since Confucian times, state and society were regarded as identical, and "higher" intellectuals (*gaoji zhishifenzi*) were taught to identify with the state and serve it. This tradition was continued by the Communists, albeit in much revised form.[42] In April and May 1989, one of the slogans of protestors in Tiananmen Square was "We love our country, but we hate our government." The distinction between government and party and both of them and society has since taken deeper roots among Chinese intellectuals.[43]

In Britain, in the mid-eighteenth century, society still referred to associations that brought like-minded people together. It also had a contractual connotation and only gradually came to describe a polity. In the early nineteenth century, society began to assume an autonomous

[38] Dunn, "Contemporary Political Significance of John Locke's Conception of Civil Society"; Oz-Salzburger, "Civil Society in the Scottish Enlightenment"; Baker, "Enlightenment and the Institution of Society."

[39] Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*; Jones, "Hegel and the Economics of Civil Society."

[40] Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty*, pp. 7–8.

[41] Gordon, "Domestic Conflict and the Origins of the First World War"; Chickering and Haley, "Strong Society, Weak State"; Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States*.

[42] Schwartz, "Primacy of the Political Order in East Asian Societies"; Ng-Quinn, "National Identity in Premodern China"; Hunt, "Chinese National Identity and the Strong State"; Reilly, *Strong Society, Smart State*.

[43] Goldman, Link, and Wei, "China's Intellectuals in the Deng Era."

existence in peoples' minds, an understanding that is widespread today. In Jane Austen novels, characters find themselves enmeshed in society but feel alienated from it. In Britain and elsewhere in Western Europe, society increasingly came to be understood as having its own laws, although many commentators observed that changes in its manners and customs could ultimately be attributed to individuals.[44] For this to happen, these practices had to be emulated by others. This understanding coincided with recognition of the inner or reflective self, and with it the tension between reflective and social selves.[45] In Britain, eighteenth-century heroines stretched the limits of freedom. Their Victorian successors directed their energies toward containment and self-management.[46] Most nineteenth-century continental novels treat society as a dominant and tend to restrain their characters for the sake of the social order.

Victorian attitudes toward society find an echo in theoretical understandings of the international system. In the postwar era, American realists and liberals developed paradigms in which international politics and capitalism were understood to function according to their own laws. This created tensions – consider the security dilemma – between state preferences and system imperatives. Like Jane Austen and her successors, these theorists urged states to discipline themselves and act in accord with political and economic "laws." Realism's appeal to self-help in response to anarchy was matched with liberalism's emphasis on free trade and investment and balanced budgets with regard to the world economy. The latter found institutional expression in the so-called Washington Consensus, and many debtor nations were coerced into implementing its dictates.

As Felix Berenskoetter notes, most constructivists appear to accept the power of society to shape identity, and correspondingly downplay the possibility of self-fashioning. Ontological security, the dominant identity-driven research program in international relations, is positively Victorian in its emphasis on the ways in which state identities shape foreign policy and the punishment possibly in store for leaders who act at odds with these identities. I urge us to reject such a

[44] Lynch, *Economy of Character*, pp. 107–51; Armstrong, *How Novels Think*, pp. 7, 16–18, 43–59.
[45] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1.
[46] Armstrong, *How Novels Think*, pp. 54–56, 79–80.

conceptually cramped and empirically dubious framework in favor of a more complex one that acknowledges the strength of society, but also the quasi-independent behavior of actors. We need to address the origins of state identities, not take them as a given, and analyze the circumstances in which they change, evolve, and rise and fall in importance, and the mechanisms – domestic and international – responsible for these changes. Finally, we must develop more nuanced understandings of relationship between state identifications – they are always multiple – and behavior. I suspect that they will be found to be often mutually constitutive.

Domestic and regional societies – and today, domestic, regional, and international societies – interact and influence one another in important and diverse ways. Since ancient times, philosophers have debated the feasibility of a society that spanned political entities. For Aristotle, society was coterminous with the city-state; he considered Babylon too populous to qualify as a society.[47] The Stoics and Cicero were more open to the concept of a universal society but thought it had very significant limitations.[48] Humanist and post-humanist writers of the Renaissance and early modern Europe conceived of international society in even thinner terms than had Aristotle. Alberico Gentili argued that it completely lacked the levels of friendship and self-sacrifice that made domestic societies robust.[49]

In today's world, states and their peoples befriend other states and peoples, but we have only limited examples of willingness to accept major costs to preserve others – as the current refugee crisis sadly demonstrates.[50] Nevertheless, the most important distinction between domestic societies, on the one hand, and their regional and international counterparts, on the other, is the greater ability of the former to shape the identifications and behavior of actors through socialization. Domestic societies are also more effective in enforcing practices through shaming and other forms of punishment. However, these are differences of degree more than they are of kind. Regional and international societies constitute actors, establish and legitimize the roles

[47] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1276a25.
[48] See Cicero, *De Amicitia*, V. 19–20; *De Officis*, III. vi. 28 on the greater weakness of international society.
[49] Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, pp. 36–50.
[50] See Berenskoetter, "Friends, There Are No Friends?" on friendship in international relations.

they perform, and thus significantly affect their sense of who they are and how they should behave. There is no empirical support for Waltz's assumption, shared by Wendt, that states have preexisting identities and create international society through their interactions only to subsequently become its prisoners.[51] This is another reason why the concept of system, and its assumption of equilibrium, is inappropriate to the study of international relations.

To understand change, we need to know more about the parallel and interactive evolution of states and their societies. The most productive way to do this, I contend, is by studying national identifications and how they form, evolve, and rise and fall in importance. Along with the roles, affiliations, territories, and biographies that shape and give expression to these identifications, they are the principal mechanism that connects actors and their societies.

[51] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 397.

# 2 *Ontological Insecurity*

The ontological security research program assumes that states, like people, need stable senses of self. Most of its practitioners attribute unitary identities to states – or at least the search for them – and believe that they are achieved and maintained by foreign policy routines and biographical narratives of the state and its people.[1] These routines and identities and their related narratives are said to guide and constrain policymakers.

I take issue with how ontological security conceptualizes identity as well as the goals and consequences it attributes to it. Like people, states do not have single identities, but multiple, labile, and often conflicting identifications. States differ from people in having neither emotions nor reflective selves. They thus lack the incentives and means to mediate among the numerous identifications foisted on them by leaders, officials, media, interest groups, and intellectuals. This multiplicity gives leaders considerable leeway in their choice of policies. Their freedom is further enhanced by the fact that individual national identifications are rarely defined with any precision, making it possible for leaders to justify a wide range of policies with reference to them. For both reasons, there is no simple or direct relationship between national identifications and foreign policy.

Ontological security describes organizational routines as the principal mechanism of anxiety reduction. There is ample evidence that organizational routines serve this and other ends. Arguably, their most important function is to make it easier for those at the top to control the behavior of those beneath them. Identifications also serve many purposes. So we must be very careful to avoid giving priority to anxiety reduction in the absence of case-specific evidence.

[1] This practice does not originate with ontological security. Other international relations (IR) scholars have frequently treated national identity in the singular, including one of the first books on the subject: Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations*.

By interrogating ontological security and exposing it weak foundations, I hope to provide a conceptually richer and empirically sounder basis for the application of psychology to the study of foreign policy.

## Ontological Security

Highly respected scholars in diverse fields (e.g., Clifford Geertz, Erik Erikson, Anthony Giddens) encourage the illusion of a unified identity, as do prominent philosophers (e.g., Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor). The former see it as a source of psychological well-being and the latter as a foundation for ethics. They write in an era when our discourses reveal the near-metastasis of the word "self," which is now attached via a hyphen to an almost endless list of words. These include self-image, self-seeking, self-esteem, self-knowledge, self-consciousness, self-reference, and self-preservation, all of which have a positive valence.

The continuity assumption, so central to Locke's construction of the person, has been accepted as unproblematic by many of these scholars. Erik Erikson, arguably the most influential postwar writer on the subject of identity and the inspiration for ontological security, maintains that "[t]he conscious feeling of having a personal identity is based on two simultaneous observations: the immediate perception of one's selfsameness and continuity in time; and the simultaneous perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity."[2] Summarizing the conventional wisdom among psychiatrists and psychologists in the 1960s, Milton Rokeach noted that health professionals such as Erikson, Helen Lynd, Paul Federn, Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, and Abraham Maslow attribute much mental illness to "disturbance of the sense of identity."[3] Ever since, many therapists push addicts, child abuse survivors, and other patients to discover their "true selves" to regain the capacity for self-direction and purpose.[4] Ontological security is an extension of this project to states and international relations theory.

[2] Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle*, vol. 1, p. 22, and *Identity: Youth and Crisis*; Rogers, *On Becoming a Person*.
[3] Rokeach, *Three Christs of Ypsilanti*, p. 310.
[4] Rice, *Disease of One's Own*; Davis, "Healing and the Fragmented Self."

The social science literature is equally emphatic about the importance of identity for behavior. In 1938, Marcel Mauss wrote about the distinct Western understanding of self.[5] In 1984, Clifford Geertz described the Western self "as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action."[6] French philosopher Paul Ricoeur maintains that identity is little more than a continuously reconstructed biography.[7] For political theorist Charles Taylor, "to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become and of where we are going."[8] Alasdair MacIntyre equates our identities with our "unity of life," which is created by a coherent life story.[9] Sociologist Anthony Giddens maintains that a person's identity "is not to be found in behaviour … but in the capacity *to keep a particular narrative going* [italics in original]." This narrative cannot be "wholly fictive" but must draw on real world events to create a 'story' about the self."[10]

For Erikson, Ernst Kris, and Paul Ricoeur, self-narratives are a resource we reshape to meet psychological and social needs.[11] Giddens, by contrast, insists that autobiographies must be to some degree based on facts. He represents a tradition that extends back to Rousseau and his belief that individual uniqueness is rooted in diverse life experiences. These modern authorities are mute on the subject of how we can create stories of ourselves that capture our uniqueness and continuity in the face of the knowledge that such narratives are eminently malleable in response to social cues. If our autobiographies evolve to suit our social and psychological needs, we cannot characterize them as either continuous or reality-based. This is equally true of organizations and states, whose pasts are continually rewritten and identities reshaped to accommodate present needs. Self-identifications change in importance and substance and the boundaries distinguishing nationalities from one another are fluid. Consider how the established states like the United States, United Kingdom, and France have developed more

[5] Mauss, "Catégorie de Personne."
[6] Geertz, "'From the Native's Point of View.'"
[7] Ricoeur, "Narrative Identity."
[8] Taylor, *Sources of Self*, pp. 47.
[9] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 201.
[10] Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, pp. 54, 75.
[11] Erikson, *Childhood and Society*; Ricoeur, "Narrative Identity."

inclusive identities in the postwar era, but also how these new narratives of identifications are resisted by substantial parts of their populations.[12]

Ontological security was pioneered by R. D. Laing, but given a wider audience by Anthony Giddens, who reformulated it in his theory of structuration.[13] Drawing more on the work of Erving Goffman and Erikson than on Laing, Giddens contends that people need to reduce anxiety by developing confidence in their understandings of the physical and social world and the patterns of responses they provide. The largely routinized nature of social intercourse, he insists, helps people structure their identities and enhance their capacity for agency, and for these reasons becomes a powerful component of their security system. People suffer acute anxiety when their routines are disrupted by novel or critical situations.[14]

Ontological security for Giddens refers to one's "fundamental sense of safety in the world and includes a basic trust in other people." Trust is necessary to avoid anxiety. It provides a sense of self-confidence and "a protection against present and future threat and dangers." Giddens describes ontological insecurity as a feature of the modern world, where economic and political development did away with protective small communities. Individuals feel bereft in a larger, competitive and mobile environment in which they "lack psychological support and the sense of security provided by more traditional settings."[15]

Many constructivist scholars are attracted to Giddens's formulation of identity. Like realists, they emphasize the threatening and unpredictable nature of the international environment and argue that it heightens the need states have for strong identities and biographical continuity.[16] Consistent concepts of self are supposedly generated and

[12] Theiss-Morse, *Who Counts as an American?*; Kessler and McKenna, *Gender*; Ortner and Whitehead, *Sexual Meanings*; Money, *Gay, Straight, and In-Between*; Feinstein, *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*.

[13] Laing, *Divided Self*, ch. 3.

[14] See Giddens, *Constitution of Society*, pp. 50–51, 86, 375, *Consequences of Modernity*, pp. 92–100 and *Modernity and Self-Identity*, pp. 36, 39–40; Rotter, "Generalized Expectancies for Internal vs. External Control of Reinforcement," for a similar argument.

[15] Giddens, *Consequences of Modernity*, p. 39.

[16] Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics" and "Ontological Security in World Politics and Implications for the Study of European Security"; Roe, "Value of Positive Security"; Steele, "Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity"; Smith, *National Identity*.

maintained in part through foreign policy routines. Officials in turn look to identities and related routines to formulate and justify foreign policies. Policies at odds with them and the values they encode can bring shame and political punishment on officials.[17]

A growing body of research builds on these assumptions. Brent Steele contends that the British decision to stay neutral in the American Civil War was not determined by security or material interests, but by the shame British leaders would have felt if they had offered support to the slave-owning South.[18] To preserve ontological security, states will sometimes pursue policies sharply in conflict with their political interests. Ayse Zarakol makes a convincing argument that this is the reason Turkey and Japan refuse to face up to the genocide and war crimes they have committed.[19] Felix Berenskoetter and Bastian Giegerich explore the search for ontological security and document how the Federal Republic of Germany sought international friendships and common pursuit of shared goals as a means of constructing an identity.[20] Stefano Guzzini and his collaborators make a similar argument for post–Cold War Europe. They show how geopolitics has undergone a revival in countries that suffer from "ontological anxiety" because their former roles are no longer relevant to contemporary circumstances.[21] Ontological security has also been invoked to explain security communities, restructuring of foreign policies after World War II and the Cold War, military intervention and nonintervention, ethnic conflict, internal threats, migration, and the success of discourses of terrorism.[22]

[17] Huysmans, "Security!"; McSweeny, *Security, Identity and Interests*; Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics" and "Ontological Security in World Politics and Implications for the Study of European Security"; Steele, "Self-Identity and the IR State"; Berenskoetter, "Creating (In)Security from Within."

[18] Steele, "Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity."

[19] Zarakol, "Ontological (In)Security and State Denial of Historical Crimes."

[20] Berenskoetter and Giegerich, "From NATO to ESD."

[21] Guzzini, *Return of Geopolitics in Europe?*

[22] Croft, *Securitizing Islam*; Huysmans, *Politics of Insecurity*; Kinnvall, *Globalization and Religious Nationalism in India*; Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking, *Political Psychology of Globalization*; Lupovici, "Ontological Dissonance"; Krolikowski, "State Personhood and Ontological Security in India"; Berenskoetter, "Gefährliche Freundschaft"; Berenskoetter and Giegerich, "From NATO to ESD"; Kay, "*Ontological Security* and Peace-Building in Northern *Ireland*."

Jennifer Mitzen makes the most far-reaching claims for ontological security. She contends that states become locked in antagonistic relationships because "they would rather be assured of their enmity with another state than challenge the cognitive stability inherent within that relationship."[23] Why then have numerous states disengaged from long-standing antagonisms and sought improved relations with former adversaries? In the postwar era we have witnessed Anglo-German, Egyptian-Israeli, Sino-American, and U.S.-Soviet rapprochements. Ontological security, as formulated by Giddens and Mitzen, only looks at the costs of acting at odds with identities and routines. This is a one-sided analysis. It ignores the costs of continuing conflict and the anxiety associated with the risk of war. In many circumstances these costs equal or exceed the psychological cost of remaking enemy images. Mitzen's formulation further implies that there is no way of reconciling political and psychological goals. In practice, there is considerable room for maneuver, as leaders committed to either conflict or accommodation have frequently convinced their publics that their policies are consistent with national identifications and the national interest.

## National Identity Interrogated

Ontological security rests on the premise that states have, or can have, something resembling a singular and consistent identity. This is no more possible for political units than it is for individuals. For people, the construction of self is a social and individual process, with psychologists and philosophers generally putting emphasis on the former. The choice, construction, and importance of individual identifications are unquestionably influenced by society, and much of politics consists of efforts to shape individual identities as a means of mobilizing support.

For states, identity construction is political in a more direct sense. Officials and other actors attempt to impose identities on states consistent with their political goals or psychological needs. They do so through discourses, texts, monuments, commemorations, and other means that have the potential to construct or sustain official and collective memories. Identities and their associated narratives are almost

[23] Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics."

invariably contested. This often happens within a political elite, and in democracies it can involve a wide range of other actors as well. In contrast to individuals, there is no "I" to attempt to adjudicate among these conflict pressures and claims. The closest states have to an "I" are courts and legislative assemblies that at times adjudicate among these conflicting identifications and their representations. A case in point is the renewed controversy over the Confederate flag that has flown outside the South Carolina state house for more than five decades. For some whites it was a symbol of their Southern heritage; for most Blacks it represented racism and opposition to civil rights. In 2015, South Carolina's House of Representatives and Senate, supported by its governor, voted to remove the flag and move it to a museum in the aftermath of the racially motivated killing of members of an African American church.[24]

As the South Carolina example indicates, identity conflicts within states can become acute and tend to focus on controversial symbols. Like schizophrenic or multipolar people, states can be divided by conflicts between or among seemingly irreconcilable identifications. The identifications in contestation arise from diverse domestic constituencies, but also from external actors. Contemporary France, Germany, and Russia offer examples that I explore in subsequent chapters. Most individuals try to assert some control over their multiple identifications and often try to convince themselves that they are unitary and consistent beings. States are largely passive receptacles for the multiple identities and biographical narratives imposed on them.

State identities – more properly, multiple identifications – serve instrumental ends for those who advance and propagate them, and arguably for the wider public. These needs are diverse and by no means limited to anxiety reduction and ontological security. Over the decades, psychologists and political scientists have posited that "identities" can provide meaning to life, buttress self-esteem, encourage predictability of behavior, bring material benefits, promote physical security, and enable social relationships and intimacy.[25] We know little about the conditions in which self-identifications serve particular

[24] Richard Fausset and Alan Blinder, "South Carolina Settles Its Decades-Old Dispute over a Confederate Flag," *New York Times*, 9 July 2015, p. 1.

[25] Pioneering attempts to explain state identity in terms of personal needs or to explain national identity include Lasswell, *Psychopathology and Politics*;

needs or those in which any of them have priority.[26] The problem is more complicated when we turn to collective identities. Students of nationalism who stress its psychological basis and possible rewards generally fail to identify relevant mechanisms connecting psyche to ideology.[27]

There is no empirical evidence that ontological security is a primary goal of either individuals or states. There is even less reason to think that national self-identifications are the most important determinant in shaping and constraining foreign policy, as opposed to one of many considerations that come into play. The best that can be said is that policies advocated for whatever reason are more likely to gain support when they can be sold as consistent with and supportive of one or more widely accepted state identifications. The power of government and media is such, and the susceptibility of most publics to manipulation sufficiently great, that many, if not most, policies can be defended successfully with reference to at least one important state identification. American exceptionalism is one of the most fundamental features of the country's narrative and a key component of many national identifications. According to Ron Krebs,

> American Exceptionalism has been sufficiently flexible to have sustained policies that are diametrically opposed – from George Washington's valedictory warning against "artificial ties" and foreign entanglements, legitimated with reference to European moral corruption and the priority of maintaining America's purity, to Woodrow Wilson's crusade to remake world order, similarly legitimated with reference to America's superiority, but now confident that values would stream only east across the Atlantic.[28]

We must also consider the possibility that publics are sometimes willing to conspire tacitly with leaders to implement initiatives at

Adorno, Frankel, Brunswick, Levinson and Sanford, *Authoritarian Personality*; Mead, *And Keep Your Powder*; Gorder, *People of Great Russia*; Erikson, *Childhood and Society*; Riesman, Denny and Glazer, *Lonely Crowd*; Braudel, *Identity of France*; Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*. See also Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity, and International Relations*.

[26] Kowert, "National Identity."

[27] Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*; Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

[28] Krebs, *Narrative and the Making of US Security*, p. 14. On this point, see also Osgood, *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations*.

odds with their understandings of what their country represents or what they stand for as people. This is most likely to happen when perceived security or material needs appear to require ethically questionable or unacceptable behavior. To support such initiatives, publics require rationalizations that appear at least superficially to square their country's behavior with its values. This can also be helpful or necessary to assuage the concerns of government officials. The Central Intelligence Agency turned to outside psychologists to justify sleep deprivation, waterboarding, and other forms of interrogation to their employees.[29]

When individuals engage in perceptual sleights of hand to justify unethical behavior, they may encounter criticism from family members or peers. When a majority does this in support of a national policy, they are more likely to reinforce one another in their illusions and to ostracize critics. This phenomenon may help explain why open hostility is often displayed against those who point out contradictions between national policies and seeming national values. The Johnson administration convinced an initially wary public to support military intervention in Vietnam. Before the 1968 Tet Offensive, only a minority opposed the war, and the administration and its allies effectively stigmatized them as "hippies," "pinkos," and "draft dodgers."[30]

Contrary to the claims of ontological security, policies at odds with national identifications rarely lead to electoral punishment of leaders responsible for them. Daryl Bem's self-perception theory argues that how we behave shapes our self-understandings.[31] If the arrow of influence points in both directions, as Bem suggests, behavior at odds with values, if repetitive in nature, can alter conceptions of state and self. Consider the transformation of the United States from an isolationist power into a self-proclaimed hegemon, and the ways in which discourses developed to justify this transition. Striking

[29] "US torture report: psychologists should no longer aid military, group says," *Guardian*, 11 July 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jul/11/cia-torture-doctors-psychologists-apa-prosecution; James Risen, "Outside Psychologists Shielded U.S. Torture Program, Report Finds, *New York Times*, 10 July 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/11/us/psychologists-shielded-us-torture-program-report-finds.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=first-column-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news (both accessed 12 July 2015).

[30] Lester, *Johnson Administration' Response to Anti-Vietnam War Activities*.

[31] Bem, "Self-Perception" and "Self- Perception Theory."

manifestations include post–Cold War efforts by neoconservatives to convince Americans that their country is an empire, and attempts by realists and liberals to justify hegemony on the grounds that it is essential to global order. During the long Cold War, American self-understandings became closely connected with hegemony and it became a source of pride to citizens and leaders alike, and this despite its illusionary nature.[32]

## Why Identity?

Ontological security assumes that states have single dominant identities. This is no more plausible for political units than it is for individuals. Both have multiple identifications that evolve in character and relative importance. This multiplicity is beneficial to the extent that it allows different communities, groups, and people to construct narratives appropriate to their political and psychological aspirations and needs. It is counterproductive when it generates culture wars, because opposing factions regard the national identifications advanced by others as threatening to their self-esteem or security. If the need for ontological security motivates the quest for a national identity this quest can effectively undermine this goal.

Competing national identifications need not cause acute conflict when they share enough in common to sustain cooperation for the general welfare. They may allow leaders to build coalitions that include seemingly opposed groups. Franklin Roosevelt assembled such a coalition to win the 1932 U.S. presidential election and introduce the New Deal. The Democratic Party was reconstituted as a coalition of Southern whites, Northern liberals, diverse ethnic groups, labor unions, and African Americans.[33] The constituents of this coalition had different understandings of America, what the Democratic Party represented, and how country and party reflected their self-identifications. They downplayed these differences and emphasized their common economic interests.[34] The Roosevelt coalition broke down in the 1960s, when civil rights and the Vietnam War highlighted these cleavages by

[32] Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*, chs. 1 and 3. See Jackson, "Culture, Identity and Hegemony" on the war against terrorism as a continuation of Cold War identity politics.

[33] Key, *Southern Politics*; Katznelson, *Fear Itself*.

[34] See ibid. on the trade-offs involved.

bringing new issues to the fore. As this example indicates, political agency can intensify or mute the tensions arising from different understandings of the nation. Any theory that fails to take it into account can offer at best only a first cut into a problem.

Ontological security maintains that national identities serve important psychological needs. This claim is unproblematic, as self-identifications are universal to human beings. They would not be if they did not satisfy a range of psychological and instrumental needs. Ontological security makes more specific and less defensible claims: it describes anxiety reduction as a first-order human goal and stipulates that individual and state identities are the principal means toward this end.

One way to assess these claims is to consider the diverse ends self-identifications appear to serve. Best documented is the need for status and self-esteem. Psychologists have demonstrated that membership in high-status groups confers self-esteem and that people seek to enhance the standing of their group or join higher-status ones.[35] Fans whose sports teams regularly lose are more likely than others to switch allegiances.[36]

If high-status groups confer esteem, membership in low-status groups and exclusion from higher-status ones foster humiliation and lower self-esteem. In Orhan Pamuk's novel, *Snow*, Blue, a Muslim fundamentalist, tells Ka, a Westernized Turk: "Most of the time it's not the Europeans who belittle us. What happens when we look at them is that we belittle ourselves."[37] Each of these Pamuk characters chooses a different route to self-esteem, and neither ends up happy with his choice. Such dilemmas are as commonplace in the contemporary Middle East as elsewhere in the world. Ayse Zarakol makes a more general case for the phenomenon of low self-esteem. She argues that Western stigmatization of Russia, Turkey, and Japan as backward countries was a source of national humiliation and provided a strong incentive to modernize.[38] It also engendered suspicion, even hostility, when one's accomplishments are recognized in the West. Turkish

[35] Ellemers and Barreto, "Impact of Relative Group Status"; Luhtanen and Crocker, "A Collective Self-Esteem Scale."
[36] Castano, Yzerbyt, and Paladino, "Advantages of Reifying the Ingroup."
[37] Pamuk, *Snow*, p. 75.
[38] Bache, George, and Bulmer, *Politics in the European*, pp. 549–50; Zarakol, *After Defeat*.

novelist Elif Shafrak contends: "The more you are read in the Western world, the more you are hated in your motherland."[39]

Membership in high-status groups can be a vehicle for increasing wealth and mobility. Attending an elite school or church allows one to make useful social and professional contacts. Degrees from Ivy League schools open doors as do the contacts one makes while a student. Yale University awarded John F. Kennedy, a Harvard graduate, an honorary doctorate in 1962. Yale was famous for seeding New York banks, law firms, and other prestige professions with its graduates. Upon receiving his degree, the courageous president announced to the assembled crowd of Elis that he now had the best of two possible worlds: a Harvard education and a Yale degree.[40] Karl W. Deutsch characterizes nationalism as an "implied claim for privilege" in a world dominated by group competition for wealth and standing. By affiliating with a nationality, individuals help the group advance its goals and benefit in material and psychological ways from its success.[41] Much of the enthusiasm in Eastern Europe for joining the European Union in the aftermath of the Cold War was fueled by aspirations of this kind.[42]

Identity can enhance physical security. Individuals have strong incentives to associate with groups to protect themselves from human predation. Gangs serve this function in communities where the police are incapable of maintaining order. Security concerns were probably a core motive for the formation of tribes and clans, which became the basis of hunter-gatherer societies. In historical times, people have found it attractive to associate with or assimilate into politically dominant groups, especially when they feel vulnerable. In countries where genocide or ethnic cleansing is a possibility, Donald Horowitz argues that one's identity can be a matter of life and death.[43] Reflecting the consensus among constructivists, Paul Kowert contends that the survival of states requires a national identity that builds solidarity among

[39] Susanna Ruskin, "Interview with Elif Shafak," *Guardian Review*, 6 December 2014, p. 14.
[40] Author present at the event.
[41] Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, p. 52.
[42] Mykulanynets, "Whither V4?: EU Entry as a Turning Point in Visegrad Cooperation," Visegrad Group, 7 January 2014, http://www.visegradgroup.eu/students-section/whither-v4-eu-entry-as (accessed 7 January 2014); Dimitrova and Pridham, "International Actors and Democracy Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe."
[43] Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

their citizens.[44] Following the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, Eastern European states sought to restructure their identities in a manner that made them more acceptable to the European Union. Membership in the NATO was seen by many as necessary to protect against the possibility of future Russian assertiveness.[45]

Terror management theory builds on the Heideggerian assumption that identity is a means of coping with mortality. The inevitability of death would give rise to paralyzing terror in the absence of psychological mechanisms to cope with it. The most prominent of these mechanisms is a cultural system of meaning, or worldview, that imposes meaning, order, stability, and continuity on life. It confers symbolic immortality on those who perform well the social roles derived from this worldview or live up to its behavioral standards. Terror Management Theory has inspired considerable research, much of it lending support to the claim that culture is an important buffer for anxiety associated with death.[46]

Identifications enable relationships and intimacy. They create bonds and expectations among people who become part a group. Group membership also brings people into closer contact, thereby facilitating relationships and intimacy. Group solidarity may be most important for people in low-status and marginal groups. American examples include the Amish, orthodox Jews, and recent immigrants to almost any country who congregate in the same neighborhood and develop all kinds of mutual support networks.

Self-identifications serve multiple emotional and instrumental ends and can be greatly strengthened by the social relationships and practices they promote. People can accordingly find it difficult, perhaps inconceivable, to imagine themselves as someone else and come to believe that renouncing their "identity" would be paramount to counterfeiting themselves. Such people are likely to defend what they

[44] Kowert, "National Identity."

[45] Mykulanynets, "Whither V4?"; Dimitrova and Pridham, "International Actors and Democracy Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe."

[46] Greenberg, "Evidence of a Terror Management Function of Cultural Icons"; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon, "Causes and Consequences of a Need for Self-Esteem"; Greenberg et al., "Evidence for Terror Management II; Greenberg et al., "Role of Consciousness and Accessibility of Death-Related Thoughts in Mortality Salience Effects"; Greenberg et al., "Role of Effects"; Greenberg, Solomon, and Pyszczynski, "Terror Management Theory of Self-Esteem and Social Behaviour."

consider to be their identities even when it risks, or actually involves, external punishment. Across the millennia, many religious and ethnic groups have resisted conversion efforts even in the face of expulsion or death.

It is evident that identifications do much more than reduce anxiety. As people have multiple identifications that serve multiple ends, they not infrequently must make trade-offs among them, as not all goals or self-identifications are mutually reinforcing. Scholars working in the ontological security research program need to specify when anxiety reduction is the most important need, or at the very least a pressing one, and when self-identifications, in contrast to other vehicles or mechanisms, best serve this end. This kind of specification is probably unattainable for all the reasons the positivist search for predictive generalizations fails. The more feasible alternative is to recognize the context-dependent nature of this question and to attempt to document it within case studies. I return to this problem in the next chapter.

## Indefensible Assumptions

Some formulations of ontological security come close to treating states as people. They project psychological needs onto them like cognitive consistency and anxiety reduction. They further maintain that states require consistent concepts of self that are sustained through their foreign policies.[47] Other scholars retain the individual as the unit of analysis and theorize about how the psychological well-being of officials and ordinary citizens is affected by national identities.

Treating states as people is deeply problematic.[48] This fiction is accepted by international law, but only involves recognition of a corporation or state as a responsible agent. Prominent international relations theorists routinely refer to the "motives," "beliefs," "feelings," even the "personalities" of states.[49] This is for the most part a linguistic

[47] Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics" and "Ontological Security in World Politics and Implications for the Study of European Security"; Roe, "Value of Positive Security"; Steele, "Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity." Also Wendt, "State as Person in International Theory" and "*Social Theory* as Cartesian Science."

[48] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, pp. 18–19.

[49] See Vincent, *Theories of the State*, ch. 6, on the state as a legal person and its critics. See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 91–92, on the survival motives of states; Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*,

convention. States are units without psyches and emotions. It makes no sense to speak of their psychological needs, especially anxiety reduction. The people who govern, represent, support, and simply live in states have such needs, and it is perfectly proper to refer to them. Officials and citizens can project some of these needs onto their states, and when they do, their self-esteem may rise and fall with their successes and failures. Not everyone is an avid sports fan or, if they are, deeply committed to a team. The same is true of citizens. There is great variation in the centrality of national identification and in the needs, instrumental and emotional, people expect it to fulfill. Here, too, we must look for evidence of strong identification projection, not simply assume it.

A key incentive for ontological security's treatment of states as persons is to account for their reliance on routines. This opens a can of worms. The first wiggly creature to crawl out is alternate explanations. Organizational theorists have long argued that routines are necessary to provide guidance and sustain authority in large organizations.[50] Nuance in organizations comes close to being an oxymoron. Policy directives must be simple to succeed, and leaders put additional routines in place to limit the autonomy of those charged with enforcing them. People at the top invariably wish to maximize their power, which derives in part from the size and success of their organization and effective control over it. Here, too, routines are critical.

All organizations have routines, but some are more reliant on them by the nature of their tasks. Military mobilization, nuclear command and control, air traffic control and other transit systems, hospitals, and power plants are examples. Studies indicate that the more routinized an organization or activity, the more likely it is for operators to reach informal understandings among themselves that shortcut, even violate procedures in order to achieve the intended ends.[51] Effective organizations are accordingly characterized by a complex mix of routines, informal understandings, and innovation.

There is also considerable variation in how people respond to stress. Ontological security assumes that once people become committed to

p. 71, on state beliefs; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp. 291–94, on states as psychological persons; Guzzini, "Framework of Analysis."

[50] March and Simon, *Organizations*, ch. 6; Becker, "Organizational Routines" and *Handbook of Organizational Routines*.

[51] Perrow, *Normal Accidents*.

routines, they are unlikely to deviate from them. Historical examples abound. In August 1914, Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke took refuge in his army's mobilization plan and refused to consider the possibility of sending the bulk of his forces against Russia instead of France. However, the general in charge of railways provides a counterexample; he insisted, contrary to Moltke's claim, that it was possible to reroute German forces to the east against Russia.[52] As this example indicates, there are always people willing to jettison routines in emergencies in the hope of coping more effectively with challenges. Variation is undoubtedly a function of personality and circumstance. Giddens's formulation of ontological security predicts only one kind of response, and an extreme one at that.

Giddens makes a more embracing claim about routines: they are responses to the uncertainty, lack of roots and threats to life and livelihood associated with modernity. He offers no evidence that the modern world is more uncertain and threatening than prior eras were. A case could be made for the opposite, as modernity has all but done away with famines and encourages and allows more freedom and autonomy than premodern, more hierarchical societies in which people performed a limited number of largely assigned roles and upward mobility and initiative of all kinds were more difficult. Routines are most evident in large organizations, and they are, with few exceptions, the product of modernity. Here, Max Weber is more persuasive than Giddens is. Nevertheless, since Weber's time, there have been important changes in how organizations function. The model emerging in the postindustrial world is of more flexible, less hierarchical and routinized organizations able to innovate more effectively and respond more rapidly to change.[53]

More fundamentally, Giddens's distinction between modernity and what preceded it is a questionable shibboleth long peddled by sociologists. Modernity defines itself as distinct from and superior to the past, and those who invoke it almost invariably use it in a binary way. In sociology, it finds an influential statement in Durkheim's distinction between mechanical and organic solidarity. It is based on the idea that the replacement of the collectivity by the individual as the object of ritual attention is one of the hallmarks of the transition from

[52] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, pp. 235–42.
[53] Weber, *Success of Open Source*.

traditional to modern societies.[54] Almost all of the differences between the present and the past are better described as degrees of kind, not of difference. This is certainly true of what we call identity. In the *Politics and Ethics of Identity* I demonstrate how interiority, which Kant and Hegel define as a hallmark of modernity, was present in the ancient world and should be considered a transhistorical phenomenon.[55] Greek and Roman texts indicate that interiority and reflexivity were to some degree always present among human beings, although for cultural reasons did not find much expression in ancient literature and art. Simple comparisons between them and their modern counterparts are accordingly misleading.[56]

Modernity has undeniably created novel problems for people. At the outset of the book I argued that the deepening of interiority and the proliferation of roles produced greater alienation, and with it a search for self-definition and a fixation on identity. Indeed, there was no concept of identity prior to John Locke. Modernity produced what Heinz Kohut nicely calls a "reshuffling the self."[57] It compelled people to find new ways of defining themselves, which helps explain the rise of nationalism and class consciousness. Alienation found its most thoughtful exploration in fin-de-siècle Vienna in the psychoanalysis of Freud, the novels of Schnitzler and the poetry of Hugo von Hofmannsthal.[58] Hofmannsthal followed Schnitzler in believing that Europe faced a crisis because of the growing awareness that what previous generations took as unquestioned rules of ethics and behavior lack foundations, consistency, and support. Society rested only on *das Gleitende* the moving, slipping, sliding.[59] Friedrich Nietzsche and Max Weber made a similar diagnosis and explored its cultural and epistemological implications.

Modernity aggravated a particular kind of problem, not having to do with stress, but with angst arising from rejection of traditional beliefs and cynicism about, if not scorn for, the existing political and

[54] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and *Division of Labor in Society*.
[55] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 8.
[56] For a contrary argument, see Onuf, Nicholas, "Recognition and the Constitution of Epochal Change."
[57] Kohut, *Analysis of the Self*.
[58] See especially Schnitzler's *Reigen* (1896) about the power of eros to dissolve hierarchy, and *Paracelsus* (1897) and *Frau Berta Garlan* (1900).
[59] Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, pp. 19–20.

social order. The quest for identity was driven not only by the desire for autonomy but a desperate search for foundations for one's beliefs, behavior, and aspirations. Robert Musil's *Man Without Qualities* prefigures contemporary psychological research in exposing the fallacy of the Romantic imperative to step back from society and look inside oneself for answers. Stripped of all social roles and affiliations, its principal character becomes a bundle of raw passions guided by instrumental reason and unconstrained by Freud's superego.[60]

The quest for ontological security is a response to a real problem but hardly its solution. It is the latest repackaging of the Romantic illusion that people have independent inner selves waiting to be discovered and developed and relied on for a safe anchorage in the stormy sea of life. It is understandable that Hollywood and the gurus of pop culture peddle such metaphysical pap, but not that scholars of international relations take it seriously. The search for ontological security is doomed to failure, and the belief that people or states can find it flies in the face of psychological reality.

The second worm to emerge is cause and effect. Advocates of ontological security assert that governmental officials, media, and intellectuals create biographical narratives for states to justify their foreign policies. As these biographies serve important functions for citizens, most notably anxiety reduction, policies at odds with them and the values they instantiate allegedly arouse shame on the part of officials and opposition from the public. The prospect of internal and external punishment encourages officials to pursue policies consistent with their state's identity.[61]

This formulation assumes that states have unitary identities. But they have multiple identifications that rest on multiple, and often incompatible, narratives that provide justifications for opposing policies. To turn to identities for political or ethical guidance is to invite incoherence. Some constructivists recognize this problem. Maja Zehfuss argues that identity formation is an active and ongoing project; one cannot essentialize identities or take a snapshot of one and use it to explain

[60] Musil, *Man Without Qualities*.

[61] Huysmans, "Security!"; McSweeny, *Security, Identity and Interests*; Miztzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics," and "Ontological Security in World Politics and Implications for the Study of European Security"; Manners, "European [Security] Union; Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, p. 3; Berenskoetter, "Creating (In)Security from Within."

behavior over time.[62] Alice Cooper offers as an example the debate in Germany over NATO intervention in the former Yugoslavia. Arguments for and against turned on two different readings of German identity and the ways they invoked Nazi Germany as a negative role model. These readings led to two different policy lessons – no more war and no more Auschwitz – that could be mobilized to support or oppose intervention.[63] Brent Steele acknowledges that state interests and identities are always up for grabs and can promote intense national debates.[64]

As noted earlier, conflicts over identifications and their narratives can become so acute that national identity becomes a source of anxiety rather than its palliative. Close identification by many people with different and irreconcilable narratives intensifies internal conflict and makes it less likely that anyone will feel secure. This problem arises for states as well. Stefano Guzzini warns that "if identity is heterogeneous – and it usually is – than almost anything goes." Any outcome, he reasons, can be explained by "cherry-picking the part of the identity that fits the story, just as with 'national interest.' "[65]

Multiple identities and their fluid nature create considerable leeway for officials with regard to foreign policy. It is always easier to justify a policy when there are at least several narratives to which to appeal. This multiplicity also makes it harder to build any kind of national consensus, because almost any policy will be seen by some segment of the community as at odds with its understanding of the nation. British Prime Minister David Cameron's effort in 2013–14 to repatriate powers to the United Kingdom from the EU is a case in point. They rest on one understanding of British identity and are rejected outright by people who subscribe to different national identifications that see Britain as part of Europe.[66]

[62] Zehfus, "Constructivism and Identity."
[63] Cooper, "When Just Causes Conflict with Acceptable Means."
[64] Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, pp. 17–18.
[65] Guzzini, "*Framework of Analysis*."
[66] Robert Winnett, "David Cameron vows to reclaim EU powers amid Tory rebellion, 23 October 2011, *Daily Telegraph*, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/8844572/David-Cameron-vows-to-reclaim-EU-powers-amid-looming-Tory-rebellion.html (accessed 28 September 2013); "Nick Clegg Attacks David Cameron's Plan to Repatriate EU Powers," *Guardian*, 1 November 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2012/nov/01/nick-clegg-david-cameron-eu (accessed 28 September 2013);

Even a single national identity would rarely be constraining in the way that Giddens and Mitzen maintain. Leaders of democracies, let alone dictatorships, have been quite successful in selling policies to their publics that are at odds with principles to which they and their supporters are publicly committed. Coups against freely elected governments, support of right-wing murderous dictatorships, and, more recently, rendition of terror suspects, detention of others without trial in Guantanamo, and listening in on the cell phone conversations of allied leaders are policies that should be difficult to reconcile with most Americans' understandings of the country's identity and foreign policy principles. Contrary to claims of ontological security, historical evidence indicates that leaders in democratic countries are more likely to be punished at the polls for failed policies than for those at odds with prevalent understandings of national identity. Consider Truman's steep political decline as a result of a stalemated Korean War, Lyndon Johnson's defeat in the New Hampshire primary following the Tet Offensive and pubic recognition that victory was unlikely in the Vietnam, and Jimmy Carter's loss of political support after embassy personnel in Tehran were taken hostage, and worse still, when the mission to liberate them failed. To be sure, some of the opposition to the Johnson and Nixon administrations was from people who were morally outraged by their policies in Indochina. But it is well to remember that the decisive shift in American opinion about Vietnam did not come until after the 1968 Tet Offensive, four years into massive American intervention.

The final worm, a large night crawler, is the most fundamental assertion of ontological security: that national identities and their narratives reduce anxiety. States have no emotions and cannot suffer from anxiety, so the agents in question must be people. Giddens and his followers provide no definition of anxiety and offer no empirical evidence for their claim. They take it as a given and use it to account for diverse forms of behavior.

Denis McShane, "Is Mrs. Merkel About to Sign Up to David Cameron's Dreams," 9 June 2013, *Social Europe*, http://www.social-europe.eu/2013/09/is-mrs-merkel-about-to-sign-up-to-david-camerons-eu-dreams/ (accessed 28 September 2013).

## Conclusions

Much of the research that draws on ontological security is empirically impressive. Its authors are to be commended for the interesting connections they have made between psychology and foreign policy. My critique is not being aimed at this empirical work, but at the research program with which many of these scholars identity. By reformulating its assumptions and basing them on firmer psychological and political foundations IR scholars could make a more important and persuasive contribution to the study of foreign policy and international relations.

Ontological security – or better yet, some formulation that supplants it – must make individuals or groups its unit of analysis. Its claims must be more cautious, better specified, and framed in a way to make them falsifiable. Its proponents need to tell us something about the circumstances in which people seek to reduce anxiety by clinging to routines or turning to more restrictive formulations of national identity. These are related but different processes, and it is important to theorize their relationship. At present, ontological security assumes, without any good reason or evidence, that they covary.

Proponents of ontological security need to free themselves from the illusion that states have single identities, or anything approaching them. Amir Lupovici has taken a step in this direction. He argues that states sometimes confront multiple threats to multiple components of identity, as Israel does from the Palestinians. Any serious response would force Israelis to choose among identities as policies intended to address any threat violate some of them. This dilemma creates ontological dissonance, to which the easiest psychological response is avoidance. Such an approach effectively explains Israel's response to the Second Intifada.[67] A half-century ago, I made a similar argument about the British conquest of Ireland and subsequent policies toward the Irish. Oppression of the Irish was at odds with the Christian identity of the English colonizers, so it was necessary to invent stereotypes about the Irish to overcome cognitive dissonance. Colonizers elsewhere did the same, and this is why stereotypes of colonized peoples show such remarkable uniformity.[68]

Governments to varying degrees promote national narratives that support particular constructions of national identity through

[67] Lupovici, "Ontological Dissonance."
[68] Lebow, *White Britain and Black Ireland*.

memorials, commemorations, textbooks, and other kinds of discourses. All but the most totalitarian regimes meet some resistance in imposing these formulations on their publics. In democratic states, those who constitute the policy elite are often attached to different narratives, making an official narrative difficult to construct and propagate. And any government narrative must compete with nonpublic ones sustained by civil society and collective memory. We need to acknowledge this variation and incorporate some theoretical arguments about the structure and appeal of diverse constructions of national identity and the circumstances in which they are most likely to gain adherents.

Constructivism rejects the fundamental search of mainstream social science for laws with predictive value because of the complexity of social life, the culturally bound nature of social behavior, and the importance of context. Theories and propositions are no more than starting points for explanatory narratives or forecasts that must build on idiosyncratic features of context. Even then, we must recognize the uncertainty of any causal claims and, more so, of any efforts to look into the future. The ontological security research program needs to exercise more caution and self-restraint in this connection and to avoiding aping neo-positivists in their search for master variables that often rest on unsubstantiated assumptions and are applied with a heavy hand.

# 3 *National versus Individual Identifications*

This chapter explores the similarities and differences between individual and state identities – or more accurately, the multiple identifications that constitute these so-called identities. With individuals, we can properly use the term "self-identifications" because many, if not most, of these identifications are accepted by people or originate with them. As states have no "I," they cannot accept or reject attributions made by others, but their leaders and citizens do. This difference is critical for identity formation and its consequences at the national level, where numerous actors attempt to impose identifications on their state.

National identifications are characterized by three tensions, and I devote this chapter to analyzing them and some of their foreign policy implications. The first tension is between externally imposed and internally generated identifications. It can be acute in individuals when their reflective "I" is in conflict with the social "Me." It is more complicated for states because their identity construction takes place at several levels. Diverse actors within national societies attempt to impose identifications on their states. Government officials do the same. External actors also try to shape national identifications. Conflicts occur within and across these levels.

A second tension concerns similarity and difference. Most individuals and almost all states proclaim their uniqueness. This is more illusion than reality, but a seemingly important illusion. Individuals want – perhaps need – to think of themselves and their countries as different and better than others. Self-serving definitions of this kind are an important means of building self-esteem. Our self-identifications – realistic or illusionary – derive primarily from our roles, affiliations, bodies, and the stories we construct about our individual and collective pasts. Many people perform the same roles and share the same kinds of affiliations. There are a finite number of ways of relating to our bodies, whether they are human platforms or state territories. Individuals and states accordingly share more in

common with other individuals and states than not. With respect to bodies, there is more diversity among political units than among people. When it comes to roles, states are more alike because of the more limited number of roles and ways in which they can be performed.

There is another aspect of the tension between similarity and difference worth exploring. Since Kant and Hegel, identity formation has been conceived of as separation and distinction from others. It is commonly thought to require, or at least be assisted by, negative stereotypes of those from whom we are differentiating ourselves. In international relations, this is a central contention of postmodernist scholars.[1] Research in social and child psychology calls it into question. Negative stereotypes appear to be something of a special case, most often arising when individuals or groups compete for the same scarce resources. In practice, healthy people draw closer to those from whom we are separating. Identity construction should accordingly be reconceived as a dialectical process.[2] I believe this is equally applicable at the national level. Germany is the most obvious example; it has constructed a robust and distinctive postwar identity by drawing closer to its neighbors, allowing Germans to self-identity as good Europeans.

The third tension arises from the multiple identifications that constitute individual and state identities. Here, too, there is double dynamic at work. The more roles we perform, the more likely we are to feel cross-pressured because of their different, possibly competing behavioral requirements. Since states are not reflexive, they cannot become alienated from themselves. Policymakers can suffer this tension when domestic and foreign identifications, or their policy requirements, appear to be at odds. President Lyndon Johnson knew that large-scale military intervention in Vietnam would sidetrack his domestic reform program and had a gut feeling that it would not achieve its intended goal. He did not feel confident enough in his command of foreign policy to resist the nearly uniform pleas of his advisors to commit to intervention.[3] Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates reveals that President Obama had similar misgivings about Afghanistan.[4]

[1] Campbell, *Writing Security*, p. 150; Rumelli, "Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference"; Walker, "The Double Outside of the Modern International."
[2] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, chs. 3, 8.
[3] Conversation with McGeorge Bundy, New York City, 24 April 1992.
[4] Gates, *Duty*, pp. 474–502 and 569–71.

These three tensions cut across the subnational, national, and international levels of society. They cannot be studied effectively in isolation from one another, and this precludes a neat division of chapters devoted to the domestic and international sources of identity. Instead, I approach this task by exploring the key similarities and differences between self-identifications at different levels of society, including international society.

## Social versus Self-Construction

British liberals and continental Romantics consider individual identity the product of socialization and self-fashioning. They disagree about the relative strength of the two processes. Boswell, Hume, and Mill give precedence to self-fashioning. They describe the tension between society and individuals as productive; society offers role models, allowing people to emulate them, or mix and match qualities of different people to fashion new selves. Such people in turn became possible role models for others. Society and individuals evolve through reciprocal interactions. Rousseau, Romantics, and their post structuralist descendants condemn society as corrupting and totalizing; it coerces people into assuming predetermined identities and renders the prospect of self-fashioning all but illusory.

Felix Berenskoetter observes that constructivists focus too much on the "Me" at the expense of the "I."[5] *The Politics and Ethics of Identity* puts this bias in historical perspective. I demonstrate how during the course of the nineteenth century belief in agency all but disappeared and identity came to be described as almost entirely the product of society. The writings of Marx, Durkheim, and Mead convinced many people that identities were constructed largely at the social or state level. Poststructuralists like Foucault, Lyotard, and Derrida come close to denying agency, unless it takes the form of rebellion.[6] Individual agency is nevertheless real, if constrained.

In international relations the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction. The nineteenth-century notion of a family of nations was largely supplanted by the realist conception of states as autonomous actors, constrained only by the power of other states. Powerful actors

[5] Berenskoetter, "Identity in International Relations."
[6] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1.

were understood to march to their own drumbeat. These formulations of individual and state are highly ideological and more reflective of the projects of their advocates than of the reality of domestic or international society. Agency exists in domestic society, and social conditioning operates in its regional and international counterparts. To be sure, there are differences between robust domestic societies and less ordered regional and international societies. There are also differences in agency between powerful actors and those lacking resources and status.

***"Me" and "I"*:** The most insightful attempt to explore the possibilities and limits of self-fashioning is the work of the nineteenth-century American Pragmatist philosopher George Herbert Mead. He conceives of the self as the organization by the individual of a set of attitudes toward its social environment and itself. These attitudes are generated by imagining what it would be like to perform others' roles and regarding oneself from their perspective. To reach this understanding, a person must have considerable social experience; for Mead, experience and reflections on it is the core of the self. Reflection is also a source of freedom and spontaneity. It builds the "I," which provides the impetus for self-fashioning. Toward this end, we require a general, rather than purely personal, perspective on society. In evaluating our performance, as say a partner or a parent, we must view ourselves from the vantage point of the relationship or family.[7] The "I" is accordingly constrained, partly by social affiliations and pressures.[8]

For individuals, the construction of selves is a social and personal process. The social has a large political component as government and political actors of all kinds attempt to impose identities on individuals. For states, this process is entirely political. They are composed of assemblages of institutions, the people who work for them, and a veneer of leaders. "The state" is a reification, even a metaphor, as in the concept of the "body politic." To the extent that power is diffused through the system, as it most certainly is in democratic and federal states, there is no conscious center able to develop and impose its own identifications and resist, assimilate, or reformulate those sponsored by local and foreign actors.

[7] Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*, pp. 174–78.
[8] Ibid, pp. 177–78.

***Official and Collective Memory***: Individuals struggle to maintain the illusion of consistency. This is more difficult for state authorities, unless they are rigidly authoritarian regimes that adopt the kinds of procedures described in Orwell's *1984* and practiced by Stalin's Soviet Union and contemporary North Korea. Governments everywhere attempt to control what can best be described as "official memory" by means of holidays, monuments, school curricula and texts, and reports and other items they disseminate through media. Individual officials and bureaucracies can propagate reinforcing or competing accounts of their country's past and its implications for domestic and foreign policy.

Collective memory operates at the level of society and is influenced by government, media, schools, and social, religious, professional, and other groups. In a robust civil society, collective memory is largely independent of, and even in conflict with, official memory. Like official memory, it consists of stylized representations of the past, propagated through media and word-of-mouth and kept alive through commemorations, sites, and ritualized practices. Collective memory – created by the society and groups within it – is more pluralistic. In democratic societies, diverse actors propagate narratives about the territory, history, and values of the country in support of their preferred national identifications and policies. In contrast to official memory, there is no central authority to adjudicate among these different interpretations, although governments frequently take sides. Both kinds of memory interact and shape individual identifications. Those who have assimilated collective memories often tend to believe they are their personal memories.[9]

In democratic states, official and collective memory is openly disputed. In the United States, a significant divide exists between the urban, professional, largely secular population and rural, less educated, evangelical Christian population. These differences manifest themselves in competing historical narratives as well as conflicting approaches to a wide range of issues that include abortion, school prayer, gun control, military budgets, and foreign intervention. As noted, culture wars become acute when one or more groups attempt to gain official support for their parochial narratives and impose them on

[9] Neisser, *Memory Observed*; Winograd and Neisser, *Affect and Accuracy in Recall*; Neisser and Harsch, "Phantom Flashbulbs."

the country. In the United States, such struggles often focus on school textbooks, where there is a long-standing struggle in multiple states to exclude evolution or so-called creationism from biology texts, or to include either.[10] Most recently, conservatives have pushed, with some success, to include favorable references to capitalism in textbooks.[11]

In the United States, where conservatives control a disproportionate share of the media, they have been effective in recent years in shaping collective memory about foreign policy. In the face of considerable evidence to the contrary, conservative publicists convinced many Americans that Ronald Reagan's military buildup and Strategic Defense Initiative brought the Soviet Union to its knees and ended the Cold War.[12] Neoconservatives rewrote the history of the Vietnam War to make it consistent with their depiction of America as always victorious, and to mobilize support for "staying the distance" in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their claim that the United States only retreated from Vietnam because its soldiers were betrayed by the home front is reminiscent of Hitler's "stab in the back" thesis.[13] The yellow ribbons with "Support the Troops" imprinted on them that proliferated on cars and elsewhere during the First Gulf War and the Iraq invasion provide evidence of the extent to which this myth found traction and entered into the collective consciousness.

Studies of changes in collective and official memory indicate they are hotly contested, even if a consensus finally emerges, as it did in the case of the Confederate battle flag. Powerful groups within society will defend contested narratives and identifications with great tenacity. The unsuccessful effort of National Air and Space Museum Director Martin Harwit to exhibit the B-29 bomber *Enola Gay* is a case in point. The exhibit was canceled and Harwit was forced to resign in

[10] Elizabeth Harball and "ClimateWire," "'Teach the Controversy' Comes to Climate Science," *Scientific American*, 6 March 2013, http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/teach-the-controversy-comes-to-climate-science/ (accessed 27 September 2014).

[11] James McKinley, Jr., "Texas Conservatives Win Curriculum Changes," *New York Times*, 12 March 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/13/education/13texas.html?_r=0; Gail Collins, "How Texas Inflicts Bad Textbooks on Us," *New York Times*, 21 June 2012, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/jun/21/how-texas-inflicts-bad-textbooks-on-us/ (both accessed 27 September 2014).

[12] Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, postscript.

[13] Krumeich, "Die Dolchstoss Legende"; Seiler, "'Dolchstoss' and 'Dolchstosslegende'."

April 1995 in response to protests from service organizations, the Pentagon, and conservative congressmen unwilling to reconsider the decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[14] The United States regularly spends money to maintain more "comfortable" narratives of the past. In 2014, the Pentagon spent $15 million on a fiftieth anniversary "commemoration" of the Vietnam War. Its website features Congressional Medal of Honor recipients and portrays the conflict as one of valor and honor, which, as the *New York Times* put it, would be unrecognizable, and probably offensive, to most veterans of that conflict.[15]

Official memory is a powerful vehicle for shaping memory and identity and preserving the relative power of elites. Former Vice President Richard "Dick" Cheney consistently justified the invasion of Iraq with reference to Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons of mass destruction and his support of Al Qaeda. A decade later, a majority of Americans still believed both these patently false allegations.[16] Struggles over official memory usually take place within a government, but they can pit governments or regimes against their would-be replacements. In November 2013, in Gaza, Hamas spurned Palestinian Authority school textbooks and introduced their own. Their books reject Israel as a state, do not acknowledge the Oslo Accords, and attempt to create an alternative definition of what it is to be Palestinian.[17]

***Multiple Identities***: The biggest difference between state and individual biographies is the multiplicity of the former. People generally

[14] Harwit, *An Exhibit Denied*; Kohn, "History at Risk."

[15] Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Paying Respects: Pentagon Reviews Vietnam, and the War Over Truth, *New York Times*, 9 October 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/10/us/pentagons-web-timeline-brings-back-vietnam-and-protesters-.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&version=HpSum&module=second-column-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news (accessed 10 October 2014).

[16] World Public Opinion.org, "Percentage of Americans Believing Iraq had WMD Rises," 9 August 2006, http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brunitedstatescanadara/238.php (accessed 10 March 2013); "Sizeable Minorities Still Believe Saddam Hussein Has Strong Links to Al Qaeda, Helped Plan 9/11 and Had Weapons of Mass Destruction," PR Newswire. Harris Interactive, 29 December 2005.

[17] Fares Akram and Jodi Rudoren, "To Shape Young Palestinians, Hamas Creates Its Own Textbooks, *New York Times*, 3 November 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/04/world/middleeast/to-shape-young-palestinians-hamas-creates-its-own-textbooks.html?hp (accessed 3 November 2013).

change their life narratives over time but rarely subscribe to two or more of them at the same time, and all the more so if they are contradictory. People who do so are sometimes diagnosed as having dissociative identity disorder. Alternatively, they are trying to put an unpleasant, if not insalubrious, past "behind them" and convince themselves and others that they are now different people. Regardless of the cause, each personality may be experienced with a distinct history, self-image, and identity.[18] States, by contrast, do not have the ability that healthy individuals have to impose single narratives on themselves. Nor is it evident that they suffer the way people often do from "multiple identities."

For people with dissociative identity disorder, their several identities often deny knowledge of each other, or they may be in open conflict. This is an uncommon disorder for individuals but the norm for states. Even authoritarian states are never fully controlled from above. More open societies are likely to be divided within and across their respective bureaucracies.[19] Each of these units and subunits can have its own biography, often nested within different national ones, or versions of a commonly shared one. These narratives draw on different memories or interpretations of them.

Individual repression or rewriting of the past is not generally visible to others. It is best detected by means of experiments or access to letters, diaries, and other records.[20] Efforts by states, even authoritarian ones, to use official memory to maintain existing national identifications or impose new ones are almost always more visible. The Soviet Union famously rewrote its past by expunging officials from history books and photographic records – or airbrushing them in – as their political fortunes rose and fell. The Nazis dehumanized Jews and propagated narratives that attributed an entirely destructive role to them in German political, economic, and cultural history. Both regimes did their best to cover up their atrocities or, as in the Katyn Forest

[18] *Psychology Today*, "Disassociate Identity Disorder," http://www.psychologytoday.com/conditions/dissociative-identity-disorder-multiple-personality-disorder (accessed 23 March 2016).

[19] See Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*, on how at the height of Stalinism, Eastern European governments were unable to impose their preferences on workers without considerable negotiation.

[20] Neisser, "John Dean's Memory," "Self-Narratives: True and False, "Psychology of Memory and the Socio-Linguistics of Remembering," and *Perceived Self*.

Massacre, to blame them on their adversaries.[21] Outsiders tracked and described such efforts, although it took some time for reports about the Holocaust to gain credibility in Britain and the United States because of its inconceivable barbarity.[22] After the Nazis were defeated and the Soviet Union began to reform, and then collapsed, scholars gained access to archives and were able to reconstruct more accurate accounts of the crimes of these regimes.[23]

The history of communist regimes indicates that mind control through official memory is more difficult to achieve than is often assumed. In Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, where the Church remained robust, people kept alive unauthorized narratives and identifications that fueled political opposition and ultimately emerged triumphant in 1989.[24] Early in the Cold War, Czesław Miłosz described the concept of *Ketman* and how it allowed those oppressed by communist regimes to develop inner lives rooted in alternate conceptions of history while showing outward compliance to the regime.[25]

The postcommunist history in Eastern Europe suggests that these governments nevertheless succeeded in shaping the understanding of the past of several generations of their citizens in important ways.[26] This is most evident with respect to World War II and the Holocaust. When paired by cohort, East and West Germans had quite different historical memories. Some analysts point to these differences to help explain the greater hostility in the former East Germany toward Jews and immigrants.[27] We rightly regard official rewriting of the past as a reprehensible exercise of power because it diminishes the ability of citizens to think independently. We should recognize that this process parallels the one within our psyches, where phenomenological selves rewrite the past and repress, rather than suppress, memories of inconvenient persons, events, beliefs, and prior self-identifications. To the

[21] National Archives, Records Relating to the Katyn Forest Massacre at the National Archives, http://www.archives.gov/research/foreign-policy/katyn-massacre/ (accessed 10 March 2013).
[22] Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*; Laqueur, *Terrible Secret*, pp. 82–89; Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, pp. 57–59.
[23] For example, Friedlander, *Origins of Nazi Genocide*"; Hirschfeld, *Policies of Genocide*; Snyder, *Bloodlands*; Applebaum, *Gulag*.
[24] Lévesque, *Enigma of 1989*; Thomas, *Helsinki Effect*.
[25] Miłosz, *Captive Mind*, pp. 54–81.
[26] Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*.
[27] Bergmann, "Antisemitism and Xenophobia in Germany after Unification."

extent that we find totalitarian efforts at identity construction abhorrent, we should develop a greater commitment to monitor and control our efforts to impose unity on ourselves. Elsewhere, I make the case for the political and ethical benefits of greater acceptance of the fragmented, conflicting, and labile nature of our self-identifications.[28]

In democratic states the public construction and contestation of national identifications makes this process more visible. We can readily track efforts by diverse actors to develop and impose particular identities on their states and the reactions of others to their efforts. What is harder to measure is the response of broader publics and the extent to which they assimilate these identifications. Carefully constructed public opinion polls can tell us something in this regard, but identifications are multiple and their relative prominence very much a function of context and priming. Surveys inevitably prime participants, and something like Heisenberg's uncertainty principle comes into play; interaction effects between observer and observed limit the information that can be extracted from the system.

In states with freedom of expression, multiple, conflicting narratives proliferate. They can be sources not only of acute domestic conflict but also of incoherent foreign policies. Since the Revolution of 1789, membership in the French national community has been based, in theory, on a voluntary commitment to the republic and its political values. This Jacobin ideal of the "nation state" was challenged from the outset by a monarchist conception of the state.[29] It envisages the king as the overarching symbol of the state and found support among the aristocracy (formerly the principal opponents to the throne), the Roman Catholic Church, and others who felt threatened by revolutionary change. These opposing views of France remained entrenched long after the Revolution gave way to Napoleonic dictatorship, the Restoration, the empire under Louis Napoleon, and the Third Republic. In the late nineteenth century, these rival understandings of the destiny of France warred with one another during the scramble for Africa and the Dreyfus Affair. French penetration of the Sudan led to the Fashoda crisis of 1898, which almost resulted in an Anglo-French war.[30]

[28] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 8.

[29] Safran, "State, Nation, National Identity and Citizenship in France as a Test Case."

[30] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, ch. 4; Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered*.

The "monarchial" conception of France triumphed temporarily during the Vichy regime and now finds expression in the far-right Front National, headed by Marine Le Pen. It draws support from members of *le petit bourgeois* who feel marginalized by economic and social changes and threatened by Muslim immigrants. In 2009, President Sarkozy called for a public discussion on France's identity, but his appeal was denounced by critics left and right as a useless, if not dangerous, exercise. The frustrated president then called for a debate about the role of Muslims in France, which revealed polar understandings of what it means to be French and led to legislation banning the *niqab* and *burka* in public places.[31]

The backlash against Muslims extends beyond the far right. This is evident in the success of a 2013 book by self-described philosopher Alain Finkielkraut. He charges that Muslim immigration is destroying the country through "mongrelization" (*métissage*), a position that finds much resonance in France.[32] The novel *Submission* by Michel Houellebecq became the number-one best seller in 2014.[33] It imagines a Muslim president of France in 2022. Another bestseller, *The French Suicide* by journalist Éric Zemmour, is a long, rambling essay that contends that France has been destroyed by immigration, feminism, and the 1968 student uprisings.[34]

[31] Nicolas Sarkozy, "Discours de Monsieur le Président de la République Françaises," 12 November 2009, http://linkinfluence.com/projets/discours/sarkozy/Sarkozy-2009-11-12.html (accessed 10 July 2010); Le Monde, *Les Moments Clés du Débat Sarkozy-Holland*," http://www.lemonde.fr/election-presidentielle-2012/article/2012/05/03/les-moment-cles-du-debat-hollande-sarkozy_1694468_1471069.html (accessed 28 September 2013); Marianne, "*Débat sur L'Islam: Sarkozy a-t-il perdu sa Clientèle Musulmane?* 6 April 2011, http://www.marianne.net/Debat-sur-l-Islam-Sarkozy-a-t-il-perdu-sa-clientele-musulmane_a204744.html (accessed 28 September 2013); Gatestone Institute, Soren Kerm, "Debate Heats Up Over Muslims in France," 17 March 2011, http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/1969/muslims-in-france (accessed 28 September 2013); Reuters, "Sarkozy Party: Islam Debate Undercuts Far Right," 6 April 2011, http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2011/04/06/sarkozy-party-islam-debate-undercuts-french-far-right/ (accessed 14 November 2013).

[32] Finkielkraut, *L'identité malheureuse*; Justin H. Smith, "Does Immigrant Mean that 'France' Is Over?" *New York Times*, 5 January 2014, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/does-immigration-mean-france-is-over/ (accessed 7 January 2014).

[33] Houellebecq, *Soumission*.

[34] Zemmour, *Le Suicide français*.

Many French people have taken refuge in an appeal to the *Trente Glorieuses*, the years between 1945 and 1973, which have been reconstructed as a mythical period of happiness, not unlike the 1950s for American conservatives. This myth is propagated in French cinema and other manifestations of popular culture. The obsession with the so-called *Trente Glorieuses* is an indication of what people feel they have lost as well as their need for an alternate image of France. Some French people have embraced Anglo-American culture and cuisine, long a bugaboo in their country.[35]

Debates about Russian identity have been equally contentions, arousing rather than ameliorating internal conflict. In 2005, the Putin government resurrected the old holiday of 4 November, which commemorated the expulsion of Poles from Moscow in 1612. The hope of intensifying a sense of national identity provoked opposing demonstrations, with participants brandishing Orthodox crosses and some of their opponents the Soviet hammer and sickle. In the words of one experienced observer, subsequent "attempts to define and affirm Russian national identity have slid either toward irrelevance, or toward a dangerous kind of ethnic-center nationalism, with slogans like 'Russia for Russians.' "[36]

More recently, there have been fierce controversies over statues. Bronze Lenins and muscled workers have gone the way of the hammer and sickle. Russian culture minister Vladimir Medinsky announced in 2015 that he wants to fill this void with an eighty-two-foot-tall statue of St. Vladimir, Russia's patron saint, atop one of the hills overlooking Moscow.[37] Vladimir the Great, prince of Kiev, forcibly converted his subjects to Christianity in 988. The statue is intended to legitimize Russia's claim to Crimea, if not Ukraine. Ukraine president, Petro O. Poroshenko, countered by ordering the commemoration of Volodymyr, as Vladimir is known in Kiev, as the founder of

[35] Simon Kuper, "How Paris put everything on the menu," *Financial Times Weekend Magazine*, 27–28 September 2014, p. 7.

[36] Celestine Bohlen, "A Struggle with Identity and Racism," *International Herald Tribune*, 5–6 January 2013, p. 2.

[37] Neil McFarquhar, "Another Huge Statue in Russia? Not Rare, but Hugely Divisive," *New York Times*, 28 May 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/29/world/europe/another-huge-statue-in-russia-not-rare-but-hugely-divisive.html?emc=eta1 (accessed 28 May 2015).

the medieval state "Rus-Ukraine." Russian politicians accused him of inventing history, as Ukraine was not a state at the time.[38]

Collective memory trumped official memory in the French and Russian cases, and this is not unusual. It is a powerful phenomenon everywhere there is a civil society, independent and social media, non official commemorations, and other forms of mass and personal communication. It makes it correspondingly difficult for government or non state actors to impose single national narratives, and their absence encourages competing ones. Some of these narratives are popular and sharply at odds with the official line. An open letter published in December 2012 by Landscrona, the largest fan club of St. Petersburg's Zenit football team, offers a vivid example. This manifesto proclaims unalterable opposition to hiring dark-skinned players: "For us, the absence of black Zenit players is an important tradition that underlines the team's identity."[39] Similar expressions of racism in Milan and Rome, the latter leading to violent attacks against visiting British fans by hooligans chanting anti-Semitic slogans, indicate the extent to which identity has narrowed for important segments of societies, in stark opposition to efforts by governments to foster more inclusive national identities.[40]

***International Influence***: Individual identities have an important, some would say dominant, social element. People are socialized into roles and affiliations, both of which come with a proscribed set of practices. International and regional societies are thinner than their domestic counterparts are. They have less power to socialize or compel. The greater freedom of states was fostered and justified through the discourse of sovereignty that asserts the legal doctrine that states have absolute authority over their territories. Although the international community has chipped away at this principle over the last half-century, it remains relatively robust. Only in recent decades have political and legal changes occurred to justify infrequent efforts at intervention for humanitarian or other compelling reasons.[41] The

[38] Ibid.

[39] Bohlen, "Struggle with Identity and Racism."

[40] Press Association, "Tottenham fans attacked by Ultras ahead of Lazio game," *Guardian*, 22 November 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/football/2012/nov/22/tottenham-supporters-stabbed-rome-lazio (accessed 21 January 2014).

[41] Welsh, *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*; Koskenniemi, *Gentle Civilizer of Nations*; Kratochwil, *Status of Law in World Society*.

balance of power between state actors and their societies is still the reverse of that between individuals and their societies.

States nevertheless come under pressure from other states as well as regional and international institutions and organizations to behave in certain ways. This is most apparent for occupied states whose de facto sovereignty is temporarily in abeyance. Following World War II, the United States restructured the German and Japanese political systems and political culture. Fully independent states are also subject to external pressures. Apartheid was central to Afrikaner identity in the Republic of South Africa. The boycott of the country's economy, organized by international opponents of racism, helped end apartheid and transform the country's political system. Korea, China, and Taiwan pressure Japan to acknowledge its crimes during World War II and vocally objected to the efforts of Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe to introduce a more patriotic narrative in school textbooks that whitewashed the country's role in World War II.[42]

Despite the relative weakness of international society, the identity construction of states is partly regulated by it. International society legitimizes roles and their associated practices, responsibilities, and privileges and the entry of states and non state actors into these roles. These roles enmesh states in sets of practices that in turn influence how other think of them and how their leaders and citizens think of themselves. There is wiggle room in all roles, and states, like individuals, can exploit it to enhance their distinctiveness and, sometimes, their influence. I return to this question in Chapter 6.

Struggles over official memory are not always restricted to domestic participants. American occupation authorities in Germany and Japan pushed indigenous elites into developing alternate and more acceptable definitions of their nations. In Germany, local populations were compelled to visit recently liberated concentration camps while the Nuremberg Proceedings, and the evidence presented to it about Nazi crimes, were widely disseminated in German language newsreels and newspapers.[43] More recently, Washington pressured Switzerland and

[42] Martin Fackler, "In Textbook Fight, Japan Leaders Seek to Recast History," *New York Times*, 28 December 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/29/world/asia/japan-fights-a-political-battle-using-history-texts.html?_r=0 (accessed 22 January 2014).

[43] Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*; Smith, *The War for the German Mind*.

its banks to make efforts to locate and compensate the families of Jewish depositors who perished in the Holocaust.[44]

Members of the European Union have individually and collectively encouraged the countries of Eastern Europe to confront their pasts more honestly.[45] China, South Korea, and the Philippines have called on Japan to acknowledge its war crimes, including the Rape of Nanjing, medical experimentation on prisoners of war and civilians, and the pressing of young women into involuntary service as sexual servants for Japanese soldiers.[46] Outside pressures of this kind always meet resistance, but have succeeded to varying degrees in Eastern Europe. Success appears to hinge on the leverage of outside parties, the existence of groups within the target countries whose agendas are served by responding positively to external pressures, and the ability of these groups to appeal successfully to the wider public, or at least key officials. Such efforts nevertheless encounter serious opposition when they clash with deeply held conceptions of national identity.[47] The decisive victory in October 2015 of the Polish Law and Justice Party, which campaigned to return Poland to its conservative roots, is a case in point.

The international relations literature is sensitive to efforts by states to influence the policies of others. It has largely ignored the ways in which states seek to influence others in their choices of national identifications. States routinely attempt to influence identity debates within other states about identifications and support institutions, groups, and individuals who propagate identifications they favor. They also do this from afar through radio and television broadcasts. Governments often use semiofficial or private institutions for both purposes, cases in point being the BBC Foreign Service, the British Council, and the institutes to foster democratic change in Russia established by the U.S. Democratic and Republican parties. Host governments are correspondingly wary of these institutions. In 2013, the Russian government expanded its definition of treason and of foreign agents required to register in an effort to put pressure on political

[44] Ludi, "Past as Present, Myth, or History?"
[45] Dimitrova and Pridham, "International Actors and Democracy Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe."
[46] Ueno and Sand, "Politics of Memory"; Seraphim, *War Memory and Social Politics in Japan*; Miller, "Still Frosty After All These Years."
[47] Zarakol, "Ontological (In)Security and State Denial of Historical Crimes."

think tanks funded by foreign governments. Threats against their staff led the American-funded National Democratic Institute to move most of its operations to Lithuania.[48] Azerbaijan did something similar in 2014 in an expanding campaign against NGOs and their international supporters.[49] Putin has also gone after homegrown organizations. Dynasty, an NGO founded by Dmitry Zimin, a telecommunications billionaire, was forced to shut down as a foreign agent even though it is entirely indigenous and gave grants to young Russian researchers and established science camps.[50]

I suspect that external efforts to influence national identifications are on the rise. It would be interesting to know if such efforts are coordinated with more traditional forms of diplomacy and, more importantly, the extent to which they succeed. Has resistance to them by governments increased for this reason? Should regional or international society develop norms to regulate these practices as they have for more overt forms of intervention? And if so, how could one possibly differentiate coordinated efforts to influence internal debates from the free flow of information?

***Continuity***: States also differ from people in their continuity. They have longer histories, and often longer standing identifications. These identifications can be a source of stability and solidarity, but also a barrier to change. France has been a great power since the mid-seventeenth century and successive leaders have nurtured its *gloire*. Arguably, the commitment of France's postwar political elite to their country's great power status hastened its decline as it prompted costly wars

[48] On the National Democratic Institute, see it webpage, which does not acknowledge outside support: http://www.ndi.org/russia; Jonathan Earle, "Amid Crackdown on NGOs, US Group Moves Staff Out of Russia, *Moscow Times*, 23 November 2012, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/amid-crackdown-on-ngos-us-group-moves-staff-out-of-russia/471846.html (both sites accessed 14 December 2013).

[49] "Azerbaijan: Transparency Group Should Suspend Membership," *Human Rights Watch*, 14 August 2014, http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/08/14/azerbaijan-transparency-group-should-suspend-membership (accessed 13 January 2015).

[50] Andrew Roth, "Unlike Targets in Cross Hairs as Russia Aims to Expose Foreign Influence, *New York Times*. 11 July 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/world/unlikely-targets-in-cross-hairs-as-russia-takes-aim-at-foreign-agents.html?mabReward=CTM&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&region=CColumn&module=Recommendation&src=rechp&WT.nav=RecEngine (accessed 17 July 2015).

in Indochina and Algeria. To this day, Britain and France maintain expensive nuclear arsenals as matters of national pride. In 2007, the Labour government, with unanimous Conservative support, voted to refurbish at great cost the submarine-based Trident missile system.[51] China reveals a different face of this problem. Historical memories of the Celestial Empire and subsequent humiliation at the hands of the European powers and Japan have given rise to a strong sense of unity and superiority, but also recognition of a rupture. What is perceived as past humiliation has made contemporary Chinese intensely nationalistic and particularly sensitive to anything that is seen to encroach on Chinese sovereignty. The government has been able to exploit this feeling to build legitimacy for the regime, but Chinese officials implicitly acknowledge their concern of becoming vulnerable to public opinion that would push them into confrontational policies at odds with their understanding of the national interest.[52]

The defining feature of John Locke's "person" was continuity. He described the concept as a forensic one because it provided the justification to consider people responsible for past actions. For Locke's individual, continuity was provided by memory.[53] From the outset, Locke's critics questioned the accuracy and completeness of memory, and contemporary psychological experiments offer considerable evidence for these concerns.[54] People change over time as a result of new experiences and the reworking of memories to support current social and psychological needs. Individual continuity is more a psychological construct than a social reality, but one to which most people appear committed.

For states, continuity confronts other obstacles. Governments and regimes change. In a little more than a century, Germany went from a collection of political units with varying forms of government to an empire, a de facto military dictatorship under Ludendorff and Hindenburg, a republic that never quite established legitimacy, a

[51] Ministry of Defence, *The United Kingdom's Future Nuclear Deterrent: 2012 Update to Parliament*, December 2012, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/39252/191212a_uk_future_nuc_deter2012_update.pdf (accessed10 March 2016).

[52] Gries, "Chinese Nationalism: Challenging the State?"

[53] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, ch. 27.

[54] See Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, pp. 26–28 for an overview.

Nazi dictatorship, a divided country with democratic and communist governments, and most recently a unified, democratic federal republic. Germany's rapid, multiple transformations are unusual, but many countries undergo political upheavals and regime changes. Twentieth-century France, Italy, Egypt, India, China, and Russia all qualify for this long list. International law, and its concept of the successor state, allows independent political units to maintain their continuity. In practice, they often change dramatically.

Leaders of new governments and regimes invariably claim to be true representatives of the national tradition. At the same time, they do their best to distance themselves from their predecessors, who, of course, once made the same claims. This strategy of establishing legitimacy is followed by even the most radical regimes. When the Chinese communists came to power in 1949, they waged war on capitalism and denigrated Confucianism and traditional practices like ancestor worship. Mao's essays on foreign relations nevertheless emphasized the peaceful tradition of the Chinese civilization and the communist commitment to be faithful to the best of the country' past. He described himself as a combination of Karl Marx and Qin Shihuang – the first emperor of China famous for using Legalist methods to unify the country in 221 BC. Mao's successors have made more explicit references to China's long civilization and portray themselves as its inheritors. Chinese traditions are invoked more frequently in its international relations discourse.[55] The tension between the goal of historical continuity and ruptures caused by government and regime changes is only resolvable by political-psychological sleights of hand.

## Similarity and Difference

Martin Heidegger describes identity construction as paradoxical because it involves similarity and differentiation.[56] This seeming paradox is largely a product of language. Difference and uniqueness assume meaning through comparison. It requires the invention of sets (e.g., things, concepts, beings, people) to which something can be assigned. Additional categories must be created to describe similarities and differences among members of these sets. Difference

[55] Zhang, "Rise of Chinese Exceptionalism in International Relations."
[56] Heidegger, *Being and Time*; Berenskoetter, "Identity in International Relations."

means that people, objects, institutions, concepts – whatever interests us – do not share a particular attribute, although they may share many others. The claim of uniqueness asserts that something has no attributes in common with others in a set. True uniqueness would mean that there is no set to which it belongs that has at least one other member. While theoretically possible, anything we encounter can somehow be compared to something else. In rare instances, like that of the universe, it is necessary to imagine additional members of the set for purposes of comparison, in this instance prior, parallel, or future universes that share at least some of the features of ours. In practice, any attempt to establish difference rests on the premise that there are also similarities.

What is commonly called identity is a composite of roles, affiliations, bodies, and histories. They are all generic categories. Our affiliations may be singular in focus (e.g., love for a particular person, family members, or friends), but they are universal in type, and most types are common across societies. Affiliations also develop and find expression in similar ways, although there is ample room for individual variation. These variations can be described, which means they can be placed in categories with multiple members. The same is true of roles. There are only so many roles, and their performance is invariably circumscribed to some degree. Even stage actors renowned for highly individualistic interpretations of famous and frequently enacted roles reveal some similarities with other actors in their performance. If not, the roles they play might not be recognized or appreciated by audiences.

In *The Politics and Ethics of Identity*, I argue that healthy individuals draw closer to those from whom they are separating. For evidence, I draw on research in social psychology and early childhood development.[57] Identity construction is dialectical in that the seemingly opposed processes of distancing oneself from another actor or actors can occur at the same time one draws closer to them. Both processes require interactions with others, who do not remain passive. Their responses encourage or discourage separation and integration and influence their timing, character, and the degree of cooperation or conflict associated with this process. We can imagine a continuum anchored at one end by individuals (or collective actors like states)

[57] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, chs. 3, 9.

with a robust sense of autonomy and close relations with other others. At the other end are insecure, even neurotic actors, who have love-hate and tense relationships with those from whom they have separated. These outcomes are the product of interaction and are influenced by the character of the actors and context in which their interaction occurs.

Identity construction is dialectical in the additional sense that it has the potential to change the identities of all those concerned. Parents are drawn into emotional relationships with their children and become different people in the process. Children react to these changes and may revise their self-understandings and behavior in response. Construction of these relationships and understandings of self is reciprocal and ongoing. The same is true of friendships and business and romantic relationships.

The scholarly literature addresses only the separation side of "identity" construction and tends to frame it as a unilateral process. Kant and Hegel theorized that identity requires distancing oneself from others, often framing a hostile relationship with them. Many philosophers accept their formulation; even Nietzsche did, despite his moral revulsion at the creation of negative "others."[58] Neither Kant nor Hegel offers any empirical evidence for their claim, and it was accepted solely on the basis of their authority.

In the 1970s, the experiments of Henri Tajfel and his collaborators and successors demonstrated that group identities could be formed on the basis of cooperation in simple and meaningless tasks. With these identities came a feeling of superiority to other groups given the same tasks to perform.[59] Beginning with Jonathan Mercer, international relations scholars have generalized from these experiments to state and regional identities and negative images of other political units.[60] This involves a great leap from robust laboratory finding to relations among states. There is no evidence that the group identities created in Tajfel-like experiments endure over time or have implications for participants outside the laboratory. They can only be measured because

[58] Ibid., pp. 78–84; Connolly, *Identity\Difference*.

[59] Tajfel, "Social Categorisation, Social Identity and Social Comparison" and *Human Groups and Social Categories*; Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." See Hornsey, "Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory," for a review.

[60] Mercer, "Anarchy and Identity."

other influences are carefully eliminated or controlled. Nor has it ever been demonstrated that group identities that form through the performance of simple tasks of the kind performed in these experiments trump other, prior forms of identification.

The self-other binary is central to poststructuralism and postcolonialism. Michel Foucault's assertion that order and identity are created and maintained through discourses of deviance has become a verity for poststructuralist theorists.[61] Edward Said was among the founders of postcolonial theory, and his account of how the East became the West's "other" is admired and emulated by many who work in this tradition.[62] Said's account finds little empirical support. European self-understandings have multiple roots that extend back to the Roman Empire and Christianity. Images of the east developed later and were more diverse, nuanced, and some of them far less negative than Said alleges.[63] A micro-variant of this argument posits that Western Europe developed an identity as a civilized region by creating Eastern Europe as its antithesis.[64]

Summarizing recent research in social psychology, Marilynn Brewer finds complicated and still poorly understood patterns among in-group solidarity, hostility, and discrimination.[65] In-group bias and out-group hostility is more closely associated with preferential treatment of in-group members than it is with discrimination or violence against out-groups.[66] Even when there are no strong negative stereotypes, studies of Caucasian populations in the United States and Western Europe indicate the widespread existence of "subtle racism," defined as the absence of positive feelings toward minority groups. Subtle racism reinforces the propensity of in-groups to reward their members over those of out-groups.[67] Discrimination does not require in-group loyalty or attachment or even negative stereotypes of out-groups. Survey and comparative political research indicate that stereotypes

[61] Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*; Connolly, *Identity\Difference*, p. 64.
[62] Said, *Orientalism*.
[63] Warraq, *Defending the West*.
[64] Wollf, *Inventing Eastern Europe*.
[65] Brewer, "Psychology of Prejudice."
[66] Feshbach, "Nationalism, Patriotism and Aggression"; Struch and Schwartz, "Inter-Group Aggression."
[67] Dovidio and Gaertner, "Stereotypes and Evaluative Intergroup Bias"; Pettigrew and Meertens, "Subtle and Blatant Prejudice in Western Europe"; Iyengar, Sullivan, and Ford, "Affective and Cognitive Determinants of Prejudice."

and discrimination are most pronounced in conditions where groups compete for physical resources or political power.[68]

In the early postwar decades, Sherif and Sherif theorized that loyalties to large collectives such as nations, or even humankind as a whole, were compatible with those to family, religion, and region.[69] They reasoned that "transcendent" identities might actually mute feelings of hostility because they provide some basis for common identity and empathy between in- and out-groups.[70] The European project appears to have had this effect in some long-standing national and ethnic conflicts; Northern Ireland is a case in point. However, greater interdependence with out-groups can sometimes promote intergroup conflict and hostility. As in-groups become larger and more impersonal, the institutions, rules, and customs that maintain in-group loyalty and cooperation tend to assume the character of moral authority. Other people and groups who do not adhere to the same rules and customs are no longer viewed indifferently, but with contempt and hostility.[71] More inclusive groups, whether sub- or supranational, also threaten the loss of distinctiveness for individuals with strong in-group identification. In this connection, it is important to recognize that groups strive for distinctiveness that is considered positive by their members.[72] When out-groups feel distinctive on dimensions that matter to them, and thus superior, they can tolerate, even acknowledge, in-group superiority in other domains.[73] When they hold common standards for worth, the mutual search for positive distinctiveness and higher status

[68] Sherif and Sherif, *Groups in Harmony and Tension*; Levine and Campbell, *Ethnocentrism*; Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

[69] Sherif and Sherif, *Groups in Harmony and Tension*, p. 44.

[70] Sherif, "Subordinate Goals in the Reduction of Intergroup Conflict." See Kelman, "Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian Identities," and Hymans, *Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation*, for more recent applications of the concept.

[71] Lebow, *White Britain and Black Ireland*; Sidanius, "Psychology of Group Conflict and the Dynamics of Oppression"; Brewer, "Psychology of Prejudice."

[72] Turner, "Social Comparison and Social Identity"; Taylor, "Multiple Group Membership and Self-Identity"; Freeman, *Liking Self and Social Structure*; Elmers, "Individual Upward Mobility and the Perceived Legitimacy of Intergroup Relations"; Abrams and Hogg, "Social Identification, Social Categorization and Social Influence."

[73] Mummendey and Schreiber, "Better or Just Different?"; Mummendey and Simon, "Better or Different III."

becomes more competitive.[74] Any of these processes can be intensified or dampened by leaders seeking to exploit or downplay hostile feelings for their own political ends.

To what extent does the construction of national identifications resemble that of individuals? International theorists have not explored this question, although it is certainly relevant to understanding state identities. Paul Kowert, an international relations scholar with an impressive familiarity with relevant psychological literature, distinguishes between "internal" and "external" identities. The former gives a state cohesion and the later its distinctiveness. The two are closely related because cohesion is facilitated by distinctiveness; the more citizens feel different from those of other states, the more cohesive their society has the potential to become. Dick Merritt's study of the rise of American national consciousness finds that a prime catalyst for it was study abroad at English universities. American students arrived with diverse and distinctive colonial identities but were lumped together as Americans by the English. They increasingly socialized with one another and returned home with an "American" identity they did not possess before.[75]

Kowert's distinction between internal and external identity finesses Heidegger's tension because Kowert contends that these identities are created with different audiences in mind. Internal identity is designed to enhance solidarity and cohesion by stressing what citizens share in common. External identity is intended to differentiate one's state from others, and is constructed with foreign audiences in mind. Internal identity aims at domestic audiences. It is often built on claims of distinctiveness that can serve as important sources of internal cohesion. In several iterations of my undergraduate seminar on identity, students insist that they are unique. I ask them to write down their reasons, only to discover that for the most part they assert distinctiveness on the same grounds: they are caring, imaginative, talented, and have a good sense of humor.

States play the same game. Many proclaim distinctiveness and superiority by virtue of their remarkable internal cohesion. Japan and Korea base their claim on ethnic homogeneity, whereas France and the

[74] Mummendey and Wenzel, "Social Discrimination and Tolerance in Intergroup Relations"; Deschamps and Brown, "Superordinate Goals and Intergroup Conflict."

[75] Merritt, *Symbols of American Community*.

United States appeal to a concept of citizenship that transcends ethnic, religious, and other differences. Two million Parisians took to the streets in January 2015 in support of this conception in the aftermath of the murders at *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher butcher shop.[76] In *The Politics and Ethics of Identity*, I traced the remarkable similarities in the identity construction of late cultural developers. Germany, Russia, and Japan invoked variants of a discourse that stresses their cultural distinctiveness and superiority on the basis of their allegedly more collective and less materialistic cultures.[77]

These contradictions are unimportant so long as citizens buy into assertions about their country's distinctiveness. They are generally unaware of, or uninterested in, the way in which other states assert distinctiveness and claim status along similar lines. One of the more common, and more successful, claims for distinctiveness and superiority has to do with wealth, level of economic equality within the society, and high levels of foreign aid giving. It is now an established trope in countries as diverse as those of Scandinavia, Canada, Japan, and South Korea. Canada and the Scandinavians also claim status on the basis of the efforts to reduce conflict through mediation, go-between diplomacy, sponsorship of agreements and treaties, such as those to ban landmines, and participation in peacekeeping missions.

Status is a relational attribute and competition for it is accordingly intense. Japan, Brazil, and India compete for recognition as permanent members of the UN Security Council. Mexico and Nigeria want to be counted among the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and Brazil and India routinely refer to this grouping as BRIC, as they feel inclusion of South Africa diminishes the standing of the group and that of their countries as a consequence. Through membership in such elite groups as the BRICS, G-6, 7, 8, 15, the Security Council, or simply recognition as a rising or great power, states gain status.

Any claim for status is based on differentiation. Those claiming status are distinguishing themselves from others and claiming superiority on the basis of some set of qualities or accomplishments. Status

[76] Shiv Malik, Paul Owen, and Josh Halliday "Huge crowds gather for Paris unity rally – as it happened," *Guardian*, 11 January 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2015/jan/11/1m-expected-for-anti-terror-rally-live (accessed 14 January 2015).

[77] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, pp. 171–73.

also involves similarity because the qualities or accomplishments that confer it are socially constructed. It accordingly requires some kind of consensus among leading actors, if not the community at large, about roles and who should occupy them. In effect, actors claiming high status attempt to differentiate themselves from lower-status actors and demonstrate their similarities with high-status ones. Paradoxically, they may draw closer to the very actors from whom they are seeking to differentiate themselves by providing aid and other forms of assistance in support of their status claims.

Here, too, the construction of state identifications can resemble that of individuals if it is a reciprocal process that involves drawing nearer to those from whom the political unit is separating. This is most evident for countries that were once conjoined. Belgium-Netherlands, Norway-Sweden, and the Czech Republic-Slovakia are cases in point. Although the breakup of Yugoslavia involved much violence, its successor states may in due course develop more intense and positive relationships that facilitate national stability and identity. This has been true for many ex-colonies and their former metropole, including the United States, Ireland, India, and the United Kingdom, the successor states of Austria-Hungary, and many of the countries of Latin America and Spain. The postcolonial identifications of former metropoles were in turn significantly influenced by their relations with their former dependencies. Earlier, these identifications were very much affected, if not shaped by, their interactions with their colonies.[78] In defining others Europe and Europeans defined themselves.

The most peaceful and successful relationships are those in which newly independent countries are able to maintain and improve relations with the states from which they seceded. The dialectic of distancing and drawing closer is usually a complicated nonlinear process, often characterized by initial hostility, followed by periods of partial rapprochement, and possibly by additional irruptions of hostility, or at least strained relations. Anglo-American relations illustrate this truth. To some degree, post-independence conflicts between these countries arose from substantive issues. They were also connected to identity issues, and were only resolved when both, but especially the Americans, were able to recognize what they shared in common

[78] Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, p. 35; Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society*.

without feeling that this somehow lessened or devalued them, their country, or its independence. Psychological processes are as important as political ones are, yet historians and international relations scholars have devoted insufficient attention to them.

The most enduring antagonisms are between peoples of the successor states to former colonies. These relationships are often characterized by intense territorial, religious, or ethnic disputes. Israel and Palestine, India and Pakistan, Greek and Turkish Cyprus, and Armenia and Azerbaijan are cases in point. They are the product of imposed partitions or de facto ones following post-independence wars. Here, too, antagonisms are as much psychological as political. The post-independence identities of these states – or of Palestinians, who aspire to a state of their own – have been shaped by their conflicts with their neighbors, making it impossible to disengage politically or psychologically. Any reframing of relationships requires extraordinary leadership combined with outside assistance and pressure. Superordinate institutions and identities can also play a positive role, and have done so in the Irish conflict.

## Multiple Identities

The third tension arises from the multiple self-identifications that constitute individual identities. Earlier I argued that identifications are largely a response to our affiliations, roles, and bodies, but also reflect the histories of our families and collective identifications. The same is true of states; they have affiliations, perform roles in regional and international systems, possess bodies in the form of territories and have historical traditions.

State identifications are constantly evolving, sometimes in conflict with one another, often mythical, and rarely justified empirically. Powerful states use their influence to encourage foreigners to confirm their self-images. American leaders and media play this game with their alleged hegemony; they solicit and publicize statements by foreign leaders and politicians about how essential it is to the peace and prosperity of their countries. These affirmations are aimed at congress and other domestic audiences, but they are probably welcome to leaders and their advisors as well.[79] This strategy of validation has a long

[79] Ibid, ch. 4.

history. In Egypt and Assyria, soldiers and rulers of defeated armies were enslaved and made to march before the assembled masses. The Celestial Empire insisted on the more benign kowtow, a form of genuflection intended to show voluntary recognition of China's self-image and self-proclaimed role in the world.[80]

Multiple identities create some of the same kinds of problems and opportunities for states that they do for individuals. For individuals, clashing identifications and their ethical and behavioral imperatives are a source of anxiety. In the absence of good defense mechanisms, the tug and pull of multiple, crosscutting self-identifications can become incapacitating. For this reason, among others, we tend to deny contradictions in our identifications, and between them and our behavior. People rewrite their pasts to make them as consistent as possible with present understandings of themselves. To the degree that leaders and publics identify with their state and derive self-esteem from this identification, they respond in similar ways to tensions and contradictions among national identifications.

Consistency is also important for political reasons. Leaders who appear to contradict themselves are vulnerable to telling criticisms from opponents. They accordingly have a need to convince supporters and voters that their policies are consistent with one another, their principles, and national values. They must adhere to Groucho Marx's dictum of "always being sincere whether you mean it or not."[81] In Chapter 2 I argued that multiple national self-identifications and narratives supporting them make it easier for skillful leaders to make almost any policy appear consistent with national traditions.

## Conclusion

Ted Hopf warns that a world without identities would be one of "chaos, a world of pervasive an irremediable uncertainty, a world much more dangerous than anarchy."[82] His fear reflects the widespread but, I believe, questionable belief that identities are anchors for individuals and social collectivities and that without them the latter would be cast adrift. Self-identifications are only one of many factors

[80] Hevia, *Men from Afar*, pp. 124–33; Kang, *China Rising*, p. 56.
[81] Groucho Marx in *Night at the Opera* (1935).
[82] Hopf, "Promise of Constructivism in International Politics."

that determine how we behave and what we consider ethical, appropriate, or obligatory. People also act in response to their beliefs, lessons they have learned from the past, peer group pressures, desires to join higher-status groups, calculations intended to advance their interests or careers, and, perhaps above all else, simple habit.

Different self-identifications generate different, sometimes conflicting ethical imperatives or policy directives. This would not pose a serious problem if people had transitive identifications, as rational choice theorists unreasonably assume they have with respect to preferences. Numerous studies demonstrate that this assumption is unjustified. Self-identifications rise and fall in importance as a function of context and timing. If they provide ethical or policy guidance, it is of an arbitrary kind. Because of their labile and often conflicting nature, identifications rise and fall in importance and change in character. They are neither a source of unity and continuity nor can they serve as a steady ethical and behavioral compass.

Scholars who turn to identity to explain behavior ignore the ways in which behavior shapes self-identifications. They assume that identity determines interests, and that interests determine behavior. There is ample evidence that this process also works in reverse: behavior shapes interests and identities. When we act at odds with one or more of our self-identifications and recognize this asymmetry, we suffer anxiety. This recognition encourages us to change our behavior – or how we think about or define ourselves. At times, we alter our ethical beliefs or self-understandings to make them more consistent with our behavior.[83]

The United States once again offers an illustration. In the first decade of the current century there was a lively debate over America's role in the world. Neoconservatives (neocons) described their country as an empire and urged their compatriots to recognize this "reality" and act accordingly. Liberals rejected this characterization as empirically unwarranted and ethically offensive.[84] The neocon depiction of the United States was not entirely inaccurate, given Washington's imperial behavior toward less powerful states, especially in Latin America. Neocons sought to

[83] Bem, "Self-Perception Theory" and "Self-Perception."

[84] Ferguson, *Rise and Fall of American Empire*; Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power*; Bacevich, *Empire*; Nexon and Wright, "What's at Stake in the American Empire Debate."

bring self-definition and practice into harmony by defining the country in a way that recognized the unilateral and unrestrained use of force against other states and political groups. Liberal objections represented an attempt to defend a more benign characterization of national identity and use it to restrain imperial practices.

We must deny any ontological status or priority to identity or the multiple identifications of which it is composed. They are sometimes motives for behavior but just as often justifications, as in the example above. For purposes of analysis, we can privilege identifications, interests, or behavior, but we must recognize that their importance will vary with context and that whichever category we privilege we must explore the connections between it and the other two to explain the choices and behavior of individual and collective actors.

# 4 *Roles*

Individual and state identifications are derived largely from roles, affiliations, relationships to bodies and history. In this chapter, I restrict my analysis to roles, which provide an important source of identifications for individuals and states. I turn to role theory for a general understanding of roles and the functions they perform in society. I describe the kinds of roles available to actors in international society, the extent to which these roles are chosen or imposed, and the freedom states have to choose and shape them. I look at the ways in which roles and their performance reflect and shape national identifications. Finally, I explore some of the implications of the relationship between roles and identifications for the practice of international relations.

## Role Theory

Research on roles is primarily the preserve of sociology, although the concept of role has been widely applied by political scientists to domestic actors.[1] Sociologists began to theorize about roles in the 1930s.[2] Multiple perspectives emerged and led to functionalist, symbolic interactionist, structural, organizational, and cognitive research programs.[3] These approaches share some important features:

1. The division of labor is manifested through roles. Economic development accounts for the proliferation of roles in the modern era.
2. Roles are governed by norms that define appropriate behavior and that which is inappropriate and discouraged. Peer groups

[1] Harnisch, Frank, and Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations.*
[2] Simmel, "Zur Philosophie des Schauspielers"; Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*; Parsons, *Social System*; Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?*; Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*; Dahrendorf, *Homo sociologicus*; Goffman, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*; Biddle, "Recent Development in Role Theory."
[3] Biddle, "Recent Development in Role Theory."

and societies often reward actors for exemplary performance of approved roles.

3. Actors conform to roles and their norms because they are rewarded for doing so and shamed or punished for violating them. Roles can also provide a sense of belonging and purpose. Role performance is generally learned through emulation and can become habitual in its performance.
4. Roles vary in status. High-status roles are relatively few in number, are much sought after, and are frequently restricted to certain kinds of actors. Such roles have more elaborate rule packages than lower-status ones and generally also require more self-restraint. Rule packages are intended to minimize the abuse of low-status actors by high-status ones.
5. Actors are socialized into accepting the legitimacy of roles and the hierarchies they instantiate. High-status actors and their minions police these roles, their privileges, and rule packages as they are seen as the pillars of the social order.
6. When political, economic, and social conditions change, some roles come under stress. They can appear outdated, irrelevant, or illegitimate in the eyes of at least some actors. Pressures build to revise, transform, or terminate them. Change can also encourage adjustments in the ways roles are performed. Actors may perform their roles differently, or come under pressure from others to do so, as did monarchies and churches in the modern era.
7. Multiple roles inevitably generate conflict. This arises in the first instance when actors are forced to choose between roles or find ways to ease or finesse their contradictory requirements. Roles also produce conflict when they require actors to behave in ways they find difficult, ethically questionable, or at odds with their sense of self.
8. Multiple roles give rise to multiple hierarchies, and these hierarchies may well be in conflict. Examples include the conflict between ascribed and achieved roles, church and state, and aristocrats and the commercial classes. Such conflicts are arguably becoming more evident in international relations.
9. Successful role performance builds self-esteem, especially when achievement is recognized and rewarded by others actors. Role conflict has the reverse effect. Actors accordingly seek to avoid it by shunning roles that conflict or require behavior they oppose

or find stressful. The proliferation of roles has made such conflict more likely, but it has also created more choice for many actors, which can minimize this conflict.

Sociologists describe most human behavior as role related and consider roles the glue that binds societies together and makes them distinct. Roles enable and sustain social orders and their hierarchies and make behavior readable and predictable. Actors in all kinds of societies perform multiple roles, and role proliferation is a distinguishing feature of modernity. Multiple roles require us to wear different faces, and this in turn encourages us to step back and reflect on our diverse social selves. Reflection may convince us that we are falsifying ourselves in at least some of our roles and that there is some part of ourselves independent of them. Following Hegel, I contend that this recognition and the alienation and anxiety it arouses are the root cause of identity projects intended to make us "whole."[4]

Every role is distinct by virtue of its associated duties, rights, and responsibilities as often by the more general norms governing its performance. Most roles are performed by a myriad of actors (e.g., partner, teacher, chef, volunteer). As a general rule, the more actors that perform the same role, the more specific the expectations are about its performance. New roles, by contrast, have fewer expectations. High-status roles – like CEO or president –come with more inclusive rule packages, but also with the presupposition that office holders should have considerable freedom in how they perform them.

Society is maintained through roles and their performance and is transformed by the same means. Even gradual shifts in how roles are understood or enacted have the potential to bring about substantial change over time. Changes in performance become visible when they are followed by many actors. Recognition and emulation of these changes can bring about a phase transition and the establishment of new norms for these roles. Change can be stealthy when it is ongoing but not subject to commentary. It can be highly visible and controversial – as with gay marriage in many Western societies. Discourses are often critical vehicles of change, as they were with feminism. However, they can also reinforce existing roles and their performance, as realism tries to do in international relations.

[4] Lebow, *The Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1.

Roles entail many related practices, some more central than others. Even minor alterations in practices can set in motion a process that ultimately transforms a role. In Western societies it was routine for many decades to doff one's hat when a woman approached and to open house, carriage, and then car doors for the "fairer sex." These practices gradually changed, and this change was a catalyst for a debate about gender roles. Debate encouraged further and more fundamental changes in practices, some of them later legitimized, or even mandated, by court decisions or legislation. The underlying cause of change was growing acceptance of the principle of equality, first extended to religious and ethnic minorities, then to so-called racial groups, later to women, and more recently to homosexuals. In the United States, equal rights for women are far from universally accepted, and the continuing debate over the proper role of women is one of the several foci of what has been properly described as a culture war.[5] It is an appropriate use of the term because both sides have appealed to governments and courts to impose or enforce their points of view. In 2016, Donald Trump publicly insulted women during his campaign for the presidency, implicitly appealing for support from men who resented the granting of equality to women.

Much of the literature on change in international relations focuses on institutions.[6] They are obviously important, but we should not limit our analytical horizon to them because behavioral change at every level of social aggregation occurs independently of institutions. This includes the evolution of roles and their associated practices and discourses. The role of great power is a case in point. The concept and role developed before it was institutionalized at the Congress of Vienna. Institutions and roles are nevertheless closely connected because the former are one important source of the latter. The Concert of Europe and the United Nations substantially enlarged the role of great power. Changes in roles have the potential to alter not only actors' behavior but also how institutions function. International relations scholars who focus on institutions should pay more attention to the ways in which changes in society prompt shifts in roles and their performance, and by this means changes in institutions.

[5] Thomson, *Culture Wars and Enduring American Dilemmas*.
[6] Holsti, *Taming the Sovereign*; Reuss-Smit, *Moral Purpose of the State*; Buzan, *From International to World Society?*

Institutional change can be independent of roles. Many institutions have formal or informal procedures for changing their rules and procedures. H. L. A. Hart made us aware of the importance of these "rules about rules" and how demands for change are more likely to succeed when they make use of them.[7] I posit a third level of interaction: rules for changing rules about rules. The civil rights movement appealed to the courts and congress, institutions with constitutional authority to initiate changes in rules that would facilitate changes in practices. To get their attention and support, civil rights activists had to go outside of and violate the rules for change through sit-ins and other nonviolent protests. Their efforts met strong local resistance; demonstrators were hosed, beaten, arrested, and a few killed. Extralegal activity and the reaction to it by opponents won much support for civil rights outside of the South and led to court intervention and civil rights legislation in Congress. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 mandated a new and greatly expanded role for federal courts in the enforcement of civil rights. In this instance, radical changes by African Americans in their role definition and related practices ultimately produced court decisions and legislation that changed other practices in the society at large.

## International Roles

International society is hierarchical. It has a political and economic structure imposed by coalitions of powerful states.[8] It is the thinnest of societies but still has important behavioral consequences. International society determines who counts as an actor, what roles are acceptable, which of them have high or low status, how they should be enacted, and who is capable of performing them. According to Martha Finnemore, "states are *socialized* to want certain things."[9] First on the wish list of many leaders is the attainment of high-status roles for their states, and by extension for themselves. Reflecting on the international relations of his day, Max Weber observed that states that have become larger and more powerful than others through expansion seek special privileges and "their pretensions may influence the external conduct of the power structures." This is because states compete for prestige

[7] Hart, *Concept of Law*.
[8] Clark, *Hierarchy of States*; Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations*.
[9] Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, p. 2.

within the regional or international society to which they belong.[10] In *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, I argue that this phenomenon is equally evident in contemporary international relations, but considerably less likely to result in great power wars.[11]

Roles come with responsibilities as well as privileges. This principle was accepted by the great powers at the Congress of Vienna. Domestic responsibilities were firmly established by the 1878 Congress of Berlin, where rules were laid down for treatment of ethnic minorities.[12] Rule packages have become thicker over time, and states – great powers especially – are expected to be more restrained in their behavior and assume some responsibility for upholding the social order and its underlying values. State roles are more negotiable than the responsibilities associated with them, although great powers especially can retain their status even if they consistently fail to live up to their responsibilities. This is not true for rising powers that aspire to be recognized as great powers.

International society is thin because of the diversity of values and practices among its many actors.[13] Attempts by any set of actors to strengthen and enforce particular values and practices are invariably denounced as imperialism by others. Action of this kind has the potential to trigger international culture wars. The invocation of so-called Asian values by states like Singapore to justify resistance to Western pressure to implement human rights norms is a case in point.[14] Regional societies are likely to be more robust when composed of actors who share many common values. Europe is the best example, but even members of the European Union find it impossible to agree on a list of core values to include in the preamble to their constitution. Before the global financial crisis beginning in 2007, *Eurobarometer* surveys indicate that between 40 and 50 percent of EU citizens self-identified as European and that 70 percent were proud to be European in addition to being members of their national communities.[15]

[10] Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. II, pp. 910–11.
[11] Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*.
[12] Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, 115–16; Soutou, "L'ordre Européen de Versailles à Locarno."
[13] See Frost, "Tragedy, Ethics and International Relations," and Mayall, "Tragedy, Progress, and International Order," for a debate on the degree of order in international society.
[14] Zakaria, "Conversation with Lee Kwan Yew."
[15] Risse, *Community of Europeans?*, pp. 40–41.

Feeling European is not the same thing as agreeing on what it is to be European. Polls over the last decade show a growing division within Europe in this regard. The vision of a cosmopolitan, secular, liberal, and globalizing Europe competes with a nationalist, xenophobic alternative and one that emphasizes the Christian character of the continent.[16] In part for this reason European identification does not necessarily translate into support for the EU.[17] Surveys and experiments indicate that the EU is "real" for political and business elites but has little psychological existence in the minds of ordinary people. By contrast, most people have vivid, if diverse, images of their states.[18] Increased personal and informational exchanges across European borders have failed to produce a European identity.[19] These exchanges are far from the norm. Those who have "deep economic and social ties with their counterparts across Europe" and benefit from them may account for no more than 10–15 percent of the EU population. Another 40 percent have a "more shallow" relationship, and the remaining 45–50 percent no relationship at all. The EU has increasingly become associated with economic stagnation and austerity.[20] *Eurobarometer* surveys show that trust has dropped lower than ever before – 31 percent in comparison to 50 percent before the financial crisis.[21] In 2014, Europeans valued the mobility and freedom they associated with the EU, but 32 percent thought their countries would fare better outside of the Union.[22]

[16] Kaina, "'Wir' und die 'Anderen'"; Kraus, *Union of Diversity*; Cerutti and Lucarelli, *Search for a European Identity*; Checkel and Katzenstein, "The Politicization of European Identities"; Castiglione, "Political Identity in a Community of Strangers"; Risse, *Community of Europeans?*, ch. 2; Mummendey and Waldzus, "National Differences and European Plurality."

[17] Bruter, "On What Citizens Mean by Feeling 'European'," finds that 40–50 percent of Europeans only identity with their state; Nicholas Watt, "Germany: Loss of trust in EU is 'great danger'," *Guardian*, 28 January 2014, p. 6.

[18] Castano, "European Identity."

[19] Sweet and Sandholz, *European Integration and Supranational Governance*, p. 6; Kuhn, "Individual Transnationalism, Globalisation and Euroscepticism"; Fligstein, *Euro-Clash*, p. 250.

[20] Taylor, *End of European Integration*, pp. 26–35.

[21] Eurobarometer, *Public Opinion in the European Union: First Results*, 2012, pp. 13–14.

[22] Eurobarometer, Special Eurobarometer 415, "Europeans in 2014," pp. 41–46. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_415_en.pdf

Regional and international societies differ from their domestic counterparts in the smaller number of roles they make available to actors. In the modern state system, territorial states are the principal actors and perform a limited number of roles. Traditional roles, such as empire and "heathen" political unit, no longer exist, and others, such as colony, have become rare. Some roles, among them great power, rising power, neutral, and failed state, came into existence in the nineteenth century. Non state actors, such as international organization, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and corporations, are either new or have greatly increased in the number of actors who fulfill them. Traditional and new roles have evolved.

Most new participants in the international system are non state actors. This is a category that includes international organizations, corporations, and INGOs. The number of INGOs rose from fewer than 1,000 in 1956 to almost 65,000 in 2011.[23] They have increasingly been recognized as legitimate actors by states, and their influence has grown enormously, especially when it comes to agenda setting, monitoring, and implementation.[24] Sanctions against South Africa, the SALT I and II arms control treaties and the end of the Cold War, the Montreal Protocol to reverse the hole in the ozone layer, the 2008 Ottawa Treaty to ban land mines, and the Right to Protect were set in motion through intensive lobbying of governments by NGOs and INGOs.[25] These achievements have facilitated their recognition as

[23] Union of International Associations, citing data from the *Yearbook of International Institutions*, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35293&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (accessed 16 July 2013)

[24] Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norms Dynamics and Political Change"; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; Büthe, "Governance Through Private Authority?; Carpenter, "Vetting the Advocacy Agenda"; Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame*; Prakash and Gugerty, *Rethinking Advocacy Organizations*; Tarrow, *New Transnational Activism*; Baumann and Stengel, "Foreign Policy Analysis, Globalisation and Non-State Actors."

[25] Klotz, *Norms in International Relations*; Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces*; Adler, "Emergence of Cooperation"; Parson, *Protecting the Ozone Layer*; Young, *Creating Regimes*; Cameron, Lawson, and Tomlin, eds., *To Walk Without Fear*; Reich and Lebow, *Goodbye Hegemony!*, ch. 3; Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norms Dynamics and Political Change"; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; Rutherford, "Evolving Arms Control Agenda"; Cameron, Lawson and Tomlin, *To Walk without Fear*; Hampson, Daudelin, Hay, Reid, and Martin, *Madness in the Multitude*; Reich, "Evolution of a Doctrine."

legitimate actors, and this in turn has enhanced their influence. Many of these organizations are invited to attend important international meetings, find easier access to national legislators and policymakers, and with their higher profile are more successful in raising the funds that sustain their activities.[26] There is considerable research on INGOs, but not on their self-identifications and how they are formed or how their growing prominence has influenced the identifications of states.[27]

Roles are embedded in hierarchies, and the nature of these hierarchies underwent significant change in the last century. The distinction between sovereign states and dependent territories largely disappeared when colonialism ended. Some dependencies nevertheless remain, among them Gibraltar, Western Sahara, Anguilla, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, the U.S. and British Virgin Islands, the Falkland Islands, New Caledonia, and American Samoa.[28] Occupied states have always been relatively few in number, and the recent examples of Afghanistan and Iraq now have indigenous but highly contested governments. The West Bank is an occupied territory, and some states or exile groups would like the Falklands (Islas Malvinas) and Tibet to be classified as such. Taiwan, Palestine, Northern Cyprus, Transnistria, Abkhazia, and the part of eastern Ukraine occupied by pro-Russian rebels are in a greater limbo. Taiwan has all but lost its recognition as a state and the others are to varying degrees de facto states but do not have de jure standing.[29] Students of sovereignty distinguish between internal (control over territory) and external (recognition by others) components and disagree among themselves as to whether there are "degrees" of sovereignty.[30]

[26] Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norms Dynamics and Political Change"; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; Büthe, "Governance Through Private Authority?"; Carpenter, "Vetting the Advocacy Agenda"; Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame*; Prakash and Gugerty, *Rethinking Advocacy Organizations*; Tarrow, *New Transnational Activism*.

[27] See Bloodgood and Schmitz, "Researching NGOs," for a review of this literature.

[28] Sharman, "International Hierarchies and Contemporary Imperial Governance."

[29] Caspersen, *Unrecognized States*. In 2013, The Republic of China was recognized by 22 states and the People's Republic of China by 172. Wikipedia, "Foreign Relations of Taiwan," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_relations_of_Taiwan#Entities_with_no_relations_with_either_ROC_or_PRC (accessed 27 September 2014).

[30] Krasner "Abiding Sovereignty"; Pegg, *International Society and the De Facto State*; Batta, "Getting a Look into the Black Hole of Unrecognized States."

The 1648 Peace of Westphalia, ushered in by the Treaties of Osnabrück and Münster, is the conventional starting date of the modern state system.[31] These treaties were signed by the Holy Roman Emperor, the princes of the Holy Roman Empire, the House of Habsburg, the Kingdoms of Spain and France, the Swedish Empire, the Dutch Republic, and a number of free imperial cities. Kingdom, empire, and city-state are roles that predate the modern state system and extend back to antiquity. Dynasty is also a premodern term and described a family whose territorial holdings might include diverse kinds of political units, as was true of the Habsburgs.

Kingdom was once a powerful role and arguably the dominant one in the premodern era when rulers considered territories their private fiefdoms. Kings and queens competed for territory and standing while they struggled to establish effective control over the territories they claimed. Success at centralization and the rise of state bureaucracies for purposes of war making and display gave the state an identity distinct from that of its ruler.[32] Democratization marginalized royalty. Kingdoms continue to exist, as do emperors, kings, queens, and princes. Living in a kingdom is still a matter of pride to some inhabitants – more so in Scandinavia, United Kingdom, and Japan than in Belgium or Spain.[33] Some citizens of these countries proudly identify themselves as "subjects," but most do not. Modernity encourages classification and simplification, and the state has become the principal accepted role for actors in the international system. It encompasses kingdoms, principalities, dominions, republics of all kinds, city-states, and federations. Under international law all states have equal rights regardless of their size, power, location, kind of government, or the religion or ethnicity of their inhabitants.

***Great Power***: Within the category of state, differentiation based on power was always important. The Peace of Westphalia recognized special privileges for some powerful political units, but the

[31] Holsti, *Taming the Sovereign*, pp. 121–28.

[32] Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, ch. 6.

[33] "How popular are Europe's Monarchies?," *Royal Central*, 26 June 2014, http://royalcentral.co.uk/blogs/insight/how-popular-are-europes-monarchies-33508 (accessed 15 July 2015). The Norwegian monarchy is supported by more than 90 percent of the population. The British monarchy is supported by 70–80 percent of the population, and Denmark's and Sweden's by about the same.

term "great power" did not come into wide use until the eighteenth century. The concept of great power emerged together with the state system. Vattel thought of a great power as a state that could stand up to any combination of others. In the nineteenth century, the German historian Otto Ranke described a great power as a state that could maintain a sphere of influence that was respected by other powers.[34] The status of great power received institutional recognition at the Congress of Vienna, which formalized what Edward Keene called the "grading of powers" based on their capabilities.[35] Great powers attained special rights and corresponding responsibilities, including the duty of upholding the international order. They recognized one another's sovereignty, at least legally limiting territorial aggression by any one of them against the others. By creating a two-tier society, they also implicitly legitimized intervention against lesser political units.[36]

The Concert of Europe succumbed to ideological divisions between liberal England and the reactionary monarchies of the east.[37] It nevertheless broke new ground because there had been peace conferences to settle wars in the past, but none to make arrangements to manage international society on a continuing basis[38] The concept of great power endured, and the Ottoman Empire, the United States, Germany, Italy, and Japan were admitted to the club in the course of the nineteenth century, and the Soviet Union and China in the twentieth.

Great power status is conferred by other states, and not every state that appears to meet the criteria is recognized as a great power.[39] In

[34] Hurrell, "Vattel"; Ranke, "Great Powers"; Neumann, "Status Is Cultural."

[35] Keene, "International Hierarchy and the Origins of the Modern Practice of Intervention."

[36] Nicolson, *Congress of Vienna*, p. 137; Webster, *Congress of Vienna*, p. 61; Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, pp. 97–98; see Osiander, *The States System of Europe*, p. 234, on the emergence of great powers. Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, pp. 96–97; Bukovansky, Clark, Eckersley, Price, Reus-Smit, and Wheeler, *Special Responsibilities*, pp. 26–28; Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*; see Jarrett, *Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy*, on the special rights of great powers.

[37] Gentz, *Dépêche inédites du chevalier de Gentzaux Hospodars de Valachie*; Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, ch. 4.; Bridge and Bullen, *Great Powers and the European State System*, p. 2; Jarrett, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*.

[38] Langhorne, *Collapse of Europe*, p. 318.

[39] Hobson and Sharman, "The Enduring Place of Hierarchy in World Politics"; Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*; Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*; Suzuki, "Seeking 'Civilised' Great Power in a Contracting International Society."

her study of the American and French revolutionary regimes Mlada Bukovansky shows that state power must first be considered legitimate by existing great powers, and "justified in principle because it rests not just on force but on acquiescence." Entry into the club was denied to the Soviet Union for some years after the Bolshevik Revolution, and from 1949 to 1971 the United States and allies kept the People's Republic from occupying the China seat in the United Nations.[40] Shogo Suzuki argues that great power status, like the concert of Europe, is a "social and socially legitimated hierarchy within international society."[41]

States sometimes retain great power status after their power has declined. Hans Morgenthau believed that "brilliant diplomacy" could make up for raw power and offered France as his example. It retained its great power status after the Napoleonic Wars due to the diplomacy of Talleyrand.[42] Less powerful states have also been recognized as great powers as it serves the interest of other great powers. In 1945, France and China were made permanent members of the Security Council. At the time, France was weak and impoverished, and China weaker and poorer still and in the throes of a civil war. The China seat went to the Kuomintang, even though it controlled only part of the country. Subsequent efforts to expand the number of permanent members of the Security Council have been resisted by states that feel they will lose prestige if their rivals are admitted or that the "club" will lose some of its value if its size increases.

Erik Ringmar describes international society as a ring of concentric circles with the great powers inhabiting the innermost ring.[43] Max Weber observed that prestige is essential for becoming a great power, and becoming one confers prestige.[44] Some Victorian thinkers confidently asserted that great powers bred great individuals, and noted a surprising correlation between chess champions and powerful states.

[40] According to Neumann, "Russia's Quest for Great PowerHood," this phenomenon pre- and postdates the Soviet Union. Russia has often met the conditions for great power status but its European contemporaries have always doubted whether it qualified on normative grounds.

[41] Suzuki, "Seeking 'Civilised' Great Power in a Contracting International Society."

[42] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 1st ed., p. 107; Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, p. 81; Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, pp. 99–101; Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, p. 107.

[43] Ringmar, *Identity, Interest, and Action*.

[44] Weber, *Economy and Society*, II, p. 926; Lebow, *Wissenschaftliche Wahrheit*.

John Stuart Mill argued that recognition of a great power was recognition as a great "civilization."[45] Such arrogance is less frequently voiced today, but it is arguably an implicit assumption of many citizens of great powers.

To become a great power, an aspiring state must acquire the "status markers" associated with great power identity and persuade existing great powers that it deserves this status.[46] Historically, recognition as a great power has depended primarily on military prowess. By the eighteenth century, display had become an increasingly important criterion. It took the form of grand palaces, parks, and other forms of city beautification as well as support for the plastic and performing arts, science, and medicine. In the late nineteenth century, industrial might, colonies, and fleets became important markers. In the second half of the twentieth century, national wealth, nuclear weapons, space exploration, Nobel prizes, and Olympic medals augmented or replaced these earlier markers.[47] China and India, the two most recent great power aspirants, have aspired to all of the accomplishments noted in the previous sentence, and many analysts believed they acquired nuclear weapons to buttress their claims for status.[48] Following the tradition of great powers, China and India engage in conspicuous consumption at the national level, which includes satellite launches, missions to Mars, and the construction of new stadia and airports in conjunction with major sporting events like the Olympics and Commonwealth Games.[49] Recently, China has sought to mobilize traditional Confucian thought as a soft power and status resource.[50]

[45] Bell, "Victorian Visions of Global Order," also notes that Matthew Arnold and others challenged the equation of size with greatness.

[46] Russell, *Identity Diplomacy*; Suzuki, "Seeking 'Civilised' Great Power in a Contracting International Society."

[47] On nuclear weapons, see O'Neil, "Nuclear Weapons and National Prestige"; Hymans, *Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation*.

[48] Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, pp. 441, 448–89; Nayar and Paul, *India in the World Order*, pp. 219–20, 231: Larson, Paul, and Wohlforth, "Status and World Order"; Schweller, "Status Signaling."

[49] Frank, *Luxury Fever*, ch. 9; Larson, Paul, and Wohlforth, "Status and World Order"; Jason Burke, "Indian Mars satellite successfully enters orbit, brining country into space elite," *Guardian*, 24 September 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/sep/24/india-mars-satellite-successfully-enters-orbit (accessed 24 September 2014).

[50] Cohen, *India's Emerging Power*, p. 62; Gries, "Identity and Conflict in Sino-American Relations"; Ding, *Soft Power*; Black, Lindsay, and Yih-Jye

Great powers must be willing and able to uphold the practices and core values of international society.[51] They chair international conferences, participate in elite convocations, and are expected to assume a range of responsibilities commensurate with their status.[52] Their ability to govern has always relied on a combination of power and legitimacy.[53] From the Congress of Vienna on great powers insisted on their right to order the system in the name of stability.[54] As hierarchy is increasingly unacceptable to the majority of states, great powers exercise less authority than in the past, but can impose their preferences in the rare instances when they are united. At times, less powerful states seek great power intervention to maintain or restore political or economic order. The key point is that great power influence is easier to exercise when accepted as legitimate, and that requires acting in accord with generally accepted practices to achieve commonly desired ends.[55] For this reason, Ian Clark observes, actors seeking status engage "in endless strategies of *legitimation*."[56] I return to this question in Chapter 7.

The contemporary understanding of great power responsibilities includes responsibility for security and the international economic order. However, great powers do not have exclusive provenance in these domains. Economic management is coordinated through several "G" institutions that include the largest economies. Also important are international organizations like the IMF and World Bank and private banks and corporations and other, more informal institutions, like the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR).

Since 1815, great powers have shown varying degrees of responsibility in carrying out their duties. Not infrequently, they have violated norms in the eyes of other powers and international public opinion. These accusations were made against the Bush administrations when

Hwang, "China and Japan's Quest for Great Power Status"; Zhang, "The Rise of Chinese Exceptionalism in International Relations."

[51] Wight, *System of States*; Bull, *Anarchical Society*, p. 171; Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms, and Decisions*, p. 52.

[52] Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms, and Decisions*; Reus-Smit, *Moral Purpose of the State* p. 137; Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, p. 100.

[53] Coicaud, *Legitimacy and Politics*, p. 10; Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, p. 5.

[54] See Bukovansky, Clark, Eckersley, Price, Reus-Smit, and Wheeler, *Special Responsibilities*, pp. 28–34 for examples.

[55] Ibid., p. 45 for a similar claim.

[56] Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*, p. 2.

it invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, and the Bush and Obama administrations when they illegally detained and tortured terror suspects, spied on allied leaders, and used drones against suspected terrorists. Russia encountered criticism from other great powers and NGOs for undemocratic practices at home, its 2008 military intervention in Georgia, and 2014 intervention in Ukraine. China faces similar protests over its human rights record, treatment of minorities, and efforts to extend its control over disputed islands. All these powers defended their behavior as necessary to protect their national interests and uphold the stability of the international order.

***Rising power*** is a more informal category applied to states thought to be increasing their power and influence and anxious to join the ranks of great powers. Often there is an informal consensus within the diplomatic community about which powers are rising at the regional or international levels. Historically, a rising power could be identified by the percentage of national income it allocated to its military and the frequency with which it engaged in war. Sweden in the seventeenth century, Russia and Prussia in the eighteenth century, and Japan in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries all spent disproportionately on their armed forces and were particularly aggressive.[57] Rising powers for the most part make war against less powerful states and once great but now declining great powers.[58] Contrary to the assertions of power transition theories, great powers almost always attempt to placate rising powers and make them responsible members of the society of states. Sweden, Prussia, and Russia were recognized as great powers, as was the United States after the Spanish-American War. Japan was rapidly brought into the system following its defeat of Russia in 1905. It took some time for the Soviet Union and China to gain acceptance, but even powers that initially opposed admitting them to the "club" came around to seeing the many possible advantages of recognizing their regimes and their states as great powers.[59]

Great power status achieves institutional recognition in permanent membership in the UN Security Council. Equally important is recognition by other great powers of the state's "enhanced responsibilities,

[57] Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, ch. 6.
[58] Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4.
[59] See Manning, *Nature of International Society*, pp. 102–05, for the concept of the great powers as a club.

privileges, or rights" by invitation to summits, strategic and economic fora, membership in the Group of 5, Group of 7, and other organizations, as well as informal dialogues and official state visits.[60] Japan was de facto recognized as a great power through its 1902 alliance with Great Britain and participation in the 1905 Portsmouth Peace Conference, convened to end its war with Russia. In the case of China, Nixon's 1972 visit to Peking and meetings with Mao Zedong were a turning point not only in Sino-American relations but in China's rise to great power status.[61] The 2005 nuclear cooperation agreement between India and the United States did not elevate India to great power status but still raised its status.[62]

Sometimes, elevation in status is not enough to satisfy the leaders or peoples of the aspiring state. Japan was treated as a second-class superpower by the United States and pressured in 1907 into signing the so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement" that stopped Japanese emigration into the United States.[63] Japan was also humiliated by President Woodrow Wilson at the Versailles Peace Conference. Acting on his racist beliefs, Wilson rejected Japan's Racial Equality Proposal.[64] In the 1920s, Japan felt discriminated against by the Washington Naval Treaty that did not put it on an equal footing with the United States and the United Kingdom in the construction of capital ships. In the era of détente, Washington was willing to recognize Moscow as an equal military power but not as its political equal. This asymmetry was a major source of conflict, as Soviet leaders placed enormous importance on formal superpower equality.[65] Rising powers can create their own organizations in addition to seeking entrance into existing ones. The BRICS – the shorthand acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – have created IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa) and BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China), the latter to coordinate policy on global warming.[66]

[60] Larson, Paul, and Wohlforth, "Status and World Order"; Paul and Shankar, "Status Accommodation through Institutional Means."
[61] Goh, *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China*, pp. 66–67, 78–81, 165–66, 200.
[62] Mohan, *Impossible Allies*, pp. 35, 47–58, 77–78.
[63] Neu, *Uncertain Friendship*.
[64] Lauren, *Power and Prejudice*; Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality*.
[65] Kornienko, *Kholodnaia voina*; Dobrynin, *In Confidence*; Wohlforth, *Elusive Balance*, ch. 7 and "Status Dilemmas and Interstate Conflict."
[66] Mohan, "Rising India"; Burges, "Brazil's Africa Strategy."

As noted, the traditional way for a rising power to becoming a great power was by military conquest. In the eighteenth century, the American and French Republics claimed standing on a different basis: their republican form of government. Both countries found receptive audiences among liberal intellectuals, but status in the system remained on the whole power based. In the twentieth century, the Bolsheviks made an appeal for foreign support on the basis of their revolutionary socialism. When intervention failed, the victorious allied powers refused to recognize the Soviet Union and imposed a *cordon sanitaire* to keep it isolated. Maoist China also appealed for standing on the basis of its political system and leadership in the struggle against imperialism. More recently, China has sought standing due to its economic development, foreign aid assistance, and responsible participation in a full range of international organizations.[67]

Victory in war and territorial aggrandizement are now de jure and de facto verboten. States that draw the sword without authorization by the international community lose standing, as the United States did in the aftermath of its invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Europeans, extremely sympathetic to the United States in the initial aftermath of 9/11, came to regard it as a greater threat to world peace than North Korea.[68] In Britain, the number of those with favorable opinions of the United States dropped from 83 percent of the population in 2000 to 56 percent in 2006. In other countries, the United States suffered an even steeper decline.[69] Since the Iraq War, the United States has in

[67] Fravel, *Strong Borders Secure Nation*, pp. 300–19; Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?"; Foot and Walter, *China, The United States and the Global Order*.

[68] BBC News, 18 March 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/2862343.stm, showed that on the eve of the Iraq invasion, only 34 percent of Europeans viewed the United States positively, compared to 70 percent in 2002. In Spain, only 14 percent had a favorable image. In Eastern Europe, where the United States is traditionally held in higher esteem, support for the United States dropped from 80 percent to 50 percent in Poland. *Time Europe* magazine, asked readers "which country poses the greatest threat to world peace in 2003." North Korea was identified as the great threat by 6.7 percent of the 700,000 respondents, Iraq by 6.3, and the United States by a whopping 86.9 percent; http://www.time.com/time/europe/gdml/peace2003.html

[69] The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "15-Nation Pew Global Attitudes Survey," 13 June 2006.

effect undergone a shift in its international profile from a status quo to a revisionist power.[70]

Great powers are looked up to by others. Leaders have actively sought recognition for their states as great powers as an end in itself but also as a means of forging national identity and legitimizing their rule. Erik Ringmar argues that Gustavus Adolphus waged war to gain external recognition as a major power as a means of creating a Swedish nation.[71] Variants of this story could be told about Hohenzollern Prussia and the Russia of Peter and Catherine. Governments of once great, even dominant powers can be compelled by their publics to attempt to regain their lost standing, as were the leaders of post-Napoleonic France. Politicians can gain support, and even rise to power, by promising to restore greatness.[72] Mussolini and Adolph Hitler pursued this strategy, and Hitler's popularity reached a high point when he overturned much of the Versailles settlement without resorting to war.[73]

***Dominant power*** is an informal status, and there is a consensus that there have been three of them in the last 500 years: Spain in the sixteenth century, France from the mid-seventeenth to early nineteenth century, and the United States since 1945.[74] The United States has 4.5 percent of world's population but accounts for 23 percent of the global GDP and more than 19 percent of world purchasing power. By comparison, China has 19.4 percent of the world's population but its GDP is only 9.4 percent of the global total.[75]

***Failed state*** is a post-1945 concept that has been applied to political units where order has broken down and government is either nonexistent or too weak to impose its authority and provide security.[76] Alison Ayers notes that it is a highly ideological category, but this is

[70] Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, "Global Public Opinion in the Bush Year (2001–2008), 18 December 2008, http://www.pewglobal.org/2008/12/18/global-public-opinion-in-the-bush-years-2001–2008/ (accessed 7 November 2013).

[71] Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action*.

[72] Weber, *Economy and Society*, II, pp. 910–11.

[73] Kershaw, "*Hitler Myth*," pp. 120–39: Weinberg, *Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany*, vol. 1, pp. 159–79, 239–63.

[74] Clark, *Legitimacy and International Society*, pp. 24, 162, also makes a sharp distinction between dominance and hegemony.

[75] Reisen and Turkisch, *Shifting Wealth*.

[76] See Rotberg, *When States Fail*, for valuable essays on this topic.

unavoidable because, like most other roles, it is justification to increase or decrease the status and influence of actors.[77] The concept of failed state has gained more prominence since the end of the Cold War. In 2002, and again in 2006, the U.S. government's annual *National Security Strategy* declared: "America is now threatened less by conquering states than by failed ones."[78] The World Bank hopped onto this bandwagon. It contrasts "failed" and "fragile" states to "successful states" of which United States is held out as leading exemplar.[79] For American neoconservatives, the category of failed state is closely connected to that of rogue state.[80]

In 2014, the Failed State Index listed seventeen states that qualified to some degree as failures.[81] At the end of that year, South Sudan was also judged to be a failed state.[82] Sierra Leone emerged from ten years of civil war in 2002 and has regained it status as a normal state. Order was reimposed by 17,000 foreign troops that disarmed tens of thousands of rebels and local militias. Some failed states are put into receivership as de facto "protectorates."[83] In others, weak regimes or armed factions prey on their population. They harass, exploit, and murder citizens not of their faction, clan, or sect. A collapsed state like Somalia is an extreme version of a failed state, "a geographical expression, and a black hole into which a failed polity has fallen."[84]

[77] Ayers, "An Illusion of the Epoch."

[78] United States Government, *National Security Strategy*, September 2002, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf (accessed 20 August 2013); Robert Gates, "Helping Others Defend Themselves. The Future of US Security Assistance," *Foreign Affairs* May/June 2010, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66224/robert-m-gates/helping-others-defend-themselves (accessed 20 August 2013).

[79] Julian Borger, "World Bank urges new focus on global development in fragile states," *Guardian*, 11 April 2011, http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2011/apr/11/world-bank-global-development-focus (accessed 30 January 2014); Ignatieff, "Intervention and State Failure."

[80] Robert Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1994/02/the-coming-anarchy/304670/ (accessed 20 August 2013).

[81] Wikipedia, "List of countries by Failed State Index," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Failed_States_Index (accessed 9 January 2014).

[82] David Howden, "South Sudan: The State That Fell Apart in a Week, *Guardian*, 23 December 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/23/south-sudan-state-that-fell-apart-in-a-week (accessed 9 January 2014).

[83] Bain, *Between Anarchy and Society*, p. 69.

[84] Rotberg, "Failure and Collapse of Nation-States."

The role of ***Neutral*** emerged in the aftermath of the 1648 Treaties of Westphalia. This peace settlement recognized Switzerland's independence from the Holy Roman Empire and its neutrality. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna created the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815 and stipulated that it would be neutral. Belgium became neutral in 1830, when it achieved its independence from the Netherlands. Neutrality was imposed on both countries by the great powers on the grounds that occupation by any of them would put others at a disadvantage and become the catalyst of a general war. The laws concerning the rights and duties of neutrality are contained, for the most part, in the Declaration of Paris of 1856. They were further clarified in Sections 5 and 13 of the Hague Convention of 1907. Neutral states cannot initiate wars against other states, join other belligerents, provide war material to them, or willingly allow their armed forces to transit or occupy their territories. Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, and Sweden have at times described their status as one of "armed neutrality"; they insist they will defend themselves against any attacks. During World War I and II, Switzerland and Sweden declared themselves to be "non-belligerents."

Twenty-two states are, or have been, neutrals. These include Austria (1920–38, 1954–94), Belgium (1839–1914), Costa Rica (since 1949), Ireland (1937–72), Netherlands (1839–1940), Norway (1905–40), Panama (since 1989), Switzerland (since 1815), and Vatican City (since 1929). Cambodia, Laos, Mexico, Moldova, and Serbia all claim neutrality, but either their neutrality is not accepted by other states or members of the international community do not consider them to have conformed to the terms of neutrality. Laos was made a neutral by an international agreement signed in July 1962 in Geneva by fourteen nations, including the five permanent members of the Security Council. Its leadership promptly violated its neutrality by joining with Americans to fight against North Vietnamese and local rebel forces.

A more informal kind of neutrality developed during the Cold War when a number of newly independent states led by India, Egypt, Yugoslavia, and Indonesia declared their neutrality in the Cold War. Anti–Cold War and anticolonialism found collective expression at the Bandung Conference of 1955.[85] In 1961, the Non-Aligned Movement

[85] Hinton, *China's Turbulent Quest*, pp. 75–77; Mancall, *China at the Center*, pp. 421–22.

was founded in Belgrade. By 2012, the Non-Aligned, had 120 members and 12 observers, or nearly two-thirds of the UN's membership. It is committed to opposing racism, imperialism and hegemony, and great power and "bloc" politics, although it might itself be considered something of a bloc. A Non-Aligned summit was held in Iran and its next one was scheduled to meet in Venezuela in 2015.[86] Nonalignment of this kind has no legal standing but makes an important political statement.

***Rogue state*** is a controversial category invented by the Reagan administration to brand and isolate its enemies and justify sanctions against them. In July 1985, President Reagan proclaimed: "we are not going to tolerate … attacks from outlaw states by the strangest collection of misfits, loony tunes, and squalid criminals since the advent of the Third Reich."[87] In 1994, Clinton national security advisor Antony Lake wrote in *Foreign Affairs* about "the reality of recalcitrant and outlaw states that not only choose to remain outside the family [of democratic nations] but also assault its basic values." Lake pointed to five regimes: North Korea, Cuba, Iraq, Iran, and Libya.[88] The U.S. Department of State stopped using this controversial category in 2000, but it continues to be applied by journalists and scholars to states they consider threats to world peace. The criteria for qualification as a rogue state include authoritarian rule, little or no respect for human rights, sponsorship of terrorism, and attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction. The term has been routinely applied to Cuba, Syria, Pakistan, Serbia, Sudan, and Afghanistan. The slightly less derogatory term of "pariah state" has been used to describe Burma and Zimbabwe.[89]

Critics of American foreign policy have tried to turn the tables by describing the United States as a rogue state. William Blum argues that the United States has earned the appellation by virtue of its assassination, use of chemical and biological weapons, kidnapping,

[86] Morphet, "Multilateralism and the Non-Aligned Movement"; Potter and Mukhatzanova, *Nuclear Politics and the Non-Aligned Movement*.

[87] Ronald Reagan, "Remarks at the Annual Convention of the American Bar Association," 8 July 1985, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=38854 (accessed 18 July 2013).

[88] Lake, "Confronting Backlash States."

[89] Allman, *Rogue State*; Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*; Rotberg, *Worst of the Worst*.

looting, eavesdropping, drug dealing, and election trampling. At home, it perpetuates racial injustice, intensive surveillance of citizens, and atrocious conditions in the federal and state prison systems, where a higher percentage of its citizens are locked up than almost any other country.[90] Rogue state is a rhetorical device for labeling enemies of all kinds.[91] It is the international equivalent of the category of "hooligan," used by former Soviet Union to brand opponents and dismiss the political nature of their protests. It has no official standing like great power, neutral, and occupied territory.

***Non state actors*** became increasingly important in the course of the last century. They consist of international organizations and nongovernmental actors (NGOs). The former run the gamut from single-issue institutions like the International Postal Union and International Red Cross and Red Crescent to broad-gauge ones like the United Nations. The UN is the umbrella organization for many specialized agencies and NGOs.

## Negotiating Roles

Individuals and states perform roles that are imposed on them by society or those they convince others to allow them to enact. How these roles are performed depends on the nature of the role as well as the resources and skill of the actor. A young person drafted into his or her country's military often has little say about training and assignments. Someone with enough education to qualify as an officer will invariably have more choice, and in some countries might avoid conscription altogether. University entrance offers another example. Richer parents can afford better schools, private tutoring, and life experiences that make candidates more prepared and attractive to admissions officers. At the University of Cambridge, almost 50 percent of undergraduates in my college come from public schools (that is from private schools) as they perform better on standard tests and interviews.

Some international roles combine choice and assignment, as in the case of a neutral. Switzerland and Sweden chose this role. Sweden suffered grievously during the Napoleonic Wars, losing a third of its territory, including Finland, which was annexed by Russia. Neutrality

[90] See Blum, *Rogue State*, and Chomsky, *Rogue States*, for similar claims.
[91] Thompson, *Is There Such a Thing as a Rogue State?*; Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, p. 167.

protected Sweden, especially in World War II, although its supply of ball bearings, machine tools, and iron ore to Nazi Germany constituted a clear violation of neutrality.[92] Holland and Belgium had neutrality imposed on them by the great powers; it was a condition of Belgian independence. The goal was less to protect these states than to create a neutral glacis to minimize the chance of another great power war. Belgium and the Netherlands adhered to the condition of armed neutrality, but this did not prevent Germany's invasion of Belgium in World War I or that of both countries in World War II. Neutral Denmark and Norway suffered the same fate.

Low-status roles are rarely accepted voluntarily; states do their best to avoid them and to escape from them if they are imposed. This is most apparent in the role of a failed state. While not a juridical category, failed states are at a serious disadvantage when it comes to loans and investment and broader participation in international organizations and initiatives. Rogue and pariah state are equal undesired, although, strictly speaking, they are not roles. They do not come with a set of responsibilities, nor have they been legitimated by international society. They are American inventions used to marginalize opponents who routinely violate international law, norms, and expectations. Deviance is sometimes a deliberate choice and way of expressing opposition to the existing order. I return to this question in Chapter 6.

High-status roles are much sought after. There are few formal mechanisms of recognition. An exception is the role of a great power, which finds institutional expression in permanent membership on the Security Council. The UN Charter recognized the United States, Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), China, France, and the United Kingdom as permanent members of the Security Council. Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan have sought membership in recent years on the basis of their wealth, support for the UN – Japan and Germany are two of the top three funders of the organization – participation in peacekeeping missions, and the alleged need to have representatives from different regions of the world.[93] Various proposals have been

[92] Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden*, pp. 136–47.

[93] Narilkar, "Introduction"; Burgess, "Brazil as a Bridge between Old and New Powers?" and "Brazil's Africa Strategy"; Hurrell and Narilkar, "New Politics of Confrontation?"; Soares de Lima and Hirst, "Brazil as an Intermediate State and Regional Power"; Carvalho, "Brazil"; Kahler, "Rising Power and Global Governance."

mooted since March 2005, when Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the UN to consider sweeping reforms that would respond to "today's realities." They include increasing the Security Council from fifteen to twenty-four members.[94] This change would require the support of two-thirds of the General Assembly.[95]

Gaining recognition as a great power depends on fulfilling conditions other great powers consider essential. These markers have changed over the centuries, and those states seeking permanent Security Council seats have attempted to redefine them in ways supportive of their respective claims. They have devoted considerable efforts to changing the "rules about rules." Japan, Germany, India, and Brazil have arguably attempted to change the rules about the rules making rules. The five great powers have shown no willingness to enlarge their circle, so much of the efforts of would-be great powers are directed at third parties in an effort to bring indirect pressure on the Security Council and mobilize necessary backing in the General Assembly.

The role of dominant power is entirely informal. The United States is generally thought by others to have achieved this position in 1945 on the basis of its economic power and nuclear monopoly. It maintains the world's strongest military and power projection capabilities, but also engages in diplomacy and other efforts to convince others of its status. These efforts indicate recognition to which the status of dominant power is conferred on one by others. From 1944 on, American leaders encouraged others to view them in this light and sought to solidify their claim by creating institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and NATO, providing reconstruction and foreign aid on a hitherto unprecedented scale, and using their influence to sustain or put friendly regimes in power in every corner of the globe. These actions heightened the perception of the United States as the world's dominant power. Even failures, such as the stalemated Korean War, defeat in Indochina, and more recently the fiascos of Afghanistan and Iraq, have not deprived Washington of this status, although they have encouraged talk about the possibility of China becoming a dominant power at some future time. There is a widespread perception that the

[94] "Annan urges sweeping UN reforms," *BBC News*, 21 March, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4367015.stm (accessed 26 January 2014).

[95] Bosco, *Five to Rule Them All*; Hurd, *After Anarchy*; Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, pp. 158–65.

United States is increasingly less able to impose its will on others, but no less willing to try. One of many signs that the power of the United States is resented was vocal opposition to Washington's insistence that an American always head the World Bank.[96]

In the aftermath of World War II, American leaders, journalists, and academics claimed an even higher status: that of hegemon.[97] The definition and consequences of hegemony are a source of great debate among liberals and realists. Michael Doyle understands it "to mean controlling leadership of the international system as a whole."[98] Michael Mastanduno argues that hegemony exists when one political unit has the "power to shape the rules of international politics according to its own interests."[99] Kaufman, Little, and Wohlforth describe hierarchy, which they all but equate with hegemony, as the political-military "domination" by a single unit "over most of the international system."[100] Ikenberry and Kupchan insist that such influence ultimately rests on material power, it is "most effectively exercised when a hegemon is able to establish a set of norms that others willingly embrace."[101] Americans have succumbed to the flattering assertions of their leaders and journalists that their hegemony is alive and well. In 2010, 66 percent of Americans believed that their country had a "special responsibility to be the leading nation in world affairs."[102] At best, the United States achieved a partial hegemony in the immediate aftermath of World War II when it accounted for almost 40 percent of the world's GDP and had a monopoly on atomic weapons. This

[96] Bretton Woods Project, "Opposition swells at appointment of Wolfowitz to Head World Bank," 17 March 2005, http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2005/03/art-155498/; Aljazeera, "Three in Running for World Bank Job," 24 March 2012, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2012/03/201232454653902871.html; Mark Lobel, "Nigeria's finance boss Ngozi Okonzo-Iweala in profile," *BBC*, 11 April 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17662481 (all accessed 8 January 2014).

[97] Reich and Lebow, *Goodbye Hegemony!*, ch. 1.

[98] Doyle, *Empires*, p. 40.

[99] Mastanduno, "Hegemonic Order, September 11, and the Consequences of the Bush Revolution."

[100] Kaufman, Little and Wohlforth, *Balance of Power in World History*, p. 7.

[101] Ikenberry and Kupchan, "Socialization and Hegemonic Power." Interestingly, some Marxists concur. See Cummings, "Still the American Century?," who argues that U.S. hegemony extends from 1945 to the present.

[102] Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans see US as Exceptional; 37% Doubt Obama Does," Gallup, 22 December 2010, http://www.gallup.com/poll/145358/Americans-Exceptional-Doubt-Obama.aspx (accessed 10 August 2013).

situation was short-lived, and American leadership never extended beyond the Western hemisphere. No power in the modern era has established hegemony, although Napoleon came close.[103]

In the immediate postwar years, many countries welcomed American leadership as a source of political stability and economic reconstruction.[104] The rapid comeback of Western Europe and Japan, and later the economic development of the Pacific Rim, were greatly assisted by American aid, loans, and markets. Success made hegemony superfluous. Charles Kindleberger thought that hegemony had run its course by 1963, and was certainly history by the 1970s.[105] American leaders and academics nevertheless convinced themselves that their hegemony was alive and well – and benign.[106] Given the Soviet threat, which policymakers, foreign policy analysts, and scholars grossly exaggerated, they insisted that American power and hegemony was in the common Western interest. Following the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, some American realists proudly proclaimed an era of "unipolarity."[107] In the words of former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the United States is "the indispensable nation."[108] President Obama used similar language prior to his reelection.[109] Realist scholars Brooks and Wohlforth assert: "No system of sovereign states … has ever contained one state with comparable material preponderance."

[103] Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, pp. 684, 692, contends that Britain and Russia established a joint hegemony at Versailles, but this interpretation is not widely accepted.

[104] Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, p. 123, argues that the United States exploited highly structured divisions within international society to build support for its claim to hegemony. "Part of its success was to pretend that its appeal was universal, while in effect relying on a limited bloc." See also Parchami, *Hegemonic Peace and Empire*, p. 178.

[105] Kindleberger, "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy" and *Manias, Panics and Crashes*.

[106] Kindleberger, *World in Depression*; Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics*; Webb and Krasner, "Hegemonic Stability Theory"; Keohane, *After Hegemony* and *International Institutions and State Power.*

[107] Krauthammer, "Unipolar Moment."

[108] Michael Dobbs and John M. Goshko, "Albright's Personal Odyssey Shaped Foreign Policy Beliefs," *Washington Post*, 6 December 1996, p. A25.

[109] Barrack Obama in the third presidential debate on foreign policy, "America remains the one indispensable nation. And the world needs a strong America." Transcript and Audio: Third Presidential Debate, 22 October 2012, http://www.npr.org/2012/10/22/163436694/transcript-3rd-obama-romney-presidential-debate.

The foreign policy establishment journal *Foreign Affairs* published Brooks and Wohlforth and a long list of self-congratulatory articles on U.S. hegemony, but has never published a critique of the concept.[110] Even setbacks are interpreted as evidence of American hegemony. In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Fareed Zakaria, former managing editor of *Foreign Affairs*, told Margaret Warner of the Public Broadcasting System that "Because America is 'No. 1,' it is also target No. 1."[111]

A state cannot anoint itself hegemon. It must be recognized as one by others and accept "rights and duties" others associate with this status.[112] Ian Clark observes that hegemony should be regarded "exclusively as a legitimate social arrangement." It not a self-abrogated role but one conferred on a dominant state by other powers.[113] The United States is recognized as a dominant power, but not as a hegemon, although Washington does its best to encourage others to testify to the value and necessity of its leadership. Kindleberger associates three functions with hegemony: normative leadership, economic management, and the enforcement of global initiatives. He describes the motive for hegemony as an enlightened sense of self-interest that promotes a cosmopolitan approach to economy. Later international relations scholars have emphasized narrower forms of self-interest.[114] They may be closer to the truth, because in recent decades the United States has abused its power and is accused by others of acting in ways that threaten the economic and political stability by reason of its excessive borrowing and unilateral foreign policies.[115]

[110] Brooks and Wohlforth," American Primacy in Perspective," and *World Out of Balance*, p. 1, and," *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2002), pp. 20–33. Also Jervis, "Remaking of a Unipolar World"; Lake, "Escape from the State of Nature."

[111] Fareed Zakaria interviewed by Margaret Warner, on *PBS Newshour*, 3 January 2002, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/jan-june02/zakaria_1-03.html (accessed 27 January 2014).

[112] Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States*, p. 70; Jackson, *Global Covenant*, p. 39.

[113] Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, p. 162; Cerny, "Dilemmas of Operationalizing Hegemony"; Hurd, *After Anarchy*. Simpson, *Great Powers and Other States*, p. 67, argues that it should be based on some legal or constitutional basis. All three authors build on Weber's classic definition of legitimacy as acceptable authority in *Economy and Society*, vol. II, p. 31.

[114] Kindleberger, *World in Depression*; Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics*; pp. 166–67.

[115] See Kindleberger, "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy"; Reich and Lebow, *Goodbye Hegemony!*, ch. 1 for a discussion.

By July 2013, the United States had regained much of the favor it had lost during the Bush administration and was generally regarded more favorably than China.[116] However, the Obama administration made no progress in gaining recognition for its claim to be a hegemon, a project vocally opposed by China and Russia, and more quietly by Washington's closest allies.[117] Some proponents of hegemony recognize this crisis of legitimacy.[118] Attempts to propagate a hegemonic discourse have backfired and diminished American influence. In the words of one critic, U.S. exceptionalism is not as much an attempt to change the rules for everyone as it is "to exempt itself" from them.[119]

Hegemony must also be regarded, at least in part, as a role and national identification intended to buttress the self-esteem of America's leaders and people, but also to justify its extraordinary military spending and periodic interventions. Between 1998 and 2007, world military expenditure rose 33 percent, and that of the United States by 66 percent.[120] Another concept mobilized to this end is "soft power." It is invoked by U.S. academics, journalists, and the odd European fellow traveler to show how widely America is admired.[121] Consumption of Coca-Cola, the sporting of blue jeans, and interest in American TV and movies are alleged – in unspecified ways – to make foreign publics more supportive of U.S. foreign policy.[122] Joseph Nye, Jr., who coined the concept, is quick to concede that soft power, like material power, is diffuse, reliant on both local interpreters and, above all, a

[116] Max Fischer and staff, "A revealing map of how the world views China vs. US," *Washington Post*, 22 July 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/07/22/a-revealing-map-of-how-the-world-views-china-vs-the-u-s/ (accessed 25 July 2013).

[117] Foot, "Chinese Strategies in a US-Hegemonic Global Order"; Ambrosio, *America's Global Preeminence*, ch. 5.

[118] Kagan, "America's Crisis of Legitimacy; Griffiths, "Beyond the Bush Doctrine"; Brooks and Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance*, ch. 6; Nye *Paradox of American Power*, pp. 143–44.

[119] Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, p. 212.

[120] Norrlof, *America's Global Advantage*, pp. 189–90; Wikipedia, "List of Countries by Defense Expenditures" (from SIPRI), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_military_expenditures (accessed 6 August 2014).

[121] Nye, *Soft Power* and "The Future of American Power; Ikenberry, *Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition* and *America Unrivaled*; Owen, "Transnational Liberalism and American Primacy"; Risse, "U.S. Power in a Liberal Security."

[122] Nye, "Future of American Power"; Ikenberry, *Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition*, pp. 1–18 and *America Unrivaled*; Owen, "Transnational Liberalism and American Primacy," pp. 239–59; Risse, "U.S. Power in a Liberal Security."

willing audience. Governments accordingly find it difficult to exploit soft power or anticipate its outcomes. Senior American policymakers nevertheless routinely invoke "soft power" as an important mechanism for enhancing their country's influence.[123]

Some American cultural products have nearly universal appeal, but others, like fast food chains and genetically modified crops, arouse widespread opposition. Most consumers seem capable of distinguishing between a country's products and its policies. Around the world, every anti-American demonstration features protesters clad in jeans. The few American cultural products opposed to any American imperial project, like the widely acclaimed *South Park* and *The Daily Show*, are popular abroad. They may build respect for American democracy and toleration of dissent, but not for U.S. foreign policy.

The concept of soft power is soft in conceptualization and empirics. What is the leap of logic that leads from attraction to American culture or its products to support for American foreign policy? The appeal of Japanese electronics, Chinese clothes, and Cuban cigars has not made Americans – or anyone else – more pro-Japanese, pro-Chinese, or pro-Cuban. The reverse may be closer to the truth in response to the "invasion" of Chinese products in European and American markets and export of jobs overseas.[124] Soft power might lead one to expect better relations between the country and others who admire its culture and buy its products. The reverse has happened in French attitudes toward China. The Chinese buy huge quantities of French wine and their tastes are becoming more sophisticated. China is sending large numbers of students to France to study oenology and wine marketing. This has produced a backlash in France, where there is rising fear that Chinese wealth will lead to a takeover of French vineyards and domestic production that diminishes the French export market. Chinese students in Sauternes have been attacked and beaten.[125]

[123] Clinton, "Leading Through Civilian Power."

[124] Globescan/PIPA poll, "Global views of United States improves while others decline," BBC Views, April 18, 2010, p. 7.

[125] Wilson T. Vorndick, "China's New Obsession: French Wine," *New York Times*, 26 January 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/26/opinion/sunday/chinas-new-obsession-french-wine.html?hp&rref=opinion&_r=0 (accessed 26 January 2014); Ken Wilsher, "Red China uncorks a surprise for the wine world," *Guardian*, 30 January 2014, p. 19.

Ironically, one could make a stronger case for soft power in the case of the early Soviet Union. The Bolsheviks achieved considerable influence abroad through the Communist International, known as the Comintern (1919–43), and Popular Front movements of the 1930s. Ideological support for the Soviet Union and the spread of its brand of socialism had wide appeal to intellectuals and political activists around the world. In the postwar era, the French and Italian communist parties were the largest, best-organized parties in these countries. For many decades, these and many other communist parties around the world took their orders from Moscow and were used to advance Soviet foreign policy aims.[126]

International roles have changed and this is often a reflection of broader changes in domestic societies. Empire lost its formerly exalted status as equality became a dominant value and racism became increasingly unacceptable. This change made it possible – but not easy – for states to liberate their colonies. France fought multiple, unsuccessful wars in support of its authority in Indochina, Madagascar, and Algeria. When Charles de Gaulle granted Algeria independence in 1962, French standing in the world actually increased – an indication of the extent to which colonialism was in ill repute.[127] Britain had a more peaceful transition, Ireland and Malaya aside. Colonial powers resisted decolonization to different degrees but ultimately succumbed to political-military pressure from their colonies, liberal groups in their metropoles, and publics tired of the cost of seemingly futile efforts to repress colonial rebellions. Of equal importance, leaders recognized that empire, which once conferred prestige, now undermined it.[128]

The status of great powers has endured, but the rule package associated with it has changed; it has become both more embracing and constraining. Today's great powers have responsibilities for economic management as well as security, but can no longer act entirely on the basis of agreements among themselves. They also have more responsibility that others for post conflict reconstruction and looking after

[126] Rees and Thorpe, *International Communism and the Communist International*.

[127] See Wall, *France, the United States and the Algerian War*, on de Gaulle's misguided, costly commitment to traditional means of maintaining France's standing as a great power, and the improvement in France's situation that resulted from leaving Algeria.

[128] Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact*; Chamberlain, *Decolonization*; White, *Decolonisation*.

refugees dislocated by domestic and international conflicts. These responsibilities provide some leverage for foreign and domestic actors to influence state policies. It offers them what Brent Steel refers to as "counterpower": a strategy that seeks to expose how great power behavior is at odds with great power self-images and responsibilities.[129] Following the December 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the Bush administration was accused by domestic and foreign critics of being stingy in its pledge of aid, which it then raised from 7 million to 35 million and then to 350 million.[130] During the civil war in Syria, the United Kingdom took fewer refugees than did other major European powers, and a Labour MP sought to push the Cameron government into doing more by noting that "The UK as a permanent member of the Security Council has a particular obligation."[131] These exercises in counterpower compelled the governments in question to give more aid or accept more refugees.

Counterpower can usefully be contrasted to soft power. The latter is alleged to be the influence that derives, not from the applications of military or economic power, but from the social and ideological appeal of a country's lifestyle and political system. Counterpower might be reconceptualized as one of the mechanisms by which blowback functions. Soft power – whether it works or not – is not a passive process. Political leaders, foreign ministries, and sympathetic journalists do their best to publicize the glories of their country. The Voice of America, created during World War II, and United States Information Agency, begun in 1961, first headed by internationally renowned journalist Edward R. Murrow, were intended to propagate America's political values and way of life without coming across as propaganda.[132] The U.S. Information Agency established libraries abroad, sponsored English language instruction, offered cultural programs, and brought young foreigners to the United States for visits or professional training. Other major powers engage in similar activities. Other countries followed suit.

All these institutions raise expectations abroad about how a country will behave and create greater dissonance than would otherwise occur

[129] Steele, *Defacing Power*, pp. 73–74.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Quoted in Hugh Muir's sketch, "The lady's not for telling," *Guardian*, 28 January 2014, p. 2.
[132] Elder, *Information Machine*; Osgood, *Total Cold War.*

when it fails to behave in accord with its values. This dissonance is a catalyst for counterpower. It enables it because the states in question have publicly committed themselves to certain values through their efforts to generate soft power, making it more difficult for them to account for the apparent discrepancy between values and behavior. It may make it more attractive, when subject to counterpower, to bring their policies in line, at least in part, with their values. They may also be pressured to do this by domestic constituencies, as the United States and Britain successfully were by anti-apartheid activists. Pressures at home and abroad on Ronald Reagan to live up to his country's commitment to reduce nuclear weapons through arms control appear to have had a similar effect.[133]

The Soviet Union may have been even more vulnerable to counterpower because it had more effectively exercised soft power. The August 1939 Stalin-Hitler Pact promoted the defection of party members and fellow travelers in droves, as did postwar exposés of the purge trials and other crimes of Stalin. Soviet soft power seriously declined, if not evaporated, and contradictions between proclaimed Soviet values and behavior aroused strong opposition to and from communist governments that were once allies, notably Yugoslavia and China. Following the 1960 Sino-Soviet split, China denounced the Soviet Union as "revisionist" and sought to replace it as leader of the world communist movement.[134]

## Conclusion

This chapter makes four substantive points. The first, and theoretically most important, concerns the role of international society. It constitutes actors, legitimizes roles, and confers or recognizes the roles that particular actors perform. State identifications help shape the kinds of roles actors want to perform and be recognized as performing. There is an active give-and-take between individual actors and other members of regional and international society concerning roles and those they are able to enact. Political leaders recognize the importance of roles as they can enhance their country's influence. They also understand that

[133] Evangelista, "Turning Points in Arms Control."
[134] Westad, *Brothers in Arms*; Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War*; Lüthi, *Sino-Soviet Split*.

roles and their performance influence what citizens think about their state. There is accordingly a meaningful, but as yet largely unexplored, connection between roles and national identifications and between both of them and individual self-identifications.

Second, I show that these relationships are dynamic. Changing values on a global scale have been a catalyst for shifts in the legitimacy and hierarchy of roles. I argue that the rise of the principle of equality has discredited the roles of empire and colony and helped transform those of rising and great power. Changes in the nature of roles and their associated practices in turn have begun to reshape the practice of international relations. They do this by generating different constraints and opportunities for states that occupy, or want to occupy, high-status roles. Chapter 7 explores this transformation in more detail.

Third, I posit a strong relationship between national identifications and roles. Certain international roles buttress individual self-esteem because they build on and emphasize what leaders and intellectuals responsible for these discourses contend are the distinctive and superior values, institutions, and accomplishments of their culture and state. This psychological benefit provides what may be the most important incentive for leaders to seek high-status roles. Building pride in one's nation builds solidarity and also strengthens the political position of leaders associated with this project. In politics, as elsewhere, there is no free lunch. High-status roles, whether it is a rising, now great, power like China, a long-time great power like France, or a prominent neutral like Switzerland, bring special obligations in their wake. They require the holders of these roles to fulfill responsibilities and conform to a higher standard in their behavior than other states. They are accordingly more vulnerable than others to criticism for violations, which in turn can damage their standing and even cause an existential crisis for citizens. This is also true of high status neutrals; the Swiss lost standing when their collaboration with Nazi Germany was publicized and the immoral expropriation by their banks of the accounts of Holocaust victims was exposed.[135]

Finally, an increasing number of countries seek "soft power" and toward this end publicize their political and cultural accomplishments. As these depictions are self-serving, and almost always incorporate a

[135] Ludi, "Past as Present, Myth, or History?"

heavy dose of myth in the sense of equating practices with principles, they are inevitably at odds with how these states behave at home and abroad. By advertising values and practices to which they do not actually conform, states that actively seek soft power open themselves up to "counterpower" efforts by others, often in alliance with domestic political actors in the target state, to hold their feet to the fire and compel them to reduce the dissonance between their pronouncements and behavior.[136]

The importance of international society, the relationship between roles and influence, and the often unforeseen but real costs of high-status rules and the associated pursuit of soft power demonstrate the ways in which identifications at the individual and national levels are connected and influenced by what happens in international society. The next chapter, which explores affiliations, relations to bodies, and autobiographies, offers additional evidence of these links and of the mechanisms that enable them.

[136] See Steele, *Defacing Power*, pp. 73–74, on the concept of counterpower.

# 5 *Affiliations, Bodies, Biographies*

In this chapter I document the importance of affiliations, bodies, and autobiographies for national identifications. These identifications are constructed domestically but are significantly influenced, sometimes shaped, by external opportunities and constraints. Each source of identification is responsive to changes in others. The agents for change are domestic and foreign actors who expect to gain from reformulating national identifications.

The process of developing, propagating, and sustaining national identifications is one of the mechanisms that couples domestic, regional, and international societies. This is due in the first instance to the fact that national identifications are almost always contested. Diverse political actors propose identifications they believe will advance their domestic and foreign goals. Those who see themselves at a disadvantage in the domestic political arena may attempt to expand the struggle over identifications to regional or international society and their institutions. Interaction across levels of society also arises because national identifications, for the most part generated domestically, often require, or strongly benefit from, foreign approval.

National identifications have important implications for foreign policy. This is most evident in the quest for higher-status roles, and secondarily with respect to affiliations leaders and peoples feel it is important to sustain. It is also true for leaders whose influence at home and abroad may benefit from thumbing one's nose at regional or international society. My argument is in many ways the very opposite of that of ontological security. In lieu of identifications dictating policy, I suggest that policy preferences are just as likely to determine the character and relative appeal of national identifications.

National identifications can confer important psychological benefits, but I associate them more with self-esteem than with ontological security. I identify and emphasize a different set of mechanisms

linking national identifications to foreign policy. They derive in the first instance from the need to perform in a manner consistent with state roles and affiliations, to the extent that they seen to provide practical and psychological benefits. Secondarily, they are a product of domestic struggles over competing national identifications. Leaders, or dissident factions within a government, often pursue foreign policies intended to strengthen their hand in these conflicts. In such instances, policy is, if not a source of national identification, a major influence on their relative importance.

My analysis of national identifications and foreign policy offers insight into important international questions, including conflict and cooperation. I have consistently argued that international conflict is driven more by competition for standing than it is by security or material concerns.[1] There are different ways of achieving status, and competition is generally most acute between states that seek it the same way, which is also true of individuals.[2] Conflict can also be intense between actors who seek status by different routes when these pathways threaten each other. Individuals and states can seek status among domestic and foreign audiences by rejecting the norms and practices of society. Those who benefit from these arrangements are likely to label them deviants and attempt to punish or discipline them. I explore this phenomenon in the next chapter.

Here I focus on cooperation and offer what I contend is a more compelling explanation than institutionalist and rationalist accounts provide. Theorists who work in these traditions consider the principal barrier to cooperation to be the tragedy of the commons. They look to features of the external environment that might help actors escape from it by coordinating their behavior and reducing the risk of cooperation. They assume a predisposition to cooperation, which is unwarranted. By exploring the nature of national identifications and their foreign policy implications it is possible to offer some account of the conditions in which actors will regard cooperation as beneficial.

[1] Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations* and *Why Nations Fight*; Paul, Larson, and Wohlforth, *Status in World Politics*.

[2] On individuals, see Brewer, "Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love or Outgroup Hate?"

## Affiliations

Friendship, love, repugnance, and hatred are powerful human emotions. They define our relationships with others and help determine who we are. Emotions are less important for collective actors, although there are international organizations motivated by love (the Sisters of Mercy), altruism (Médicins sans Frontières), emotional solidarity (the Hidden Child Foundation), greed (the Triads), and hatred (the Ku Klux Klan). In many fraternal organizations, friendship and commitment to public service play important roles. What about states? Do they or their leaders have meaningful affiliations with other states or leaders, and how important are they to national identifications and foreign policy? By affiliations I mean any kind of strong attachment to a person, group, or institution.

Felix Berenskoetter makes a strong case for the role of friendship in international relations.[3] Drawing on Heidegger and Aristotle, he argues that friendship develops through intimate relations that facilitate belonging and recognition. The "friend" functions as a significant other capable of reducing anxiety by promoting moral authenticity and providing ontological security by stabilizing one's sense of self. In international as well as personal relations, friendship is political and to the extent it has power potential.[4]

Berenskoetter suggests that there is a strong incentive for individuals and states to make friends to formulate and sustain their respective narratives and identities. In international relations, one of the more significant incentives for this kind of relationship is a shared understanding of a social order that friends are willing to support as an end in itself but also a means of creating more stable identities. Berenskoetter offers the postwar Franco-German relationship as a case in point. Friendship between these two former enemies, and the collaboration it sustained, led to the construction of partially overlapping national identifications that are at the heart of the European project.[5]

Friendship is also central to Karl Deutsch's concept of pluralistic security communities.[6] The Scandinavian countries, also once

[3] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book VII, 2 and 8; Berenskoetter, "Friends" and "Friendship, Security, and Power."
[4] Berenskoetter, "Friends, There Are No Friends?"
[5] Berenskoetter, "Friendship, Security, and Power."
[6] Deutsch, *Political Community at the North Atlantic Area*, p. 35.

adversaries, effectively banished war because it became an increasingly "unthinkable" act among friends. The United States invaded Canada in 1775 and 1812, but gradually a friendship developed between the two peoples, reinforced by frequent cross-border visits, business, and cultural interchanges. The notion of a U.S. invasion of Canada is sufficiently absurd to have provided the premise for the 1995 comedy *Canadian Bacon*. The film is also an effective spoof on the ignorance of Americans about their northern neighbor. Knowledge is not necessarily a requirement for friendship, and certainly not for hostility.

International relations theory has largely ignored emotions, especially positive ones. To the extent that theorists or foreign policy analysts address emotions, they focus on hostility and hatred. Studies of Hitler emphasize his hatred of Jews and Slavs and how it shaped his foreign policy.[7] Those of appeasement argue that one important reason Britain and France failed to balance against the Nazi threat was the hostility of their governments toward the Soviet Union.[8] Hostility at the popular level can also be a limiting factor in foreign policy. The level of hostility worldwide toward the U.S. government, as distinct from feelings about the American people, is arguably one important reason why the world's most powerful country is less and less able to persuade others to do what it wants. Anti-American feeling derives from the perception that the United States often acts unilaterally and contrary to international law and the interests of the wider, global community.[9]

Affiliations can be analyzed independently of other sources of national identification, as Berenskoetter does. In practice, friendship and hostility are often closely connected to roles. Leaders of a dominant power, especially one striving to be a hegemon, are likely to develop hostility toward rising powers that threaten their standing. The British became more anti-German in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and public opinion polls indicate a significant contemporary shift in American attitudes toward China. Coincidental

[7] Weinberg, *Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany*, vol. 1, p. 358; Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, pp. 3–10; Bullock, *Hitler*, pp. 10–11, 622; Fest, *Hitler*, pp. 213–18.

[8] Adams, *British Politics and Foreign Policy in the Age of Appeasement*; Watt, *How War Came*.

[9] Tom Lister, "Europe Falls Out of Love with Obama over NSA Spying Claims," CNN, 25 October 2013, http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/24/world/europe/europe-us-surveillance/ (accessed 1 November 2013).

with that country's rise to great power status, Americans have become more anti-Chinese, and perceptions of the threat China constitutes have risen. In 2011, the Pew Foundation found that 36 percent of Americans felt negatively about China and 53 percent felt that China's growth was bad for the United States.[10]

Dominant and great powers alike are likely to develop some responsibility, and even affection, toward those who honor their status and seek their protection. American relations with South Korea and Taiwan are cases in point. In 2013, 78 percent of South Koreans regarded the United States favorably.[11] The Anglo-American "special relationship" overcame previous suspicions and mutual hostility associated with America's independence and rise to great power status. It gained momentum from collaboration in two world wars and created strong bonds that still connect the British and American peoples.[12] The consequences of this relationship were easy to document in the first few postwar decades, where they resulted in consultation and frequent coordination of foreign and defense policies. The relationship suffered setbacks during the 1956 Suez crisis and the Kennedy administration's cancelation of the Skybolt missile program in 1962, but still appears to be significant.[13]

Affiliations and roles can be crosscutting. Many generations of New Zealanders proudly identified themselves as British.[14] In 1926, Australia's Billy Hughes insisted: "we are more British than the people of Great Britain."[15] The sense of "Britishness" of Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders was intensified by World War I, but so too was their commitment to a distinct national identity.[16] In

[10] Pew Research Center, "Public Opinion about the US and China," 13 February 2012, http://www.pewresearch.org/2012/02/13/ask-the-expert-public-opinion-about-the-us-and-china/ (accessed 1 November 2013).

[11] Max Fisher, "Anti-American Countries Can Become Pro-American. Here's How South Korea Did It," *Washington Post*, 7 May 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/05/07/anti-american-countries-can-become-pro-american-heres-how-south-korea-did-it/ (accessed 1 November 2013).

[12] Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*; Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill*; Bartlett, *Special Relationship*; Dumbrell, *Special Relationship*; Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*; Adams, *Brothers Across the Ocean*.

[13] Dumbrell, *Special Relationship*; Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations*, chs. 5–6.

[14] Reynolds, *Long Shadow*, p. 110; Bridge and Fedorowich, *British World: Diaspora*, pp. 1–15.

[15] Reynolds, *Long Shadow*, p. 111.

[16] Ibid.

New Zealand, self-identification as British declined in importance in the post–World War II years. Something of a rupture came when the United Kingdom joined the Common Market in 1973 and agreed to give up imperial trading preferences and reorient its market to the Continent. New Zealand was compelled to find new markets for its two chief exports: carpet wool and lamb. Many Kiwis felt betrayed by the "mother country" and began to rethink their relationship with Britain and, by extension, their own self-identifications.

New Zealanders increasingly redefined themselves as a South Pacific nation. This reorientation found expression in a turn to Maori symbols and practices; Air New Zealand planes have a logo that uses a Maori design theme, and many sporting events and meetings open with a *haka*, a Maori war dance. New Zealanders deepened their connections to other countries in the region, expanded their foreign aid, all but did away with their armed forces, and rewrote their past. Recent histories of New Zealand offer narratives that emphasize the Maori past and Maori-*pakeha* [white] connections.[17] In this case, by no means unusual, a shift in roles by one country led to a national redefinition in another, with corresponding changes in foreign affiliations and national biographies.

Changing affiliations and self-identifications are often catalysts for revisions of national autobiographies. Consider the case of the United Kingdom. After Disraeli arranged for Victoria to be crowned Empress of India, the British Empire became an even more central source of identification and self-esteem for so many citizens. The idea of giving it up was initially unthinkable. By the early twentieth century, David Reynolds writes, people were "at home" with the idea of empire. They thought of Britain as "an imperial nation; indeed that was central to their conception of Britishness."[18]

This emotional commitment prompted the search for successful alternatives when Empire became problematic. One proposed substitute was a tightly integrated commonwealth. This was a goal of Lord Milner's Round Table movement, founded in 1909, to unite the British Empire through an imperial parliament. After World War I, the Round Table sought closer relations between the United Kingdom, the white

[17] King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*; Smith, *Concise History of New Zealand*; Byrnes, *New Oxford History of New Zealand*.
[18] Reynolds, *Long Shadow*, p. 86.

Dominions, and the United States.[19] Between 1956 and 1958, Winston Churchill published his best-selling four-volume history of the *English Speaking Peoples*.[20] It emphasized the historical and cultural affiliations between Britain and its former white-settler colonies, hoping to strengthen political and economic ties among them. These political and literary efforts were intended to create a new international role for Britain by strengthening existing affiliations and providing supportive autobiographical narratives. Nothing much came of this particular vision; the Commonwealth is a relatively weak institution and British influence within it is limited.[21]

Within Britain there have always been divided territorial and ethnic loyalties, and attempts began in the Victorian era to overcome them by inventing the identity of "British."[22] In the 1920s, according to Denis Judd, people in the United Kingdom were "comfortable, indeed proud of their multiple identities."[23] Speaking "as a Scotsman," Lord Balfour exclaimed in 1926, he was not going to surrender his "share of Magna Charta and Shakespeare on account of Bannockburn and Flodden."[24] Beginning in about 2000, an anti-British discourse developed.[25] Today, different visions of Britain vie for primacy and run the gamut from those that envisage Britain as part of Europe, as a power mediating between the EU and North America, and as a state broken up to make way for an independent Scotland, Wales, and England.[26] Ironically, many nationalists in Scotland and Wales, even those who favor independence, also think of themselves as British.[27]

Scots and Welsh feel more comfortable with so-called national identities than do the English.[28] Many people who live in England do feel English; displays of the English flag are more common throughout the country.[29] There is also opposition. Writing in the *Guardian*, Paul

[19] Kendle, *Round Table Movement and Imperial Union*.
[20] Churchill, *History of the English Speaking Peoples*.
[21] Srinivasan, *Rise, Decline, and Future of the British Commonwealth*.
[22] Bostridge, *Fateful Year*, p. xviii.
[23] Judd, *Balfour and the British Empire*, p. 110.
[24] Ibid., p. 68.
[25] Nairn, *After Britain*, for example.
[26] Charter, *Au Revoir Europe*; Hannan, *Doomed Marriage*; Scott, *A Nation Again*; Hassan and Ilett, *Radical Scotland*; Coleman, *Saving England*.
[27] McCrone and Bechofer, *Understanding National Identity*, pp. 184–87.
[28] Ibid, pp. 131–33.
[29] Kenny, Michael, *Politics of English Nationhood*.

Mason insists: "I do not want to be English – and any attempt to create an English identity will fail." He describes his multiethnic background and insists that beyond the football pitch "there is almost no requirement whatsoever for an English person to self-identify as English … Britishness as an identity failed and so will English."[30]

Germany underwent a more dramatic orientation in the postwar era. From 1870 on, France, and the "West" more generally, had been constructed as negative others. Britain was admired but also regarded as a great rival and a power that stood in the way of Germany achieving "its place in the sun."[31] Hostility to both countries – and to Slavs and Jews – was made much more central by the Hitler regime. After 1945, Germany began to build closer relations with its neighbors, a process that intensified in the 1960s.[32] Historians and politicians created narratives in support of these efforts by acknowledging Nazi Germany's crimes and emphasizing the common European heritage of Germany and its neighbors.[33] Symbolic in this regard was Chancellor Willy Brandt's famous "*Kniefall*" [genuflection] in December 1970 after laying a wreath at the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto.[34] It was understood as a gesture of humility and penance toward the victims of the 1943 Ghetto Rising and of the Holocaust more generally. Brandt's predecessors had publicly repudiated Germany's postwar boundaries in the east. The very day Brandt visited the Warsaw Ghetto he signed a treaty with Poland acknowledging the Oder-Neisse line as the border with Poland, thus renouncing any claim to the territories Germany lost at the end of the War. In 1990 and 1991, a reunified Germany negotiated additional treaties with Poland that reaffirmed its western border.

[30] Paul Mason, "I do not want to be English – and any attempt to create an English identity will fail," *Guardian*, G2, 5 May 2015, p. 5.

[31] Herwig, *"Luxury" Fleet*; Kehr, *Primat der Innenpolitik*, pp. 130–48; Kennedy, *The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism*, parts 3–5; Röhl, *Wilhelm II*, pp. 999–1039.

[32] Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy.*

[33] See Katzenstein, "United Germany in an Integrating Europe"; Anderson, "Hard Interests, Soft Power, and Germany's Changing Role in Europe"; Markovits and Reich, *German Predicament*; Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory*, chs. 9–10; Art, *Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*, on squaring autobiographical narratives with Germany's emerging European identity.

[34] For images, see: https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=brandt+kniefall&client=firefox-a&hs=12M&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=KMtsUuGTIIrP0QX40YCQCg&ved=0CDEQsAQ&biw=1252&bih=485 (accessed 1 November 2013).

Brandt's actions were widely interpreted by other Europeans as evidence of the Federal Republic's commitment to turning a new page by acknowledging and accepting responsibility for the crimes of the Hitler era. These policies resonated with other Europeans and the 1960s generation of German youth. Following German unification in 1991, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher proclaimed: "We do not aspire to a German Empire but want to live in a European Germany."[35]

By becoming good "Europeans" and coming to terms with the past – a process known as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* – young Germans could reduce dissonance: distance themselves from their country's past, gain the respect of others, and feel better about themselves.[36] *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* was also a vehicle for rebellion against their parents' generation and the values for which it stood.[37]

Germany's new affiliations went hand-in-hand with its redefinitions of self and brought substantive as well as psychological rewards. Former enemies gradually became friends, and the Federal Republic came to be regarded as a responsible state and a pillar of the European community. The project begun by Adenauer and Brandt reached its symbolic apotheosis in the D-Day memorial celebrations of June 2004, to which Germany was for the first time officially invited. At the ceremony, German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder described the successful allied landings not as a "victory over Germany, but a victory for Germany" that led to its liberation from Nazi rule. Schroeder's speech raised some eyebrows at home but was very favorably received by European leaders and peoples.[38] A public opinion poll in France revealed that people of all ages supported Germany's participation in the D-Day commemoration and considered Germany their country's closest friend. Britain came second and the United States a distant third.[39] The centenary of World War I in 2014 was carefully managed in Britain, France, and

[35] Ash, *In Europe's Name*, pp. 384–88; Art, *Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*.

[36] Kansteiner, "Losing the War, Winning the Memory Battle"; Risse, "European Identity?" and *Community of Europeans?*, pp. 53, 65–69.

[37] *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* was coined in the 1950s, and developed a more positive valence in the 1960s. Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory*; Art, *Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*.

[38] BBC News, 6 June 2004, "Leaders and Veterans Mark D-Day," http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3780381.stm (accessed 1 November 2013).

[39] *Le Figaro*, 6 June 2004, p. 1.

Germany to strengthen their ties through mutual recognition of the mutual suffering brought about by that conflict.[40]

This unprecedented move toward a common, celebratory understanding of a war that pitted Germany against Britain and France in four years of grueling combat and attrition stands in sharp contrast to the continuing division in Northern Ireland over the Battle of the Boyne, and in Poland and Baltic countries over Russia's "liberation" of Eastern Europe in 1944–45. The Union of Great Britain and Ireland took place in 1801, and with it the assembly in Dublin was dissolved. The Union became so central to the conservative identity that in 1886 the world "union" was incorporated into the party name and the conservatives became known thereafter as "Unionists." This identification remains strong in Northern Ireland among Protestants.

Affiliations interact with bodily identifications. Neither German roles nor affiliations can be understood independently of shifting conceptions of national territory. German nationalism developed in the nineteenth century in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic invasion of the Rhineland and Prussia. German nationalists hoped to unify all the political units in which German was spoken – thus the rallying cry of "Deutschland über Alles." Bismarck was able to exploit nationalist sentiment to divide the Prussian liberals, maintain the independence of the king and army, and fight three wars of unification under Prussia's leadership. The 1866 war excluded Austria from Germany and imposed what was known as a *kleindeutsch* solution to unification. Territory was linked to role and self-identification because this outcome made it possible for Prussia to become the dominant power on the continent and for Germany to become more of a national than multinational state.[41]

[40] "'Lights Out' ends day of centenary celebrations, BBC, 5 August 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28632223 (accessed 6 August 2014); "Gauk und Hollande fordern mehr als Erinnerung," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 August 2014, http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/jahre-erster-weltkrieg-gauck-und-hollande-fordern-mehr-als-erinnerung-1.2074535 (accessed 6 August 2014); "Centenaire de la Grande Guerre: Les messages politques de François Hollande," *Le Monde*, 4 August 2014, http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2014/08/03/il-y-a-cent-ans-la-premiere-guerre-mondiale-etait-declaree_4466231_3224.html?xtmc=premiere_guerre_mondiale&xtcr=5 (accessed 6 August 2014).

[41] Imperial Germany contained minorities, most notably Poles and French. Within Austria-Hungary, Germans were a minority.

Following its defeat in World War I, Germany was forced to concede considerable territory, acknowledge responsibility for the war, pay reparations, and accept other limitations that were considered humiliating by most Germans. Hitler's efforts to overturn the Versailles Settlement found widespread support; fully 95.1 percent of Germans supported his withdrawal of Germany from the League of Nations.[42] Hitler's wider conquests, which had had less popular support, were motivated by his desire to make Germany a superpower. In keeping with the doctrine of geopolitics, Hitler believed that control of the Eurasian landmass would put Germany in a position to conquer the world.[43] Germany lost further territory at the end of World War II, and was de facto divided. By signing the 1970 treaty with Poland and renouncing all claims to so-called lost territories the Federal Republic broke dramatically with the past, and with a vocal segment of its own public. The treaty signaled acceptance of a different role and set of identifications.

The United States provides different narrative about affiliation and territory. In Chapter 2 I noted how American national consciousness developed at English universities among students from the thirteen colonies who were lumped together as "Americans" by their English peers and instructors. They socialized with one another and went home with an American identification they did not possess beforehand.[44] A by-product of their new affiliations and identification was a greatly expanded sense of "home" to include all thirteen colonies. The extent of territory claimed by the United States was further enlarged through the concept of Manifest Destiny to include much of the North American continent.[45] The narrative of hegemony is arguably a global extension of the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny, although devoid of territorial claims. This hegemony discourse in turn has been used throughout the post–Cold War era to justify intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq and sanctions against North Korea and Iran.[46]

[42] Kershaw, "*Hitler Myth*," pp. 120–39.
[43] Weinberg, *Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany*, vol. 1, pp. 4–5.
[44] Merritt, *Symbols of American Community*.
[45] Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*; Miller, *Native America*.
[46] Reich and Lebow, *Good Bye Hegemony!*, ch. 3.

The Chinese have developed a national discourse based on Confucian traditions. In traditional China, society was envisaged as a series of ever-expanding relationship circles and networks. Each ring of the concentric circle, from the innermost one that encompassed the family to the outmost circle of larger society, was characterized by the same ethical principles. The Confucian ethics of concentric circles, based on kinship, cultural affinity, and connections [*guanxi*], was also expected to govern relationships with foreign states and peoples.[47] In modern times, China lost its cultural and material superiority, and the communist regime turned to ideology and nationalism to build national solidarity.[48] The Chinese nationalist discourse increasingly emphasizes the legal rights of citizens, although *guanxi* may still be dominant in practice.[49]

To this point in my argument, I have treated affiliation and friendship as more or less synonymous. Affiliations can also develop in the absence of friendship, and friendship can decline as affiliations deepen. Since the end of empire, British friendship with former colonies and their peoples has been periodically tested by immigration and generally found wanting as ever tighter restrictions have been imposed on non-white UK passport holders. Nor has friendship with Europeans developed in step with Britain's political and economic ties with Europe; Europe remains the "other" against which British – and even more, English – identity is framed.[50] A 2012 *Guardian* poll found that British national identification is not only much stronger but seen at odds by many with becoming European; 56 percent of the population said they would vote to leave the EU in a referendum.[51] Not surprisingly, those who identity most strongly as English are the most skeptical of Europe.[52] There is a decided lack of sympathy for non-UK nationals, including immigrants from elsewhere the EU. In January 2013,

[47] Wilson, "Change and Continuity in Chinese Cultural Identity"; Zhuoyun, *Wozhe yu tazhe: zhongguo lishi shang de neiwai fenji* [Self and Other: The Internal-External Differentiation in Chinese History]; Feng, *Chinese Hegemony*.

[48] Hunt, "Chinese National Identity and the Strong State."

[49] Kin and Dittmer, "Whither China's Quest for a National Identity"; Xu Zhuoyun, *Wozhe yu tazhe* [Self and Other].

[50] Wallace, "Foreign Policy and National Identity in the United Kingdom."

[51] "56 percent of Britons would vote to quit the EU in referendum, poll finds," 17 "November 2012, *Guardian*, http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2012/nov/17/eu-referendum-poll (accessed 24 July 2013); Oliver, "To Be or Not to Be in Europe."

[52] Wyn Jones, Lodge, Jeffrey, Gottfried, Scully, Henderson, and Wincott, *England and Its Two Unions*, pp. 17–23.

presumably in response to public opinion, the Cameron government began an advertising campaign in Bulgaria and Romania to discourage immigration to the United Kingdom.[53] In July 2013, the UK Border Agency escalated its anti-immigrant rhetoric and sent billboard trucks into six London boroughs with the message: "Go Home or Face Arrest."[54] A Liberal Democrat ex-minister attacked the campaign as an unacceptable form of intimidation.[55] Anti-immigrant is common throughout the EU, where it has become a powerful political cause for right-wing parties and prompted Prime Minister David Cameron to promise a post-election referendum on EU membership in an effort to outflank opponents on the right.[56]

In Germany, the right-wing Dresden-based *Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes*, known by its German acronym Pegida, began conducting a series of anti-immigration demonstrations that attracted many followers.[57] Pegida has provoked protests against it all over Germany, and German Prime Minister Angela Merkel has spoken out against it and offered special protection to Muslims.[58] In the March 2016 German state elections, Prime Minister Merkel's

[53] "Immigration: Bulgarian or Romanian? You won't like it here," *Guardian*, 27 January 1913, http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/jan/27/uk-immigration-romania-bulgaria-ministers (accessed 24 July 2013).

[54] International Law Practitioners Association, "Six Boroughs Targeted in Returns Plot," membership list e-mail, 24 July 2013.

[55] "Adverts urging immigrants to leave the UK attacked by ex-minister," *Guardian*, 22 July 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk-news/2013/jul/22/illegal-immigrants-advertising-campaign (accessed 26 July 2013).

[56] See Art, *Inside the Radical Right*, on anti-immigrant sentiment in Western Europe.

[57] Kate Connolly, "Estimated 15,000 people join 'pinstriped Nazis' on March in Dresden," *Guardian*, 15 December 2014, p. 1; Steven Erlanger, "Cameron's Victory Sets Stage for Fights Over Europe, Scotland and Austerity, *New York Times*, 8 May 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/09/world/europe/cameron-election-uk-scotland-europe-austerity-referendum.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=b-lede-package-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&_r=0 (accessed 8 Mary 2005).

[58] "12 000 Münchner feiern Fasching gegen Pegida," *Süddueutsche Zeitung*, 19 January 2015, http://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/protest-gegen-islamhasser-muenchner-feiern-fasching-gegen-pegida-1.2311555; Merkel verurteilt "Kälte und Hass" bei Pegida," *Süddueutsche Zeitung*, 30 December 2014, http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/neujahrsansprache-der-kanzlerin-merkel-verurteilt-kaelte-und-hass-bei-pegida-1.2287216; "Merkel nimmt Muslime in Schutz," *Süddueutsche Zeitung*, 13 January 2015, http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/bundestag-zum-terror-in-paris-merkel-nimmt-muslime-in-schutz-1.2305218 (all accessed 21 January 2015).

CDU took a big hit while more than 20 percent voted for the new and anti-immigrant party, Alternative für Deutschland.[59]

## Bodies

Bodies are important sources of self-identification for people because they determine our capabilities and influence how others understand and respond to us. States show more variation in their bodily identifications that often determined the roles they can perform. Only large and populous states can become great powers or successfully retain that status. Neutrality has been imposed on small states because they are located near major powers that do not want them to be controlled by adversaries. Features of terrain have facilitated or impeded the formation and expansion of states. People and territory are central to the autobiographical narratives of states and important means of differentiating from others.

For political units, bodies take the form of territory and people. States are no more able to exist without territories than individuals are without bodies. The closest political units have come to doing so are the South Pacific Island states of Kiribas, Tuvalu, and Tokelau, where sea levels are rising due to global warming and residents are leaving for Fiji, Australia, and New Zealand.[60] Such evacuations may become more common. No state can exist without people, although some microstates come close. Vatican City has only 842 inhabitants and Nauru has 9,488. There are some two dozen member-states of the United Nations with populations of 200,000 or less. In September 2014, China, at the other end of the spectrum, had a population of 1,366,990, 000, or 19 percent of the world's population.[61]

[59] Hannah Beitzer, Gianna Niewel, Gunnar Herrmann, "Diese Wahlen verändern Deutschland," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 March, 2016, http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/landtagswahlen-diese-wahlen-veraendern-deutschland-1.2906194 (accessed 17 March 2016).

[60] "South Pacific island nation faces Atlantis-lie dilemma," *Macleans*, 16 March 2012, http://www2.macleans.ca/2012/03/16/that-sinking-feeling/ (accessed 20 July 2013).

[61] Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, Country Comparison, Population, August 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ (accessed 7 August 2014); Wikipedia, "List of countries by population," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population (accessed 25 September 2014).

There are significant differences between individual and state platforms. People are gendered whereas states are not, although some languages refer to them with gendered articles. Human bodies change in size, shape, and capabilities as people mature and age. They nevertheless stay within a narrow range of size and capabilities. Until recently, people have had little choice about their bodies. Sex change operations became available in the second half of the twentieth century, and joint replacements and organ transplants are now routine, as is cosmetic surgery. Michael Jackson is one of many people who significantly transformed his appearance through multiple surgical and other procedures. In the West, we have also begun to reject the male-female gender binary in recognition that it excludes those who are physically between or transgender and others who feel out of place in gendered bodies.[62]

People are born with bodies and states are not. Many states begin as nationalities that aspire to political control over territories they claim as their own. They cannot be recognized as states in the absence of effective control over a territory. Siamese twins aside, people do not struggle over the same bodies. Nationalities and states routinely do, and conflicts over territory are a common source of international tension and justification of war.[63]

Babies discover their bodies at an early age as part of their process of self-discovery. Political units do this as well, but much more effectively since cartography, photography, satellites, and the information revolution. The advent of mapping inspired and facilitated efforts by central authorities to assert more complete control over the territory they claimed and better definition of their borders.[64] In 1559, Philip II of Spain had his dominions on the Italian Peninsula and elsewhere in Europe mapped. Other political leaders followed suit. Map-making encouraged rulers to understand their holdings as unitary and

[62] See Goldstein, *War and Gender*, p. 169, for a strong statement for the case of culture over biology when it comes to gender.

[63] Vasquez, "Why Do Neighbors Fight?" I say superficial because territorial conflicts in turn are manifestations of deeper causes: fear for security, struggle for standing and honor, and material well-being. On this point, see Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*.

[64] See Lebow, *Constructing Cause in International Relations*, ch. 4, for the relationship between maps and the emergence of the territorial state.

contiguous entities – or to try to turn them into such units – and redefine themselves as sovereign-territorial rulers.[65]

Maps whetted the appetite for more territory. Toward this end, the Dutch States General granted cartographic monopolies to the West and East India companies in the early 1600s. The English used cartographic coordinates to make authority claims. In Africa and the Americas, colonial powers assumed that spaces marked on their maps were empty and awaiting colonization. Maps were sometime regarded as threatening to a state or leader's standing and self-worth. Ptolemaic mapping can be centered on any location. Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci introduced European mapping to China in the sixteenth century. The Qing Emperor and Chinese authorities were displeased by his Europe-centered maps, so he reoriented them around China to their satisfaction. In the 1680s, Louis XIV was presented with an updated map of France that revealed it to be 54,000 square miles less than previously estimated. He expressed dismay at this "loss" of territory.[66]

Unlike people, states vary enormously in size. Russia consists of 17,075,400 square kilometers of land, rivers, seas, and lakes within its borders, or 11.5 percent of the land area of the earth. The Vatican City, the smallest political unit, is a mere .44 square kilometers. It would take 39 million Vaticans to equal the land mass of Russia. States also differ in their terrain. Some states are largely desert, others mountainous, some landlocked, others islands or chains of islands, some are near the equator, and others nearer the poles. Some states have natural and easily defensible borders (e.g., deserts, mountain ranges, bodies of water difficult to cross), and others are open and porous.

States differ from people in their physical mutability. People become obese if they eat too much or emaciated if they are starved or bulimic. States expand or shrink on an altogether different scale. France, Russia, and the United States have increased in size by many multiples over their core domains. Former empires have disappeared or been reduced to "rump" or successor states, as have Austria, Hungary, Russia, and Turkey. At least one country – Poland – has been moved 120 miles or so to the west. At the end of World War II, Stalin annexed 70,000

[65] Black, *Maps and History*, pp. 12–16; Kivelson, "Cartography, Autocracy, and State Powerlessness"; Biggs, "Putting the State on the Map"; Parker, *Grand Strategy of Philip II*, pp. 59–63.

[66] Branch, *Cartographic State*, pp. 1, 39, 58, 96–97, 112–18, 142–43.

square miles of Polish territory in the east to the Soviet Union and provided compensation in the form of 40,000 square miles of former German territory in the west.

Territories are as central to national self-identifications as bodies are to people. In Britain, post–World War I national poetry glorified English pastoralism, unlike its German or Belgian counterparts. Between 1914 and 1939, the *Oxford Book of Verse* sold 500,000 copies. The French published considerably less poetry, but their poems and other literary forms evoked the homeland through villages, churches, and their *civilization*. German poets of the period focused more on *Kultur*, but also celebrated cities and industry.[67]

Britain and Japan are island nations and their peoples strongly identify as such. The United States began life as a frontier nation, a self-definition and identification that remained salient long after the frontier disappeared. The Dutch sense of self is shaped by rivers, canals, and a constant struggle against the North Sea. Andorra, San Marino, Singapore, and Brunei are mini-states, and the citizens of the first three are part of small, highly integrated communities. Switzerland and Nepal are mountain enclaves and their citizens distinguish themselves from others this way. This distinction is replicated within countries. In the United States, inhabitants of Vermont and New Hampshire differentiate themselves from the "flatlanders" of Massachusetts to the south and Québec to the north. In Britain, many English and Scots on both sides of the border define themselves as "Borderers" and feel more in common with one another than they do with the majority of English or Scots. In the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence, the percentage of "no" votes was highest in the border areas of Scotland.[68]

The last example highlights another important difference between states and people. Human bodies have distinct parts whereas most states have administrative subdivisions. Arms and lungs cannot develop identities, but regions can. Recent Man Booker Prize winner Eleanor Catton describes New Zealand as a "bicultural nation," referring not to the distinct cultures of Maoris and Pakehas [Whites], but those of the North and South Islands.[69] Many Texans,

[67] Reynolds, *Long Shadow*, p. 190.
[68] Crofton, *Walking the Border*.
[69] Eleanor Catton, "The Land of the Long White Cloud," *Guardian*, 19 October, Review, p. 5.

Newfoundlanders, Geordies, Bavarians, Chechens, Keralans, Hong Kongers, and Hunanese feel themselves to be quite different from inhabitants of other parts of their countries. This phenomenon extends down to the village level. A recent survey identifies six countries where citizen attachments to a village or town are higher or lower than their national identifications.[70]

These self-identifications may be cultural but can also have political importance. In some countries, regional and jurisdictional people may identify more with their region than with their state, or occasionally with another state or people across the border. Turkey, Russia, Iraq, Ethiopia, India, and Sri Lanka all confront, or have faced, separatist movements. Ireland, Cyprus, Palestine-Israel, and India-Pakistan are political units that have been de jure or de facto divided for this reason.[71] Demonstrations in Hong Kong in 2014 brought home the extent to which young people, students especially, identity more with their city than they do with China, and largely for political reasons. Hong Kong authorities, beholden to the mainland, not only suppressed the demonstrations but promised to put in place programs to educate the city's youth to develop a stronger "national identity."[72]

Bodily self-identifications are never static. As people mature, they develop different understandings of their bodies. A few become alienated from them for diverse reasons. When sick or old, we may feel detached from or unhappy about our bodies because they no longer represent who we think we are. We periodically upgrade or downgrade self-identifications associated with our body or our relations to it. Territorial self-identifications evolve as well. England only became a politically meaningful term in the Middle Ages, and did not qualify as an island state until it was unified and lost its rich possessions in what today is France. Richard Hakluyt, a sixteenth-century English writer who promoted settlement of North America, urged his compatriots to think of themselves as part of an island nation. This framing received a big boost from Shakespeare in Richard II, where John of Gaunt's

[70] Bruter, "Time Bomb."

[71] Henderson, Lebow, and Stoessinger, *Divided Nations in a Divided World*.

[72] Luis Liu, "HK youth should develop a more national identity: Chen Zuoer," *China Daily Hong Kong Edition*, 9 January 2015, p. 3. Chen Zuoer is former deputy director of the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office.

paean of praise to his native land is committed to memory to this day by many English school children:

> This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle,
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demi-paradise,
> This fortress built by Nature for herself
> Against infection and the hand of war,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> Which serves it in the office of a wall
> Or as a moat defensive to a house,
> Against the envy of less happier lands,
> This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.[73]

Shakespeare's lines were invoked during wartime to inspire patriotism. In the 1990s, "This Sceptered Isle" was used as the title of a 216 part episode of the BBC 4 Radio program on the history of British lands and peoples. England is only part of the British Isles, and self-identification as English competes with the newer concept of "British." If Scotland had voted for independence in 2014, these identifications would have undergone another dramatic transformation. In Victorian times, the expanse of the British Empire encouraged a vision of the country as a "global state."[74] It shrunk again to an island state with the end of the Empire.

Countries undergo other kinds of changes in how their peoples understand their territory. At the time of American independence, the Caucasian and Black population was clustered along the Atlantic seaboard. The territorial center shifted west with the expanding frontier and today, the Middle West, once sparsely populated prairie, is routinely described as the country's "heartland." For two millennia in China, the Yellow River and the Great Wall symbolized the center and progress. In recent years, Chinese have been encouraged by their government to now regard the Pacific Ocean as the sign of innovation and progress. The new symbol is intended to encourage those in the more developed coastal areas to become more cosmopolitan, and in part reflects this development.[75] China

[73] William Shakespeare, *King Richard II*, Act 2, scene 1.
[74] Bell, "Victorian Visions of Global Order."
[75] Goldman, Link and Wei, "China's Intellectuals in the Deng Era"; White and Cheng, "China's Coast Identities."

also has evolving understandings of the importance of and relationship between coastal and inland regions, cultural fault lines within littoral provinces, and after 1949, between the People's Republic and other regions of China not under their control: Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan.[76] For states, bodies comprise people as well as territory. At the outset, the People's Republic of China laid claim to all Chinese, including those living overseas [*huaqiao*].[77] As part of its strategy of accommodation within the region it has acknowledged the political separation of overseas Chinese.

Like bodily identifications, territorial ones can become problematic. They become obsolete when territory is lost or gained or new technology does away with what were previously perceived as natural barriers. The "splendid isolation" of island and mountain states was overcome by the advent of aviation, rockets, radio, and other electronic media. As political bodies have many inhabitants, they often have diverse understandings of their territory. Most frequently, these understandings reflect different political preferences and projects. In the early decades of the Federal Republic of Germany, nationalists and refugees from the former eastern provinces described the Federal Republic as "West Germany," the German Democratic Republic as "Central Germany," and much of what became Poland as "East Germany." In Britain, right-wing Tories, who oppose membership in the EU, emphasize Britain's island character and its separation from the continent. Pro-Europeans from all parties are more likely to describe Britain as part of Europe geographically, economically, and culturally.[78]

Russia is a successor state to a larger empire. Like all such states, its people have struggled to come to terms – or not – with the loss of considerable territory and the status of being the dominant nationality in a multiethnic empire. In 1996, former Soviet Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov proclaimed that "Russia has always been, is and will always be a great power."[79] In 2014, Russia occupied and annexed Crimea and supported Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine.[80]

[76] White and Cheng, "China's Coast Identities."
[77] Zhang, "Rise of Chinese Exceptionalism in International Relations."
[78] Charter, *Au Revoir Europe*; Hannan, *Doomed Marriage*; Scott, *A Nation Again*; Hassan and Ilett, *Radical Scotland*; Coleman, *Saving England*.
[79] Primakov, "International Relations on the Eve of the XXI Century"; Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, ch. 9.
[80] "Sochi or Bust," *Economist*, 1 February 2014, p. 16.

In December of that year, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared Crimea to be holy ground, akin to the Temple Mount for Jews and Dome of the Rock for Muslims. Basically, he said, forget about Kiev: Crimea is the true wellspring of Russia and its central faith. "It was in Crimea, in the ancient city of Chersonesus or Korsun, as ancient Russian chroniclers called it, that Grand Prince Vladimir was baptized before bringing Christianity to Rus."[81]

These infringements of Ukrainian sovereignty were widely supported by the Russian people.[82] This suggests how important being a great power remains for the self- image of many Russians.[83] There is nevertheless no post-Soviet consensus, but radically competing visions of the state, its territory, and role in the world.[84] Prior to these interventions, some Western analysts argued that it was important to "recognize" Russia and avoid seeking victories and triumphs at its expense. Others urged a tougher line.[85] The post-Crimea and Ukraine debate in the West about how to treat Russia shows remarkable similarities with those during the early Cold War.[86]

[81] Neil McFarquhar, "Another Huge Statue in Russia? Not Rare, but Hugely Divisive," *New York Times*, 28 May 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/29/world/europe/another-huge-statue-in-russia-not-rare-but-hugely-divisive.html?emc=eta1 (accessed 28 May 2015).

[82] Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, chapter 3. Russia: Public Backs Putin, Crimea's Succession, 8 May 2014, http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/05/08/chapter-3-russia-public-backs-putin-crimeas-secession/; Alec Luhn, "Ukraine crisis and Olympics boost Vladimir Putin's Popularity in Russia," *Guardian*, 6 March 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/06/ukraine-olympics-vladimir-putin-russia-crimea (*both* accessed 29 September 2014).

[83] Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics*; Clunan, *Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*; Omelicheva, "Russian Foreign Policy."

[84] Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics*; Clunan, *Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence*.

[85] Mankoff, "Russia and the West; Stephen F. Cohen, "America' Failed (Bi-Partisan) Russia Policy," *World Post*, 28 February 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-f-cohen/us-russia-policy_b_1307727.html (accessed 15 February 2014). For a harder line, see Adomeit, "Russia as a 'Great Power' in World Affairs"; Donald Jensen, "U.S.-Russia Relations in 2013: A Year of Living Ambiguously," *Institute of Modern Russia*, 14 January 2014, http://imrussia.org/en/russia-and-the-world/642-us-russia-relations-in-2013-a-year-of-living-ambiguously (accessed 15 February 2014). A third perspective maintains that neither strategy is likely to moderate Russian objectives. Forsberg, "Status Conflicts Between Russia and the West."

[86] Kennan, "America and the Russian Future"; Wight, *International Theory*, p. 187.

Loss of status sometimes promotes revanchism in the form of territorial claims to former lands, as it did in post–World War I Hungary, Weimar and Nazi Germany, and for some in the Federal Republic. It can also prompt a redefinition of the state in national terms, as it did in Turkey and Austria. In the latter it also led to a kind of collective denial of loss of empire and the self-identifications it sustained.[87] Many Austrians expressed a strong desire to merge their rump state with Germany, something foreseen and prohibited by the Versailles settlement but realized by Hitler in 1938. The entry of German troops into the country and the subsequent Anschluss was welcomed rapturously throughout Austria.[88] Today's Austrians nurture a distinct identity and most are reconciled to their territory, although the right-wing Austrian Freedom Party (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreich*) under Jörg Haider advocated a German rather than Austrian identity.[89]

Like roles and affiliations, territorial identifications are multiple, change in content, rise and fall in importance, and can become contested and highly politicized. Territorial identifications differ from roles in that regional or international societies rarely attempt to impose them on states, although they can make decisions that affect their territory. For this reason territorial identifications are more similar to those based on affiliations, which are also for the most part internally generated. To be sure, the construction of these identifications is influenced by external events. Political leaders or other actors may attempt to encourage good feelings about partner states, their leaders, and peoples. A case in point is the carefully managed visit of King Edward VII to Paris in 1904, which helped mobilize support for the nascent Anglo-French Entente.[90]

Role, territorial, and affiliative self-identifications are restricted by circumstances. An island state cannot readily imagine itself as a landlocked one, or vice versa. Small units have sometimes become great powers, as Ile de France did, by becoming the core of greater France.

[87] Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Das Märchen der 672* (1895) and Schnitzler, *Leutnant Gustl* (1901) mark the beginning of this process in the decades before the dissolution of the Empire.

[88] Sichrovkey, *Schuldig geboren*; Uhl, "From Victim Myth to Co-Responsibility Thesis."

[89] Frölich-Steffen, *Die österreichische Identität im Wandel*; Bauböck, "Constructing the Boundaries of the Volk"; Art, *Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*.

[90] Albertini, *Origins of the War of 1914*, vol. II, pp. 146–47.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Prussia expanded and became the nucleus for a unified Germany through clever leadership and extraordinary spending on its military. In 1786, the last year of his reign, Frederick the Great spent 75 percent of his state's income on the army, and another 5 percent went to his war treasury.[91] All contemporary great powers are, of necessity, large in size and population. Lilliputian Israel has nevertheless become a dominant regional power by virtue of its educated population, wealth, military capability, and extensive outside support. Conquest is now expressly forbidden under international law and unacceptable to the international community, so small states can no longer become big ones through conquest. However, states can join together into larger units or create supranational institutions like the EU. Part of the appeal for identifying as European in addition to a national of a member state is membership in a larger unit that has the potential to qualify as a superpower. Public opinion in fifty-two countries reveals that the EU is the only "great power" whose international leadership is widely supported.[92]

Territories are often described metaphorically and assigned symbolic meanings. Many Irish writers have figured the Irish nation as a woman to be fought for, as in the Easter 1916 Proclamation. Since the rise of feminism in the 1960s, contemporary Irish women authors, most notably the poet Eavan Boland, have attempted to revise this image of Ireland to make it represent the oppression of real Irish women and how British colonialism restricted Irish conceptions of gender and nationality. The nineteenth-century concept of Manifest Destiny justified American westward expansion and the 1846–47 war with Mexico. For this reason, Manifest Destiny was supported by most Democrats and bitterly opposed by most Whigs.[93] Israeli self-definitions are closely connected to territorial identifications for historical and religious reasons. Israelis who understand their country's territory in biblical terms support settlements in the occupied territories. They are generally hardliners when it comes to the peace process. Secular and left-leaning Israelis have a more restricted conception of their national land and are more willing to make concessions

[91] Schulze, "The Prussian Military State."

[92] "EU Must Become a Superpower – says the world's largest public opinion survey," European Council on Foreign Relations, 23 October 2007, http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/pr_soft_power (accessed 10 August 2013).

[93] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought?*, pp. 705–06.

to gain peace with their neighbors.[94] Irish opinion has moved in the opposite direction. Most citizens of the Republic of Ireland think of Ireland as coterminous with their island and a majority favor ultimate unification. However, a 2005 poll indicated that 45 percent have no interest in unification.[95] Most Catholics in the North have a similar view of Ireland, but more than half are reconciled to living in the United Kingdom.[96]

People can have attachments to multiple territories. Someone can self-identity as Münchener, Bavarian, German, and European, each of which has a territory and associated narratives. When these territories are nested, as in the earlier example, the several identifications are easier to reconcile. Psychological and political problems arise when they are at odds.

Territorial self-images are often closely connected to role definitions and affiliations. Conflicts over state roles can produce divergent territorial identifications. This happened in Weimar Germany, Austria between the world wars, and contemporary India and Russia. Russians who see their country as a great power are more supportive of Putin's expansionist policies with regard to Ukraine.

Positive affiliations can expand the territorial self, as unification did for the Thirteen Colonies, Germany, Australia, Indonesia, and Europeans who identity as such. Good relations between the peoples of Canada and the United States led Americans to restrict their territorial ambitions and exclude Canada, a country they twice tried to

[94] Recent evidence is provided by Pew poll that found that 23 percent of secular Israeli Jews vs. 41 percent of the Orthodox consider Jewish settlements in the West Bank beneficial to the peace process. Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, "Despite their Wide Differences, Many Israelis and Palestinians Want Bigger Role for Obama in Resolving Conflict," 9 May 2013, http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/09/despite-their-wide-differences-many-israelis-and-palestinians-want-bigger-role-for-obama-in-resolving-conflict/ (accessed, 25 July 2013).

[95] Jerome Reilly, "About Half of Us Would Reject United Ireland: Poll," *Sunday Independent* (Dublin), 18 September 2005.

[96] Henry McDonald, "The Kingdom will remain United – in Ireland, at Least," *Guardian*, 17 June 2011, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2011/jun/17/life-and-times-survey-united-ireland (accessed 15 November 2013); Liam Clarke, "Border Poll: Just 7% of Voters Would Say Yes to Irish Unification Tomorrow," *Belfast Telegraph*, 1 November 2013, http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/border-poll-just-7-of-voters-would-say-yes-to-irish-unification-tomorrow-28759983.html (accessed 15 November 2013).

conquer. Negative affiliations can prompt people to restrict their territorial vision to land that excludes those they have come to dislike. The various ethnic groups of the former Yugoslavia did this after the collapse of communism, as did the Slovaks when they separated from the Czechs. Serbs and Croatians now insist that they speak separate languages, not Serbo-Croatian.

## Autobiographies

The fourth source of self-identifications is historical. People have life experiences that shape their sense of who they are and lend some substance to their claim of being unique. For purposes of identity, life experiences can extend beyond the self to parents, extended family, religious and ethnic groups, and nations. For many Americans, being an immigrant, or child of immigrants, or even grandchild of immigrants, provides a strong self-identification. Other Americans, notably Irish, Jews, and Armenians, maintain a survivor mentality across four or more generations. Expectations about how ethnic groups behave, and the historical reasons behind this behavior, help shape the self-definitions of those who have strong identifications with these groups. James "Whitey" Bulger, convicted of eleven murders in Boston, was portrayed as an FBI informer by the prosecution. Bulger appeared more upset with this allegation that he was with the murder charges against him. His defense attorney, on his instructions, insisted that Bulger's "Irish heritage would prohibit such a thing" because becoming an informant was "the worst thing an Irish person could consider doing" because of the history of "The Troubles."[97]

National autobiographies are as essential to states as they are to individuals. They serve somewhat different functions for both. States do not require ontological security because they are not people and have no emotional or psychological needs. State autobiographies are in the first instant a response to political needs. Most important in this connection is integration and loyalty. As Paul Kowert nicely puts it, "The Leviathan needs a people."[98] In the modern era, states cannot

[97] Denise Lavoie, "Bulger Lawyers Work Against Informant Label," *Valley News* (Lebanon, New Hampshire), 1 July 2013, p. A4.
[98] Kowert, "National Identity: Inside and Out."

survive or compete successfully unless they command the loyalty of their citizens and build solidarity among them. The principal means of doing this is through autobiographical narratives of the state and its people. They provide emotional and instrumental reasons for loyalty and solidarity.

These narratives are generally, but not exclusively, constructed domestically. They are a product of competition for influence among political actors and factions, bureaucracies, interest and ethnic groups, and other communities. Many of these actors propagate historical narratives that foster values and identifications they believe to be conducive to their psychological needs and political goals.[99] What matters for the polity is not the diversity of these narratives, but rather the degree to which they are accepting of one another and diversity in general. Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard identify three kinds of memory regimes: fractured, pillarized, and unified. Fractured regimes contain at least one "mnemonic warrior," an actor intent on imposing its preferred narrative. Pillarized regimes have actors who admit multiple narratives and recognize the potential for compromise. In unified regimes, there is a general consensus about how to interpret the past. Such regimes are rare, with Germany they suggest, the best contemporary example.[100]

Opposing narratives generate conflict that can be disruptive, but also integrative if it heightens respect for the democratic processes by which different perspectives and their associated policy preferences are advanced, debated, and adjudicated. Until recently, the Canadian $5 bill featured winter scenes: children sledding, skating, and playing hockey on a frozen pond. The bill now has a portrait of an astronaut. This change was controversial and pitted official memory against its collective counterpart. It appears to have encouraged a debate about what it is to be Canadian, which led to no consensus but made most participants feel more Canadian.[101] When these identifications and their respective narratives are irreconcilable and find powerful support, they threaten the democratic process, as they did with the

[99] Lebow, "Memory of Politics"; Lowenthal, *Past Is a Foreign Country*.
[100] Kubik and Bernhard, "Theory of the Politics of Memory."
[101] Simon Kuper, "Skating on thin ice," *Financial Times Weekend Magazine*, 1–2 February 2014, p. 5. See Bernhard and Kubik, "Roundtable Discord," and O'Dwyer, "Remembering, Not Commemorating, 1989," for other cases where contestation has on the whole beneficial results.

national flag in the Weimar Republic. More recent conflicts have flared in Eastern Europe, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Middle East.[102]

National narratives are generally built on stylized understandings of a country's people, past, and accomplishments. Groups present their narratives as "natural," "obvious," and "authentic" and attempt to discredit those of opponents. The United States and Canada define themselves as multicultural, immigrant nations. Up to 1945, Germany emphasized the allegedly autochthonous origin of its population with the phrase "*blut und boden*" [blood and soil]. Revolutionary and contemporary France invoked a self-assigned cultural centrality and universal mission. For Britain and China, their imperial pasts are important, but so is China's "humiliation" in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Germany's Nazi past offers a negative "other" for present-day Germany, while Israel's ingathering of Jews and India's struggle against colonialism are important positive components of national narratives.

Not all these narratives are accepted within the countries in question, and are often interpreted differently and used for different ends by individuals, groups, and political factions. Americans who support immigration make the country's diverse population and the prominent achievements of immigrants central to their national narrative. Those opposed to immigration emphasize the allegedly un-American qualities of immigrants who are said to threaten the country's political and cultural traditions.[103] Presidential hopeful Donald Trump's description of Mexican immigrants as "criminals" and "rapists" in the run-up to the 2016 election resonated with segments of the population but was widely condemned.[104]

Personal and group history is socially constructed, although it often has some basis in fact. People and states nevertheless have a well-documented propensity to invent myths about their origins. At

[102] Seleny, "Revolutionary Road"; Leff, Skolnik, Douglas-Krause, and Wolchik, "I Ignored *Your* Revolution, but You Forget *My* Anniversary"; Eglitis and Ardava, "Remembering the Revolution"; Shevel, "Memories of the Past and Visions of the Future."

[103] Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations*.

[104] Jonathan Capehart, "Donald Trump's 'Mexican rapist' rhetoric will keep Republicans out of the White House," *Washington Post*, 17 June 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-partisan/wp/2015/06/17/trumps-mexican-rapists-will-keep-the-republican-party-out-of-the-white-house/ (accessed 17 July 2015).

one time or another, half the peoples of Europe, beginning with the Romans, claimed to be descendants of the Trojans.[105] The French traced their ancestry – not quite accurately – to the Gauls, as part of a cultural strategy to distance themselves from the Germans. French history school texts once began with the phrase: "Nos ancêtres les Gaulois [Our ancestors, the Gauls]." The first *Astérix* book appeared in 1961. The text begins: "All of Gaul is occupied. All? Not quite!" The indomitable Asterix, Obelix, and the rest of their village offer a brilliant antithesis to the still raw memories of the German occupation and Vichy.[106] More serious national histories often describe the past in ways that bear little relationships to facts or how events were understood at the time. Official memory, like its individual counterpart, is a resource that is rewritten in response to social cues and psychological needs.[107]

Antony Giddens and other advocates of ontological security believe that it is important for individuals and states to maintain coherent, consistent, and reality-based biographical narratives. In Chapter 3 I argued there is little evidence to suggest that such narratives are either factual or consistent. Neither people nor states have single narratives, but multiple ones, as different officials, political, ethnic and other groups, and intellectuals propagate stories about the past that advance their goals or are psychologically comforting. The problem of recall aside, narratives of the past can change with each retelling. Psychologists have discovered multiple "remembered selves" whose evocation depends on the nature of the trigger and the social milieu in which the person is situated at the time.[108]

My critique of ontological security is in no way intended to dismiss or even downgrade the importance of memories for states. I follow Karl Deutsch in conceiving of states as communities held together by communication of which the most important component

[105] Vergil, *Aeneid*, depicts Aeneas as one of the few Trojans not killed when Troy fell, who travels across the Mediterranean, stops for some time in Carthage, and ultimately founds Rome.

[106] Tom Holland, "My Hero: Asterix by Tom Holland," *Guardian*, 25 October, http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/25/hero-asterix-tom-holland (accessed 18 August 2015).

[107] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, pp. 25–28.

[108] Neisser, "John Dean's Memory; Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth*; White, "Recall of Autobiographical Events"; Polkinghorne, "Narrative and Self-Concept"; Neisser, *Perceived Self*; Neisser and Fivush, *Remembering Self*.

is an autobiographical narrative.[109] Felix Berenskoetter defines the nation-state "as a bounded community constituted by a biographical narrative which gives meaning to its collective spatio-temporal situatedness."[110] This is a more useful conceptualization than the realist description of the state as a political-legal entity.[111] By framing states as communities, international relations can be reconceived as a society whose actors are constituted and shaped by shared and idiosyncratic structures of meaning.[112]

There are striking parallels between individual and state memories. Individual memory is socially influenced, if not largely shaped, by collective and official memories.[113] Official memories, as noted, are those that state agents attempt to impose on the society in order to shape collective and individual memories. There is a large literature on all three types of memory and their relationship. Suffice it to say that in democratic societies individuals and groups are just as active as states are in fostering national narratives, although they lack the same resources. There are nevertheless many instances of groups succeeding in the face of state opposition. More common is change brought about by groups with the support, or at least connivance, of governmental authorities. European efforts to come to terms with World War II illustrate both phenomena.

The initial across-the-board response of postwar elites everywhere was to portray their countries as victims. This was true of Germany – East and West, the Soviet Union, and Italy, and not surprisingly, as they were the countries most responsible for the war.[114] Countries with a record of collaboration, like France and Hungary, emphasized the role of their resistance movements. In France, Yugoslavia, Norway, and Poland, resistance became the principal frame of reference for wartime histories, commemoration, and public memory. Neutrals stressed their

[109] Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* and *Nerves of Government*; Ringmar, "On the Ontological Status of the State."
[110] Berenskoetter, "Parameters of a National Biography."
[111] Poggi, *Development of the Modern State*, pp. 98–101.
[112] Pouliot, *Logic of Practicality*; Hopf, "Logic of Habit in International Relations"; Berenskoetter, "Parameters of a National Biography."
[113] See Chapter 3 for a definition of these terms and a discussion of their relationship.
[114] Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, *Inability to Mourn*; Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory*.

work on behalf of victims and the constraints under which they operated. Everyone blamed the Germans for the Holocaust, the Germans blamed the Nazis, and the Nazis blamed Hitler. Most countries and their intellectuals propagated narrowly self-serving interpretations and memories of their past.[115]

In more than seven decades since the end of World War II, almost every country has undergone some kind of wrenching public debate about its roles in that conflict and the atrocities for which its government or nationals were responsible. In some countries, controversy surfaced early on; in others, it took decades. Comparative studies indicate that the catalysts for these debates were diverse, as were the fora in which they took place. In some countries, outside events, like the Eichmann trial, stimulated national introspection; in others, internal developments, such as controversial memoirs, television series, and court cases, were responsible. The ensuing debates varied in their intensity and the extent to which they involved political and intellectual elites and caught the attention of the wider public. Intellectuals were in every case the prime movers, and if they were not members of younger postwar generations – a question to which I will return – their support came overwhelmingly from younger people. The incentive for change and reformulation of memory was from the bottom up in the sense that it originated with people who were for the most part far from the levers of political power. It was nevertheless largely intra-elite, as the professors, artists, journalists, playwrights, filmmakers, and students who were the catalysts or supporters of efforts to revisit and rewrite history were educated, comparatively well off, and well-endowed with resources. Ultimately, they convinced or forced public officials to rewrite official memory, and in some countries to ally with critics to make textbooks, memorials, and commemorations more accurate representations of the past. In Germany, as noted, this process has gone the furthest.[116]

There is nothing new about historical conflict. France has been riven by mnemonic wars since the revolution of 1789. They have had profound implications for foreign policy, and often in the opposite way of that expected by ontological security theorists. Rather than

[115] See Lebow, Kansteiner, and Fogu, *Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, for a general and country-by-country analysis.
[116] Ibid; Kansteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory*.

providing guidelines for foreign policies, foreign policies have been pursued to advance particular understandings of France at the expense of competing visions. *Fin-de-siècle* France pitted Dreyfusards against anti-Dreyfusards and pro-British against pro-Germans in foreign policy. The colonial ministry, which constructed a narrative of France as a colonial power, regarded Britain as the principal enemy and Germany as a natural ally. It sponsored a military expedition to the Sudan to commit France to its vision. The expedition provoked the 1898 Fashoda crisis, bringing France and Britain to the brink of war. The two crises deeply divided the country because domestic and foreign policy cleavages overlapped, and the colonial ministry's foreign policy was also intended to deliver a blow to its domestic opponents. The colonial ministry, army, church, and monarchists were anti-Dreyfus, anti-British, and pro-imperial. The foreign ministry, which saw France as a democratic, European power, was pro-Britain and anti-Germany and supported by the secular left and pro-Republic forces. The conflict was not resolved but put on the back burner with the triumph in the 1900 election of the left-wing coalition – *la Défense Républicaine*. It would surface again on the eve of World War II, when the clerical left supported the Popular Front against Hitler while the slogan of the anti-Republican, pro-Church right became "Better Hitler than Blum." For several years the anti-Republican right exercised power in unoccupied France and collaborated with the Germans while many former members of the Popular Front joined the resistance.[117]

Serbia in 1914, Japan in the 1930s, and present-day Pakistan offer examples of fragmented states where subunits pursued conflicting foreign policies that were implemented by institutions with different visions of their country. This kind of national schizophrenia can be destructive. In Serbia and Pakistan it led to unauthorized acts of terrorism: twin assassinations at Sarajevo in June 1914 and the November 2008 attacks at twelve locations in Mumbai. The former was the catalyst for World War I, and the latter had the potential of triggering another war between India and Pakistan.[118] In Japan, the Kwantung Army and its political allies waged an unauthorized military campaign against the Soviet Union in Mongolia that provoked a crushing response.[119]

[117] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*; Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered*.
[118] Dedijier, *Road to Sarajevo*; Tankel, *Storming the World*.
[119] Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*.

## Interactions

National identifications, like their individual counterparts, are a composite of multiple identifications. They derive primarily from roles, affiliations, relations to bodies, and autobiographical narratives. As with individuals, these identifications are labile in substance, rise and fall in importance, are sometimes reinforcing, but not infrequently crosscutting. They are constructed by sub state actors, government officials, and the international community. They often appeal more, or only, to specific audiences, making it possible for different groups of citizens to have radically different understandings of their country's history and what it represents.

There is no evidence that any basis of national identification is more important than others. Most narratives draw on some combination of roles, affiliations, bodies, and histories. Their relative importance is country and situation specific, although some weak generalizations may hold. People who live in states with high-status roles are more likely to emphasize them in their national identifications than people who do not. This reflects the importance of status, but also the fact that high-status roles confer distinctiveness as there are relatively few great powers, only one superpower, and a relatively small number of leading regional powers and prominent neutrals.

The most common kind of affiliation is with neighboring countries where there are good relations between peoples and states and considerable cross-border exchange. Such affiliations can become important sources of pride and national identification, as they are in Scandinavia, and more recently between France and Germany. The French have held out their collaboration as evidence of their central role in the European project, regarded by many members of the elite as a modern means of achieving *gloire*. For Germans, this friendship between former enemies is evidence of Germany's new and valued role as a good neighbor. Creating good relations with France, and even more with Germany's neighbors to the east, required changes in territorial concepts. As noted, the Federal Republic officially recognized postwar boundaries in its several treaties with Poland. Governments and publics in Poland and the Czechoslovakia – and elsewhere in Europe – monitored how German media and people readjusted their territorial understandings, which in turn reinforced their willingness to cooperate with and trust the Federal Republic.

Changes in any one kind of identification can encourage or compel reformulation of others. Gain and loss of territory for Prussia and Germany prompted redefinition of roles, affiliations, and autobiographies. Changes in affiliations – my example was American colonial students in Britain – encouraged changes in territorial conceptions, which in turn had profound political implications for relations between the Thirteen Colonies and the mother country. Hostility can have the same effect. Gandhi's autobiography reveals how he rethought his affiliations in the aftermath of being ejected from a first-class compartment on a South African train because of his dark skin.[120]

Rupert Emerson argues that what Gandhi experienced was hardly unique. Educated colonial elites found themselves in limbo; they had rejected many of the values of the traditional societies of their origin but were treated as second-class citizens at best by the society into which they had tried to assimilate. Nationalism was a psychological strategy to make them whole again. They sought affiliation with intellectuals and workers in the homelands and to mobilize them to create independent states and a culture to which they could belong.[121] In these examples changes in affiliation occurred at the individual level. Enough influential people had strong psychological incentives to change their affiliations and then encourage their friends and associates to adopt them as well. Over time, a cascading process spread self-identifications among the population. This process offers further evidence of the complex interactions between individual and national identifications.

New national identifications require justifications, which are provided by historical narratives. To be successful, they must address events already considered central to the country's identity. In Germany, as we have seen, these include the two world wars and the Holocaust. They must also use appropriate cultural tropes and images. These narratives can offer new interpretations of these events and shift their relative importance. Key to civil peace are narratives that, even if they conflict, do not demonize those who offer competing narratives, do not maintain that the future depends on a "correct" reading of the past, and do not attempt to use the power of the state to impose their reading of history. This allows alternative narratives

[120] Fischer, *Essential Gandhi*, pp. 59–74.
[121] Emerson, *From Empire to Nation*.

and the identifications they propagate to coexist and serve the needs of different communities with the country.

## Cooperation

The liberal institutionalist, social capital, and "thin" constructivist approaches are considered competing explanations for cooperation. They nevertheless rely on the same ontological starting point and mechanism. Their analytical unit is the egoistic but rational actor who operates within a social system on the basis of self-interest. They take for granted that these individuals (e.g., people, institutions, states) want to cooperate and would do so if environmental constraints could be overcome. Toward this end they invoke institutions: a hegemon or regimes that facilitate coordination and increase the cost of defection. They assume that actors respond primarily to external stimuli.

Cooperation for some theorists can emerge as the unintentional outcome of cumulative self-interested behavior.[122] "Tit-for-tat," considered by many one of the most robust theories of cooperation, is a prominent example; it stipulates that actors will duplicate the strategy of those against whom they play. If they cooperate, you cooperate, and if they defect, you defect.[123] It assumes, but provides no explanation for, a general inclination to cooperation. Axelrod subsequently discovered that this assumption is unwarranted. When he had American officials play "tit-for-tat" during the Cold War, those playing the Soviet Union and the United States defected from the outset and no cooperation emerged.[124]

Alexander Wendt makes a parallel argument. Like Axelrod, he assumes that actors – whom he calls "alter" and "ego" – construct their relationship on the basis of their interactions. Three different kinds of worlds can emerge – Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian – and once a system level is established, it creates strong incentives for its founders and other actors to conform.[125] Unlike Axelrod, Wendt recognizes that initial negative patterns of interaction lead to Hobbesian worlds

[122] Olson, *Logic of Collective Action*; Stigler and Becker, "De Gust bus Non Est. Disputant"; Gammon, "Social Psychology of Collective Action."
[123] Axelrod, *Evolution of Cooperation*.
[124] Axelrod, *Complexity of Cooperation*, p. 30.
[125] Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp. 326–36.

in which anything more than short-term cooperation is improbable because it is likely to be exploited.

Liberals emphasize the positive role of institutions and how they reshape environmental constraints and opportunities. Robert Keohane, among others, argues that institutions reduce the likelihood of defection while raising its costs. Institutions can also lower information costs and establish patterns of interaction that make coordination more efficient for everyone.[126] Theories of this kind sometimes allow for differences in the character of actors; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita introduces a distinction between risk-prone and risk-averse actors – but these actor-level characteristics are second-order refinements for theories that rely on environmental cues as their principal mechanisms.[127]

There are numerous problems with these approaches. For a start, they posit an unreal world of egoistic, autonomous actors unconnected to one another by bonds of friendship and obligation, commitment to similar values, or recognition that it is in their interest to make sacrifices to uphold an order from which they benefit. Truly egoistic and autonomous actors, as the Greeks, Hobbes, and modern authors like Robert Musil understood, are little more than a bundle of raw appetites and instrumental reason. Outside of society and the roles, practices, and values it provides, they cannot formulate interests and are a danger to themselves and everyone around them.[128] Fully autonomous actors are nothing like the calculating rational beings of rationalist theories.

Rationalist and liberal explanations for cooperation mistake cause for effect. With the exception of orders imposed and maintained by coercion, institutions rest on prior commitments by actors to coordinate and regulate their behavior. Absent this commitment, institutions will not form, or, if they do, will not confer the advantages that

[126] Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory* ; Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations*; Cheryl Shanks, Harold K. Jacobson, and Jeffrey H. Kaplan, "Inertia and Change in the Constellation of International Governmental Organizations, 1981–1991," *International Organization* 50 (Autumn 1996), pp. 593–628; Hajnal, *The G7/G8 System: Evolution, Role and Documentation*; Ikenberry, *After Victory*, esp. pp. 248, 257–73.

[127] Bueno de Mesquita, *War Trap*, pp. 34–35.

[128] Hobbes, *Leviathan*; Musil, *Man Without Qualities*. Wolfgang Mozart and Lorenzo Da Ponte's opera, *Don Giovanni*, offers another example. For a discussion, see Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 4.

liberals attribute to them. Institutions rest on a foundation of common interests that extend well beyond short-term instrumental gains to valued ways of life. Successful institutions are the custodians of common values and foster and sustain them through their norms and procedures.[129]

Institutions do not spontaneously arise under conditions of anarchy. They are a product of society, and the more robust the society, the more numerous and robust its institutions. This is something of a truism because the robustness of a society can be defined in terms of its institutions and their legitimacy and, hence, effectiveness. People, institutions, and states interact in societies, not in systems – a claim I advance in the opening chapter of this volume. Rationalist approaches reverse cause and effect; in practice, it is society that enables institutions and cooperation, not the other way around.

When there is predisposition to cooperate, the kinds of mechanisms theorized by rationalists and liberal institutionalists can facilitate it. The more important and prior question is explaining the development of this predisposition and the society that makes it possible and encourages it. The Greeks thought deeply about this question and found an answer in affiliations. Thucydides and Plato contend that friendship enables societies and cities. For Thucydides, it prompts the kind of sacrifice, reciprocity, and striving necessary for social order. For Plato, it encourages empathy and acceptance of others as one's ontological equals. For Aristotle, as for many modern philosophers, cooperation and the civic project [*koinonia*] are ultimately an expression of our *innate* sociability. We are driven by instincts to associate with others to realize our own needs and potential.[130] Relationships and the commitments they entail are not simply instrumental means to selfish ends, but important ends in their own right. We become who we are through close association with others. In the words of Charles Taylor, dialogue allows us to "become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity."[131]

Regional and international societies are admittedly less robust than their domestic counterparts are. They are still societies, constituted in part by the needs of states and other actors for social interaction and

[129] Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms, and Decisions*, p. 64.
[130] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a30, 1252b28–1253a39.
[131] Taylor, *Malaise of Modernity*, p. 33.

the rewards it can bring. One reason I believe Hobbes invoked the state of nature was to show how in the absence of roles, affiliations, and the autobiographies they enable we become more or less identical. Our only interests are the requisites of survival and immediate gratification: food, clothing, shelter, and sex. Society strengthens affiliations and provides roles that give us social purpose and allow for differentiation and status.

Domestic, regional, and international societies are created and strengthened through positive interaction among the actors who become their members. They form affiliations that enable the construction of these societies and they in turn establish and legitimate roles and associated hierarchies that confer distinctiveness and status. They make national identifications possible and meaningful. Affiliations also encourage the kind of cooperation that helps create overlapping, if not shared, self-identifications and autobiographical narratives. They in turn provide the basis for closer collaboration and the kind of social order that makes international relations more a society than a system, and more hierarchical than anarchical.

National identifications can thus be an important underlying cause of the propensity to cooperate. They inculcate restraint and respect for rules, but by very different mechanisms than posited by rationalists. We want to be respected by people we care about and to do them right. This provides incentives to act in accord with the principles of friendship and the responsibilities associated with one's role. As noted, cooperation has the potential to create overlapping identifications and narratives. They strengthen affiliations but also lead to the construction of more common interests.

There is, of course, a downside to this story. Like individual self-identifications, national identifications are also a source of conflict. This happens when states compete for the same roles, or for relative status within these roles, when affiliations fail to develop or give way to hostility, and when autobiographical narratives gain ascendance that demonize and stigmatize other states and categories of people. In these circumstances cooperation becomes more difficult and society less robust. A vicious cycle, rather than a virtuous one, can be set in motion.

My analysis suggests two conclusions. To understand cooperation and conflict we must pose a novel set of questions. We need to learn more about the identifications that encourage cooperation as opposed to conflict, and the kinds of domestic, regional, and international

societies most likely to encourage these identifications. Helpful too would be more detailed knowledge of the ways in which roles, affiliations, bodies, and autobiographies interact. Constructivist scholars have done foundational work in their case studies and have produced pieces of these broader puzzles. We need more research along these lines, but connected to and inspired by a more general framework.

Cooperation should be regarded as no more anomalous than conflict. Both kinds of behavior reflect fundamental human needs. Cooperation enables and sustains the relationships and communities that give us identifications and interests, and conflict arises when the identifications and interests of individuals or states are at odds or clash with those of others. Cooperation and conflict are often framed as polar opposites, but at a deeper level, as the Greeks understood, and my discussion of national identifications illustrates, they are closely related and even symbiotic.

# 6 *Agency*

Agency is valued by actors of all kind, and all the more so in the modern world with its emphasis on autonomy. One of the more common ways by which people and states think they are exercising agency is in the pursuit or exercise of high-status roles – or opting out of this competition. People attempt to personalize all kinds of roles by performing them in novel and distinctive ways. Agency can also find expression in rebellion and rejection of socially sanctioned roles and practices. I explore these several means of expressing agency and the ways in which states resemble people but also differ from them.

The quest for high-status roles and rebellion against society are generally considered polar opposite forms of behavior: the former follows legitimate pathways and, if successful, brings handsome rewards, whereas the latter rejects conventional norms and practices and invites scorn and punishment. At a deeper level these strategies may be equivalent. In international relations, I argue, both forms of agency can have similar goals: the building or strengthening national identifications to enhance national self-esteem and solidarity and mobilize support for leaders and regimes. This may help explain why actors – individuals and states – not infrequently switch from one strategy to the other.

Realists define the status quo in terms of territory and measure power in terms of material capabilities. Equally important to any understanding of the status quo are the norms that govern who becomes an actor, what roles are available to them, and how they should be performed. The status quo is most secure when these norms are most robust. The degree of consensus about norms will influence, if not largely determine, the extent to which some actors rebel, the manner of their rebellion, and how it is perceived and responded to by others.

Although I use the term "status quo" in the preceding paragraph, it is something of an oxymoron, as society and its norms and practices are constantly evolving. At best, the status quo is a snapshot of social

arrangements at any given moment. Even this framing is problematic because actors form their pictures of society from diverse angles and focus on different features. This leads to different understandings of the status quo. The Cuban missile crisis offers a telling example. The United States and the Soviet Union each thought they were defending the status quo. Washington defined it as a Cuba without missiles, and Moscow, which sent missiles in Cuba in part to protect the Castro regime, defined it as a Cuba with Castro.[1] Politics is not so much a reflection of and response to the status quo as it consists of efforts to shape it and others' understanding of what it is. This is most evident in struggles over roles, where there is contestation about which ones are legitimate and what privileges and responsibilities they confer and entail. It is also apparent with regard to deviance, where disputes rage over what it is and who should be stigmatized. As Durkheim understood, labeling an actor a deviant represents an effort to define what behavior is acceptable and thereby to uphold particular norms, values, and practices.[2]

So-called deviance and its stigmatization represent an attempt to impose, defend, or change existing practices and norms.[3] Contestations of this kind can be a major source of change in all societies, including regional and international ones. This happens when new roles arise, old ones decline or disappear, or their markers and standards of performance evolve. Change in the so-called status quo can also be caused by shifts in thinking about what constitutes acceptable behavior and deviance. The two kinds of change are tightly connected, as changes of either kind can destabilize or reinforce the other. What actors think influences how they behave, and how other actors behave influences what they think of as normal or appropriate.

## Agency

Agency is the ability of people and institutions to act independently. It is always circumscribed because individuals and collective actors are embedded in societies that impose constraints not only on what they

[1] Lebow and Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*, ch. 2.
[2] Durkheim, *Rules of Sociological Method*, pp. 97–104.
[3] Campbell, "Legal and Primary-Social Group Social Controls"; Black, "Social Control as a Dependent Variable"; Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest*; Dijker and Koomen, *Stigmatization, Tolerance and Repair*.

can do but what they imagine they would like to do. For the same reason, much of what we think of as agency consists of desires and behavior that are socially induced. To muddy the waters further, scholars frequently use the term "agency" in different, even contradictory, ways. A recent review of the literature by two psychologists finds the concept to have "maintained an elusive, albeit resonant, vagueness."[4]

Positivist, rationalist, Marxist, constructivist, and postmodernist approaches to political science are dominated by thin understandings of agency. Structural theories finesse agency by treating policymakers as something akin to electrons that do nothing more than convey or respond to external forces. Rational choice and strategic interaction models frame problems from the perspective of individual actors and their calculations and decisions. However, they explain these decisions, and often preferences, as predictable responses to environmental incentives and constraints. This rules out meaningful agency, because actors in similar circumstances are treated as interchangeable. Acknowledging meaningful diversity would deprive these approaches of their traction. Marxism may offer the most extreme variant. Leon Trotsky was emphatic that the leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution were critical to its outcome, but there was nothing "accidental" about their presence or policies; they were a product of Russian history and capitalism.[5] Constructivists are critical of all these approaches, but also downplay agency by emphasizing the determining role of socialization.[6] Postmodernists assert that socialization and repression all but rule it out, leaving rebellion as the only possibility.[7]

Political philosophers have developed restrictive notions of agency.[8] Many refuse to consider actions taken in response to internal or external pressures as evidence of real agency or freedom. Plato, for example, describes people driven by appetites to be slaves of their passions and lacking any actual agency.[9] Kant develops a critique of agency in

[4] Emirbayer and Mische, "What Is Agency?"
[5] Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, vol. 1, pp. 330–31.
[6] Checkel, "Constructivist Turn in International Relations"; Jacobsen, "Duelling Constructivisms"; Bucher, "Acting Abstractions."
[7] See Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1 for a review of these literatures and their understandings of agency.
[8] For a discussion, see Pockett, Banks, and Gallagher, *Does Consciousness Cause Behavior?*; Sebanz and Prinz, *Disorders of Volition*; Siegel, "Symposium on the Phenomenology of Agency"; Pacherie, "Self-Agency."
[9] Plato, *Republic*, pp. 562–65.

his distinction between *Wille* (the manifestation of reason in its practical form) and *Willkür* (the faculty of choice, a manifestation of practical reason). He contends that real freedom, or rational agency, is the capacity to act for oneself independently of the causality of nature or society.[10] Logically and empirically, claims of agency are notoriously difficult to establish. Durkheim observed, and psychological research confirms, that people cling to the illusion that they have considerable freedom of choice.[11] John Dewey and Arthur Bentley followed up on Durkheim's insight by contrasting "situated creativity" with "self action." The former describes the reality of human agency because it recognizes that individuals everywhere act within severe constraints and must struggle to express any meaningful agency. The latter describes what people actually believe; most convince themselves they are "acting under their own powers" and are somehow conditioned to act this way by their social context.[12]

In traditional societies most people had little agency. There were relatively few roles and most of them were ascribed. People knew who they were, as their status in society was not only given but confirmed on a daily basis. Peasants may have been unhappy about their condition, but for the most part did not deny it to themselves or others. Attempts to do so would have been difficult and almost certainly would have met with resistance.[13] James Scott contends that it is not much better in the modern world, as states have invented multiple categories of identification that they force on their subjects. Officials, moreover, police these identities.[14] Postmodernist philosophers such as Foucault and Lyotard also stress the power of society to impose identities on "subjects," especially identities that reinforce social inequality.[15] Perhaps in recognition of how the world is increasingly shaped by the invisible decisions of powerful governments, corporations and other bureaucracies, postwar science fiction and

[10] Kant, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, p. 19.
[11] Durkheim, *Rules of Sociological Method*, p. 54; Pacherie, "Self-Agency."
[12] Dewey and Bentley, "Knowing and the Known"; Hellmann, "Linking Foreign Policy Analysis and Systemic Transformations in Global Politics."
[13] Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction of Reality*, pp. 184–88; Davis, "Boundaries and Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France."
[14] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*; Money, *Gay, Straight, and In-Between*; Kessler and McKenna, *Gender*; Ortner and Whitehead, *Sexual Meanings*. See also special issues of *Social Problems* devoted to labeling theory.
[15] Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* and *Discipline and Punish*.

fantasy – to the delight of readers – give extraordinary, and highly unrealistic, agency to their characters.[16] This may be one reason for their popularity.

Modernity is also characterized by widespread efforts – many of them successful – to escape, finesse, or otherwise transgress assigned categories and roles. Artists and intellectuals no longer rely on patrons but the market, which often gives them more freedom to create what they want.[17] Western states have eased up on their rigid categorization of people, in part in response to pressures from below. In recent years, to cite one example, bureaucrats have been compelled to expand the long-used categories of identification in the U.S. national census and also allow people to self-identify. Americans no longer need to be Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Native American, and so on. They can be something else or something in-between.[18]

Roles have opened up in a double sense. Restrictions based on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation have diminished, and in many cases have all but disappeared. The U.S. State Department, once limited to white Anglo-Saxon graduates of elite male educational institutions, in recent decades has had Jewish, African American, and female Secretaries. The Federal Reserve Bank received its first female chair in 2014. The armed forces of developed countries increasingly let women fill combat roles. The International Olympics Committee, generally the last holdout when it comes to bigotry, finally agreed in 1988 to allow women to run the marathon. Homosexual partnerships and marriages are increasingly common and legal throughout the Western world. There is also more leeway in one's choice of roles, in large part due to the greater wealth and education of Western populations. The percentage of men who go into their father's profession in the United

[16] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 6.

[17] See ibid., ch. 8 for a discussion of consequences of the transition from patron to market.

[18] See Anderson and Feinberg, "Race and Ethnicity and the Controversy over the US Census," http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/epss/glossary_r.html for "race" on the 2010 U.S. Census; see Ken Prewitt, "Fix the Census' Archaic Racial Categories," *New York Times*, 21 August 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/22/opinion/fix-the-census-archaic-racial-categories.html?hp (accesses 21 August 2013), for a plea to drop all racial categories; Anna Holmes, "America's "Postracial" Fantasy, *New York Times* Magazine, 30 June 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/05/magazine/americas-postracial-fantasy.html (accessed 5 July 2015).

States has declined dramatically, while the percentage of women who do is three times more likely than it was a century ago.[19]

Some important roles have become more open in their performance. Most schools and many businesses allow, often encourage, more independence and self-expression by students and employees. Telecommuting is common, dress codes have relaxed, divorce, cohabitation, and homosexuality are not longer barriers to most high-status jobs, women are making headway in professions formerly closed to them, and nurses and homemakers are no longer only women. In the West, gender roles have loosened to the point where in the eyes of some conservatives they have become dangerously blurred. In the United States, these changes generated have arguably fueled Mormonism and evangelical Christianity, which insist on traditional and clearly demarcated male-female roles. In 2013–14, France witnessed widespread protests by those wanting to protect traditional families and their alleged values.[20]

Meaningful agency requires choice and self-fashioning. Free will is most evident, as Dostoevsky realized, when actors deliberately act in ways they recognize to be inimical to their interests.[21] Ever since Hume, social scientists have downplayed agency, while biographers exaggerate it.[22] People, including policymakers, tend to cluster at both extremes. The fundamental attribution error suggests that the same people do both. When an action or policy turns out well, they stress their agency and responsibility for the outcome; when it fails, they deny agency and responsibility.[23]

A debate about agency is only possible in the modern world where self-fashioning has become a goal. It has become to some degree

[19] Megan Casserly and Caroline Howard, "How Fathers Influence Their Daughters' Careers," *Forbes*, 14 June 2010, http://www.forbes.com/2010/06/14/fathers-daughters-career-forbes-woman-leadership-success.html (accessed 18 March 2016).

[20] Steven Erlanger, "Gay Marriage Is Protested in France," *New York Times*, 26 May 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/27/world/europe/thousands-march-in-france-against-gay-marriage.html (accessed 7 February 2014).

[21] Dostoevsky, *Notes from the Underground*.

[22] Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, sec. XII; Wooton, "From Fortune to Feedback."

[23] Ross, "Intuitive Psychologist and his Shortcomings: Jones and Harris, "Attribution of Attitudes"; Krull, "On Partitioning the Fundamental Attribution Error."

possible because of reinforcing ideational and material changes. They include a more complex division of labor and the proliferation of roles and the emergence of discourses that question existing roles and theorize alternatives.[24] British and American liberals regard society as a source of role models for people to emulate or put together their own self by mixing and matching qualities of others. They in turn have the potential to become role models for others.[25] For Romantics, agency has become an end in itself, even if its consequences were understood by some to be destructive.[26] Isaiah Berlin describes the "apotheosis of the will" as a defining feature of modernity.[27]

Elsewhere I have made the case that role-playing has historically been the principal mechanism for exploring and developing new selves.[28] It becomes more attractive and widespread when discourses develop about it, as they did in eighteenth-century Europe. People reflect on their role-playing, which can make them new people even when it is not their intention. Of equal importance, they may begin to conceptualize much of what they do in their daily lives in terms of roles. This framing encourages them to regard these practices as conventional, not natural, and thus to try to exercise more agency in their selection and performance.[29]

In recent years, there has been some attempt to analyze foreign policy in terms of roles. Drawing on Judith Butler, Craig Campbell has described foreign policy as a kind of performance. It expresses a prior intention, exposes the doer behind the deed, establishes the existence of actors, and makes their behavior legible. It also allows actors to engage in some degree of self-fashioning.[30] Following Mead, Brent Steele argues that self-fashioning of this kind forces others to see us differently. He suggests that the exercise of agency can paradoxically undermine it when it exposes vulnerabilities that other actors can exploit by what he calls "counterpower." This is most likely to happen when our self-images compel us to overreact in ways that undermine

[24] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1.
[25] Lebow, *Politics and Culture of Identity*, chs. 1 and 8.
[26] Goethe, *Sorrows of Young Werther*; Turgenev, *First Love*; Yeats, "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death."
[27] Berlin, "Apotheosis of the Romantic Will."
[28] Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*.
[29] This point is also made by Rancière, *Politics of Aesthetics*, p. 13.
[30] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, *Bodies That Matter* and *Excitable Speech*; Campbell, *Writing Security*.

them. The example he offers is living up to the hegemonic masculine type, which creates fragility for the male subject, whether individual or state.[31]

Agency and self-fashioning are constrained in even the most favorable circumstances. They are problematic in another sense. Even when people exercise their free will, it is often in pursuit of ends that are inspired by society and by means it sanctions. This is true of most pathways to status and wealth. Rebellion spurns these ends and means but may go down its own well-trodden pathways. Those who "dropped out," as hippies did in the 1960s and 1970s, never entirely freed themselves of social control, and some of them ended up in equally conformist settings. This phenomenon is equally apparent in international relations, where states appear to have fewer choices than many people do.

## State Agency

How similar is agency and self-fashioning for states? By at least one measure – diversity of polities – it is much more restricted. Up through the eighteenth century, European political units included territorial states, empires, city-states, leagues, and dependencies, and these and other forms were found elsewhere in the world. Today, the territorial state is nearly ubiquitous.[32] Some highly fragmented political units (e.g., Somalia, Afghanistan) do not qualify as territorial states in the Weberian sense of having a monopoly of force within their borders. Given the juridical status of sovereignty, other powers and regional and international institutions generally overlook this failure and treat these polities as if they were sovereign territorial states. A small number of city-states, tiny states, and dependencies survive. Singapore, Liechtenstein, Monaco, and Gibraltar have created different kinds of successful niches.[33]

The number of roles available to states has increased, although some, such as empire and colony have all but disappeared. In Chapter 4 I described the roles of dominant, great, rising, and regional power and

[31] Steele, *Defacing Power*, pp. 4, 19.

[32] Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond"; Spruyt, *Sovereign State and Its Competitors*; Nexon, *Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe*.

[33] On dependencies, see Sharman, "International Hierarchies and Contemporary Imperial Governance."

neutral, failed, and rogue state. The first four roles are high-status ones to which many polities aspire. Neutrality can be a matter of choice, as it was for Switzerland and Sweden, or can be imposed by the great powers, as it was on Belgium and Laos. States attempt to avoid the roles of failed and rogue state as they are low status and invite outside intervention with the goal of regime change. Some leaders have nevertheless challenged the norms of the society and deliberately provoked its leading powers to build support at home, as Hugo Chavez did in Venezuela.[34]

With few exceptions, roles in domestic societies are performed by large numbers of actors. For both reasons, individuals who pioneer new ways of performing these roles are not very likely to reshape them. For a shift to occur, large numbers of people must act differently, and in more or less the same way. The most any individual can do is encourage change by example, and novel behavior is most likely to be followed when it strikes a responsive chord in others and receives widespread publicity. Consider gender relations and the former widespread Western practice of holding doors open for women so they pass through them ahead of men. When a few men broke with this custom, they were considered rude by many other men and women. Others approved of their behavior and began to emulate them. At some point, a tipping phenomenon occurred. Men who opened doors for women, or women who expected men to do so, were now considered old-fashioned. Changing practices reflected and accelerated changing conceptions of gender relations. More recently we have witnessed a radical change in the West with regard to courtship, a term that now even appears quaint. The traditional pattern of dating, engagement, and marriage has given way to more casual relationships, including "hookups," "friends with benefits," and more enduring kinds of partnerships.[35] Increasing numbers of couples do not marry, even when they produce children. In 2013, more than 40 percent of all

[34] John Kuchera, "What Is Hugo Chavez Up To?," *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2012, http://www.wilsonquarterly.com/essays/what-hugo-ch%C3%A1vez (accesses 7 November 2013); Ellner, "The Contrasting Variants of Populism of Hugo Chavez and Alberto Fujimori."

[35] Kate Taylor, "Sex on Campus: She Can Play That Game Too," *New York Times*, 13 July 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/14/fashion/sex-on-campus-she-can-play-that-game-too.html (accessed 16 July 2013).

U.S. babies were born to unmarried women. In 1940, this figure was a mere 6 percent.[36]

For states, it is different. There are only a small number of sovereign units. In 2014, there were 195 independent states and 67 other dependencies or areas of special sovereignty.[37] The number of international governmental organizations (IGOs) rose from less than 1,000 in 1956 to almost 65,000 in 2011.[38] Collectively, the number of states, territories, INGOs, and IGOs is about equal to the population of a small city. As a general rule, the newer the role and fewer the actors that occupy it, the greater the potential any of them have for shaping how it is performed. Regional and international roles are accordingly more pliable than most domestic ones are, some of which are performed by millions of actors. Regional and international roles are also less constrained than domestic ones because international society has fewer powers of enforcement.

In domestic and international society resources enhance agency. Differences in relative resources are arguably greater among states than among people. Dominant and great powers – fewer than ten states today – have more resources than do others. Their behavior has the potential to be more willful and can have far-reaching consequences. Acting in unison, these states can effectively compel most other units to follow their practices. This rarely happens, and the last sustained example was the Concert of Europe in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. It comprised the countries of the Quadruple Alliance that defeated Napoleon – Prussia, Austria, Russia, and Britain – and restoration France.[39] Nationalism and the Eastern Question created internal divisions that greatly limited the Concert's

[36] Natalie Angier, "The Changing American Family," *New York Times*, 25 November 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/26/health/families.html (accessed 25 November 2013).

[37] U.S. Department of State, "Independent States in the World," http://www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/4250.htm, and "Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty," http://www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/10543.htm (accessed 16 July 2013).

[38] Union of International Associations, citing data from the *Yearbook of International Institutions*, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35293&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (accessed 16 July 2013).

[39] Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, ch. 4; Bridge and Bullen, *Great Powers and the European State System*; Gentz, *Dépêche inédites du chevalier de Gentz aux Hospodars de Valachie*, vol. I, p. 157; Holbraad, *Concert of Europe*, p. 18.

cohesion and effectiveness. However, its meetings and congresses, among them Aix-la-Chappelle (1818), Troppau (1820), Vienna (1822), London (1832), and Berlin (1878), helped keep the peace in Europe and redraw the maps of the Balkans and Africa.[40]

Differences among the great powers give less powerful states more room to maneuver. At the Congress of Vienna and afterward, Spain and Bavaria were extremely unhappy at their exclusion from decision making but came to recognize that divisions among the great powers protected their independence and that of other states.[41] Although Cold War rivals, the United States and the Soviet Union had mutual incentives to recognize each other as superpowers and to exploit this status to minimize the independence of states within their respective blocs. The concept of bipolarity, invented by American international relations theorists, was part and parcel of this project. The United States and the Soviet Union managed to gain recognition as superpowers, but many states resisted the privileges that Washington and Moscow sought to derive from this status, and some rejected bipolarity as a self-serving fiction.[42] Among the great powers, France was the most adamant in resisting bipolarity in theory and practice, which de Gaulle and the foreign ministry rightly interpreted as a threat to their status and freedom of action.[43] India, China, and Indonesia took the lead toward creating an unaligned bloc of states for much the same reason.[44]

Today, there is considerable diversity in order across regions. In the Pacific Rim, China is the dominant economy and military power, but order is thin as are regional institutions. There is widespread mistrust and territorial disputes. In much of Europe, society is robust at the interstate level, and the leeway for violating norms and practices is correspondingly more restricted. There are more institutions and procedures for holding states accountable, including the European Court of Human Rights. Public opinion is also less divided than international

[40] Osiander, *States System of Europe*, ch. 4: Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, ch. 4; Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, ch. 13–15.

[41] Gentz, *Dépêche inédites du chevalier de Gentzaux Hospodars de Valachie*, vol. I, p. 157; Holbraad, *Concert of Europe*, p. 18.

[42] Zhang, "Sino-Soviet Alliance and the Cold War"; Bradley, "Decolonization, the Global South and the Cold War"; Suri, "Counter-Culture."

[43] Bozo, "France, 'Gaullism' and the Cold War."

[44] Bradley, "Decolonization, the Global South and the Cold War"; Suri, "Counter-Culture"; Latham, "Cold War in the Third World."

opinion is, and appeals to the common interest can sometimes have a restraining effect on policymakers. Even so, European and EU norms – not always the same thing – are frequently violated by member states. The United Kingdom routinely ignores decisions of the European Court. Among the leaders of the Conservative Party there is much support for Britain leaving the Court – and the EU.[45] In 2015, Germany was subject to widespread criticism for what was seen by many as abusing its power by "bullying" Greece.[46]

Throughout this volume I distinguish between roles and their performance. Both are socially established and legitimized, but they are also the principal vehicles for exercising agency. In international society, I suggest, actors have more leeway in creating roles but do not always succeed in gaining legitimacy for them. Great power, neutral, and superpower are roles that have been successfully pioneered. When these roles achieve legitimacy, as that of great power did, the new status confers standing and influence. When they only partially succeed, as with superpower, or fail, as with hegemon, they confer less status and influence, or none at all.

[45] Alice Donald, Jane Gordon, and Philip Leach, "The UK and the European Court of Human Rights," Equality and Human Rights Commission, Research Report 83, Spring 2012, http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/research/83._european_court_of_human_rights.pdf; Tamara Cohen, "Britain should leave European Court of Human Rights to stop it 'unraveling' over votes for prisoners, warns human rights commissioner," *Daily Mail*, 18 October 2013, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2465609/Britain-leave-European-Court-Human-Rights-stop-unravelling-refusal-prisoners-vote.html; Alex Stevenson, "The stolen referendum: European court "robs" Britain of vote by overturning UK opt out," politics.co.uk, 13 November 2013, http://www.politics.co.uk/news/2013/11/13/the-stolen-referendum-european-court-robs-britain-of-vote-by (both accessed 22 November 2013); Owen Bowcroft, "Senior judge: European court of human rights undermining democratic process," *Guardian*, 28 November 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/law/2013/nov/28/european-court-of-human-rights (accessed 28 November 2013).

[46] Jürgen Habermas, "Habermas: Warum Merkels Greichenland-Politik ein Fehler ist," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 16 July 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jul/16/merkel-gambling-away-germanys-reputation-over-greece-says-habermas; Nico Fried, "Vom Gipfelengel zum Rachenengel, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 17 July 2015, http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/angel-merkel-in-der-eu-vom-gipfelengel-zum-racheengel-1.2570485; Philip Oltermann, "Merkel 'gambling away' Germany's Reputation Over Greece," *Guardian*, 17 June 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jul/16/merkel-gambling-away-germanys-reputation-over-greece-says-habermas (all accessed 17 July 2015).

During World War I, and with the support of the major combatants, Switzerland transformed the conception of a neutral through an activist foreign policy that took the form of providing mail and food packages to prisoners of war and serving as an informal go-between and meeting ground for representatives of the belligerents. The Swiss expanded this role in World War II, and following both wars became home to an increasing number of international agencies. For fear of jeopardizing its neutral status, Switzerland did not join the United Nations until 2002.[47] It nevertheless participated in many specialized UN agencies, and is the home of the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization, the International Telegraph Union, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. It hosts the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, and the World Economic Forum. At each step, Switzerland built a consensus among the great powers in support of its expanded role. In the process it transformed a low-status role into a high-status one. Austria, which had neutrality forced on it in 1955 when it was reunified, emulated Switzerland and, with Finland, became a meeting ground for East and West.[48]

State roles are self- and socially assigned, and must be negotiated at both levels. Leaders generally prefer high-status roles, although not all states are willing to invest the resources necessary to achieve them. Switzerland, the EU, Scandinavia, Brazil, and other countries have pioneered new roles, or expanded existing ones, to gain enhanced standing. The EU, Canada, Scandinavia, and Japan claim standing on the basis of the wealth and how they have used it to improve the quality of life of their citizens and, through foreign aid, those elsewhere. They also claim status as a result of their efforts to benefit the international community through peacekeeping, agenda setting, and offer of good offices. Norway jump-started and hosted the discussion between Israel and Palestinians that led to the Oslo Accords. Norway, Belgium, Austria, Canada, and the International Committee of the Red Cross played key roles in building support for the 1997 convention to prohibit the use, and destroy existing stockpiles, of anti-personnel mines. They built support for a treaty in the face of strong opposition

[47] See Reginbogin, *Faces of Neutrality*, for a flattering picture of Switzerland, and Codevilla, *Between the Alps and a Hard Place* for a more critical account. Also Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland, and the Second World War*.

[48] Gehler, "From Non-Alignment to Neutrality"; Raino-Niemi, *Ideological Cold War*.

from the United States.[49] All of these initiatives enhanced the standing of the states involved, and arguably their influence, at least in certain domains.

Realists suggest that the search for status through new roles, or the expansion or recasting of existing ones, should be viewed in purely instrumental terms. For realists, status is never a goal in itself, but a means of gaining influence to advance security or material interests. They argue that countries lacking the requisite economic might or political will to become great powers in the traditional sense will try to develop alternate niches for themselves. If successful, as Switzerland, the EU, and Japan have been, they gain more influence than they would otherwise have, but nothing comparable to that of great or dominant powers, let alone a hegemon.

Realists err in thinking that every country with the resources will aspire to become a great or dominant power and build up its armed forces toward this end. For diverse reasons, some countries eschew this ambition, or renounce it, as Sweden, Germany, and Japan have in response to their tragic experiences as great military powers. Germany and Japan seek recognition as great powers, but not by military means. China, which arguably has pretensions to become a superpower, also appears to be pioneering nontraditional ways of achieving this status. Brazil and South Africa are doing the same thing.

Realist fears of China rest in the first instance on power transition theory, for which there is no historical support.[50] More fundamentally, they build on a narrow and deterministic understanding of what a dominant power is and how a state achieves this status: it uses its wealth to build military might and impose its will on its neighbors. China is undeniably upgrading its armed forces and has recently attempted to exert its authority over disputed islands along the Pacific Rim.[51] In comparison to the United States, it nevertheless spends only a fraction of its budget on its military, and appears to be seeking recognition and influence more by economic and cultural means. Its primary foreign

[49] Cameron, Lawson, and Tomlin, *To Walk Without Fear*; Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*, ch. 3.

[50] Lebow and Valentino, "Lost in Transition"; Chan, *China, and the U.S., and Power-Transition Theory*.

[51] Jane Perlez, "Continuing Buildup, China Boosts Spending More Than 11 Percent," *New York Times*, 4 March 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/05/world/asia/china-boosts-military-spending-more-than-11-percent.html (accessed 9 December 2013).

policy goal may be regional hegemony, conceived of in very different terms than it is by American leaders and academics.[52]

How do we explain variation across states? National identifications offer a useful analytical starting point. They are multiple and propagated by officials and others to advance their political goals and psychological needs. These identifications compete for influence, and the more entrenched they become in official and collective memories and narratives, the more powerful they become. Policy entrepreneurs and leaders appeal to them to mobilize popular support for their initiatives. One important purpose of national identifications is to provide distinctiveness to a country and its people, and a prominent foreign policy profile can offer an important means to this end – as it is, for example, for Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, and Canada.[53] Another purpose of national identifications is building self-esteem, and gaining respect abroad as a result of one's foreign policies facilitates this end. The two goals can be mutually supportive and encourage policies that lead to what is understood by leaders, citizens, and foreign actors as a national foreign policy tradition. When such a tradition is established, it helps determine the ways in which a state seeks standing and influence. In some cases, as in China, dominant national identifications build on historical traditions. To understand how states behave, we can learn more by studying these traditions and associated national identifications than we can from trying to make inferences on the basis of the material capabilities. These traditions and self-identifications help determine where those capabilities are invested. This path dependency indicates that the arrow of influence is often the reverse of that suggested by realist approaches.

According to this constructivist understanding, status and prestige are understood as valuable foreign policy ends independently of any security and material advantages they may confer. Indeed, they are often pursued at the expense of these goals.[54] They build national solidary and citizen self-esteem, and all the more so when the roles states

[52] Kang, *China Rising*; Zhang, *Chinese Hegemony*; Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony*!, ch. 4.

[53] On Canada, see Hynek and Bosold, eds., *Canada's Foreign and Security Policy*; Thomsen and Hynek, "Keeping the Peace and National Unity"; Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion*.

[54] See Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, for an elaboration and evidence.

perform and the policies they enact are valued by other actors. As Homer long ago recognized, heroes require bards to sing their praises and audiences to be inspired by them. For this reason, legitimacy is highly valued. It is not only a mechanism for wielding influence abroad but also an important way for leaders to strengthen their position at home by enhancing the self-esteem of their publics.

As noted in Chapter 4, regional and international societies are most influential when it comes to roles. They legitimate, sometimes create roles, acknowledge actors in these roles, or assign them, and largely determine how they should be performed. The roles of empire, colony, great power, dominant power, neutral, and failed state were either created or legitimated by international society. To fill high-status roles states must convince other members of their society to recognize them in these roles. The United States need not convince anyone that it is the dominant military and economic power; it is self-evident because of its economic and military capabilities. Dominant power is not a role in the strict sense of the term because it carries no generally acknowledged privileges or responsibilities. It does confer status, and this is the major reason why U.S. leaders and foreign policy intellectuals worry about the rise of China and predictions that it will become the dominant economy within the next two decades.[55] Even if this happens – and we must always be aware of linear projections – it will not make China a dominant power, as there will be a vast gap in the capabilities of the two countries. The ranking has nevertheless considerable importance solely on the basis of the wide attention it has received. Ironically, it was initially propagated by American leaders and journalists but now is resisted by them.

Hegemony, by contrast, is a role, and a contested one. It is the creation of American officials, journalists, and scholars. To serve as a hegemon, the United States needs the approval of other states; they must acknowledge the legitimacy of role, the privileges the United States claims come with it, and the right of the United States to occupy the role. Despite the full court press by its leaders, foreign policy

[55] Charles Riley, "China seen surpassing the US in superpower shift," *CNN Money*, 18 July 2013, http://money.cnn.com/2013/07/18/news/economy/china-us-superpower/; Christopher Matthews, "When Will China Rule the Economic World?, "*Time*, 8 January 2014, http://business.time.com/2014/01/08/chinas-economy-could-be-bigger-than-americas/ (all accessed on 12 January 2014).

intellectuals, and academics, Washington has not succeeded in convincing others to accept it as a hegemon. Rather, we observe the development of counterhegemonic discourses that deny the alleged benefits of hegemony and argue that the United States is not qualified for filling the role because of its rampant unilateralism.[56]

American leaders, journalists, and academics assert that American hegemony is essential to the maintenance of political and economic order. They ignore the ways in which the United States acts to undermine these orders through irresponsible borrowing and military initiatives unauthorized by regional or international organizations.[57] Even America's closest allies think it has "gone off the reservation" and become more of a revisionist than status quo power. In a 2007 BBC World Service poll in twenty-seven countries, the United States was regarded more negatively than either North Korea or Iran.[58] Those Americans who propagate hegemony are so committed to it that they solicit statements from any foreign leaders or journalists they can cite to confirm their claims. The fiction of hegemony plays well at home and appears to buttress their self-esteem and provides justifications for high military budgets and periodic military interventions.[59]

The striking asymmetry between U.S. self-perceptions and those of others indicates that it is possible – and dangerous – for role recognition and the self-identifications associated with it to become self-referential. In *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare explores this phenomenon in his character of Malvolio.[60] The United States bears a disturbing resemblance to Malvolio. Its political leaders, media, and intellectuals have convinced themselves that they are a hegemon, that they perform unique and necessary services for the world at large,

[56] An early entry was Hubert Védrine's charge in 1998 that the United States had become a "hyperpower." Hubert Védrine, "What the New Geopolitical World Really Looks Like," The European Institute, 18 July 2008, http://www.hubertvedrine.net/article-306.html; "To Paris, U.S. Looks Like a Hyperpower," *New York Times*, 5 February 1999, http://www.nytimes.com/1999/02/05/news/05iht-france.t_0.html (both accessed 1 February 2014).

[57] Nye, *Bound to Lead*; Mastanduno, "Hegemonic Order, September 11, and the Consequences of the Bush Revolution"; Ikenberry and Kupchan, "Socialization and Hegemonic Power." For a critique, see Reich and Lebow, *Goodbye Hegemony!*

[58] *The Age* (Melbourne), 6 March 2007, p. 7.

[59] Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*

[60] Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*.

and that others recognize their contribution and welcome and respect them for their character and willingness to provide public goods.[61] Malvolio sought evidence from others of his romantic appeal and misinterpreted their rejection of him as positive proof. The United States behaves this way with hegemony; it solicits such feedback from those who are dependent on it or seek to gain through flattery. In his perceptive application of cybernetic theory to politics, Karl Deutsch warned that a preference for internal over external feedback makes a system less able to understand, react, and adapt to its environment and can be a principal cause of its failure and collapse.[62] It may be a positive sign that in December 2013 for the first time in a survey running for four decades by the Pew Research Center a majority of Americans believed the United States plays a less important role in the world and is respected less by other countries.[63]

Regional and international societies have the most influence over states with regard to their roles. They legitimize roles and decide who fills them and how they are performed. Roles are also an important way for states to exercise agency; they seek out certain roles and pioneer new ways of performing them. As members of regional and international societies, they also have a voice – sometimes a determining one – in the legitimization and assignment of roles.

Switzerland and Sweden chose to be neutrals, while Belgium and Laos were assigned this role by the great powers. Switzerland transformed the responsibilities and understanding of neutrality and carved out a high-status role for itself in the process. States are not born rising or great powers, but must achieve these statuses. To do so they must make a major investment of resources. In the eighteenth century, Prussia was an outlier in the percentage of disposable income spent on its military. Without this extraordinary expenditure it could not have become first a rising and then a great power. The United States does the same today – spending more than the next ten major military powers combined – in pursuit of its claims to hegemony.

[61] Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony*, ch. 5, and the discussion in Chapter 3 of this book.

[62] Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, pp. 214–18.

[63] Paul Lewis, "Most Americans think US should 'mind its own business' abroad, survey shows," *Guardian*, 3 December 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/03/american-public-mind-its-own-business-survey (accessed 3 December 2013).

Washington's failure to convince others of its hegemony is one of many indications of the complex relationship between agency and legitimacy. Agency is the ability to act as one wants, but legitimacy can make that behavior more effective, especially when it involves leadership. Legitimacy also constrains agency – indeed, this is one of its primary purposes. Leaders sensitive to this relationship generally try to maximize agency and legitimacy. This invariably involves trade-offs, which on the whole policymakers are loath to make. They will try to avoid or finesse them, or convince others that what they want to do is legitimate. When this fails, they are compelled to make hard choices, as the Bush administration did when it failed to gain authorization from the UN Security Council for its impending invasion of Iraq.

There is a tension, even paradox, inherent in agency that is most evident at the state level. Powerful actors have more agency than do weak ones, and they exercise their agency through high-status roles. These roles confer privileges and are thus vehicles for influence. All roles come with rule packages and they become more elaborate and constraining toward the top of the status ladder. These rules are intended to constrain the powerful and protect the weak, or to direct agency into channels that help preserve society. High-status actors exercise agency and wield influence most effectively when this is done for ends approved by society and by means others regard as acceptable. Actors can reject these constraints, but generally pay a price for doing so. In his account of the Peloponnesian War Thucydides tells us that Athens thought it could gain more by taking itself outside of the community of city-states and the restrictions imposed by it and their role as *hegemon*. As a result, its influence increasingly came to rely on coercion, and Athens had to keep expanding to convince others of their power. Expansion was not only costly; in the end it was catastrophic in its consequences. American foreign policy in the post–Cold War world could be described as a variant of the same story. In both cases, efforts to increase influence by violating society norms led to a loss of influence.

Democratic societies are rarely monolithic and generally contain multiple subcultures. This diversity enables people to make some choices about their affiliations and roles. Self-fashioning can strengthen or generate new subcultures. They may evolve faster than the dominant cultures do because they are smaller and more sensitive to changes in beliefs and practices of individual actors. Subcultures generally lack the coercive capabilities of states, although they may

mobilize informal Durkheimian kinds of social control more effectively. For both reasons, regional and international societies may resemble subcultures more closely than they do domestic societies. Regional societies have fewer actors still, and hence reveal considerable diversity in character and robustness. Regional and international societies alike have less power to coerce and must rely more on shaming and other forms of social suasion than they do formal policing.

Regional and international societies resemble domestic societies in other ways. They are not monolithic, but rather composed of distinctive subcultures that allow individual actors considerable choice. They differ from their domestic counterparts in one important respect. In contrast with domestic societies, most states and international institutions generally have little or no interest in dictating the identities of other actors so long as they are not in conflict with existing obligations and roles. This allows states more latitude than individuals in constructing and choosing their self-identifications. As noted in Chapter 3, states do not choose their self-identifications – they are projected onto them by officials, interest groups, the media, and intellectuals. This can be a highly contentious process, and is always a political one. Occasionally, outside actors intervene, and can play an important role. I noted several examples in the previous chapter, among them the pressures exerted on Eastern European states by the EU with regard to addressing their past.

Individuals and states attempt to choose their roles and to perform them as they see fit. People benefit from sheer numbers and the diversity of large societies, which provide them with a certain degree of anonymity and wiggle room. At the micro level the reverse may be true, as they are likely to be subject to considerable scrutiny in the family and workplace. To be sure, role performance in both venues is to varying degrees negotiable, but still likely to be monitored carefully. Autonomy is very much affected by resources; generally, the wealthier, better educated, and better connected someone is, the more freedom they have with respect to both their affiliations and roles, and with them identity construction.

States are more visible if only because there are fewer of them. There are fewer places where they can hide or keep a low profile. Like individuals, they nevertheless have some leeway in their choice of roles and their performance. In some instances, they can chose relatively freely, but often require the approval, if not complicity, of other actors.

For some roles and identities to be effective, they must be recognized by others.

The Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, and China illustrate this dependence. Postwar Germany sought to restructure its identity as European and German. The former identity was a means of transcending the Nazi past and demonstrating its bona fides to its neighbors. The strategy succeeded because it was welcomed and encouraged by other Europeans. It enabled the Federal Republic to gain acceptance and wield influence and helped restore self-respect to individual Germans.[64] American assertions of hegemony offer a nice contrast because they too require acceptance by others, which has not been forthcoming.[65]

China represents a third variant, that of conflicting claims. Its rise to great power status has been rapid and its claims to that status have been universally recognized. There is no consensus about its implications for global order. Chinese leaders, academics, and journalists insist that their country seeks to develop in peace and harmony, as far as possible, with the rest of the world. They have developed a discourse about their peaceful rise and noninterference in the affairs of others, which is intended to make their growing economic and military power more acceptable to others. Many policymakers, journalists, and academics in the United States propagate a contrasting discourse that portrays China as aggressive and with hegemonic ambitions.[66] The 2012 confrontation between China and Japan over the barren Diaoyu (Chinese) or Senkaku (Japanese) islets is a case in point. Chinese described their behavior as defensive while the American government and media described it as aggressive.[67]

These and earlier examples indicate some of the ways in which internally generated state identifications interact with regional and international societies. These societies can attempt to impose identifications on states, or at least attempt to shape them. Internal actors may go along if they think it beneficial for their security or material interests or because they want to maintain or strengthen supranational regional and international identities. Many states, powerful and less powerful

[64] Kansteiner, "Losing the War, Winning the Memory Battle"; Feldman, *Germany's Foreign Policy of Reconciliation*.
[65] Reich and Lebow, *Goodbye Hegemony*.
[66] See ibid., ch. 4 for a review of this literature on China.
[67] Wade, "The Island Dispute between China and Japan."

ones, in turn try to get wider recognition of their internally developed identification from other states or supranational institutions. Either way, practical and psychological motives are generally present and difficult, if not impossible, to disentangle. They are often co-constitutive. After the Cold War, Eastern European countries sought entry into the EU for security and material reasons; they feared a revival of Russian expansionism and believed that EU membership would accelerate their economic development. They also sought membership as a vehicle to assist with the reconstitution of national identities, and this project was just as much connected with desires for status and self-esteem as it was with material or security gains.[68] More recently, geopolitical discourses have been mobilized for the same ends by nationalist, anti-European forces.[69]

## Deviance

Deviance is agency that lacks legitimacy. It is a choice made by leaders and governments who are not content with the roles they are assigned or with the norms of regional or international society. Some, like Hitler's Germany, rejected the system outright, even while pretending to adhere to its norms, because it stood in the way of their aggressive designs. Others, like revolutionary France, the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China, rejected international society in part because it rejected them. Leaders violate norms selectively when they consider it essential for the survival of their state or regime. Thumbing one's nose at international society by means of rhetoric and symbolic violations attracts attention and criticism, and can sometimes work to the advantage of regimes under stress.

Deviance is a pejorative label for behavior that violates social norms, rules, or laws.[70] It is a rhetorical weapon of those who support the status quo and want to stigmatize and marginalize actors who reject values and practices from which they benefit. Deviance generally entails a price because it invites negative labeling, sanctions, and even intervention with the goal of regime change. In instances where

[68] Mecca, Smelser, and Vasconcellos, *Social Importance of Self-Esteem*; Porter and Washington, "Minority Identity and Self-Esteem."
[69] Guzzini, *Return of Geopolitics in Europe?*
[70] Durkheim, *Suicide*; Meltzer, Petras, and Reynolds, *Symbolic Interactionism*; Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*.

leaders have freely chosen to reject existing norms and practices, they meet Dostoevsky's condition for free will. It is a clear choice, rarely a predictable response to opportunities and constraints.

Norms, rules, and laws are social creations. So is deviance. Labeling an actor a deviant depends in part on the context in which the unacceptable behavior occurs (e.g., fighting on the ice at a hockey game vs. in an airport queue). It also hinges on the status of actors. In Britain, aristocrats, celebrities, and even ordinary people have more leeway to violate social norms than in their counterparts in many other countries. They may be described as "colorful" or "eccentric."

The question of social power cannot be divorced from a definition of deviance because some groups in society can criminalize the actions of another group by using their influence on legislators. Failing that, they may be able to stigmatize, shame, and isolate them socially. During the first four months of World War I, women in Britain were encouraged to give white feathers – intended as symbols of cowardice – to men of military age who had not enlisted. This campaign may have raised the signup rate but was soon regarded with growing skepticism as white feathers were often handed to mufti-clad soldiers on leave, some of them recovering from wounds received at the front.[71]

For many decades, Western medicine branded female interest in sex as deviant. It was not until 1973 that the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) no longer classified homosexuality as a psychiatric disorder; in 1986 it was removed altogether from the DSM. These changes reflected evolving attitudes within the medical profession but also considerable outside pressure on physicians from the broader society. Labeling someone a deviant is a strategy of the powerful to affirm preferred cultural values and practices and marginalize opponents. For this reason the temptation always exists in interpersonal relations to brand someone a deviant simply on the grounds of dislike or jealousy.

Emile Durkheim describes deviance as a necessary feature of social organization. It defines moral boundaries, teaches people the difference between right and wrong, and creates solidary by bringing people together to confront collectively challenges to their norms, values, and practices.[72] Deviance also pushes social boundaries, which

[71] Bostridge, *Fateful Year*, pp. 239–47, 257–58, 293–310.
[72] Durkheim, *Rules of Sociological Method*, pp. 97–104.

has the potential to change these norms, values, and practices – even understandings of the concept of deviance. Deviance is a double-edged sword. It can isolate opponents and minimize sympathy and support for them. It can also enhance their solidarity, give them and their practices much desired publicity, attract followers, and make groups labeled as deviant the cutting edge of social, political, religious, and economic change. Throughout history, many movements initially labeled as deviant ultimately became the establishment, as did Buddhism, Christianity, and democracy.

Deviance can take different forms, and it is interesting to see what kinds of norm violations are most stigmatized and how this changes over time. In today's world, territorial aggression, support of terrorism, human rights violations, and corruption are high on the list. Freedom House publishes an annual Corruption Perceptions Index that ranks countries in the hope of exposing and shaming them and producing change.[73] The U.S. government has passed laws prohibiting its citizens from paying bribes to foreigners to facilitate contracts and business.[74] Since 9/11, if not well before, terrorism has been a major concern. For this reason, North Korea, Iran, and Libya were stigmatized and labeled as deviants by the United States and some of its allies. Europeans subsequently launched a military operation is support of Libyan rebels to remove Gaddafi, and the United Nations accused North Korea of crimes against humanity that took the form of starving and murdering its own citizens.[75]

Erving Goffman defines stigma "as a special discrepancy between virtual and actual social identity." Stigma imputes inferior and dangerous qualities to individuals or groups to justify discrimination. He distinguishes stigma arising from the alleged character of people from that imposed in response to their behavior. Racial and caste stereotypes exemplify the former and produce separation, loss of status, and discrimination. They are difficult to overcome and generally produce low self-esteem in their targets if negative stereotypes are internalized.[76]

[73] Lancaster and Montinola, "Toward a Methodology for the Comparative Study of Political Corruption."
[74] Posadas, "Combatting Corruption under International Law."
[75] Peter Walker, "UN to accuse North Korea of crimes against humanity, *Guardian*, 14 February 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/14/un-accuse-north-korea-crimes-against-humanity (accessed 15 February 2014).
[76] Goffman, *Stigma*, pp. 3–5.

One strategy Goffman describes is counter-stigmatization, whereby people accept the category of deviance but deny that it applies to them.[77] Rebecca Adler-Nissen suggests that people can also reject outright the definition of the behavior in question as deviant, or alternatively accuse those who stigmatize them of being the real perpetrators of such behavior.[78] Efforts by the Clinton and Bush administrations to stigmatize other states have frequently encouraged their critics to adopt this last strategy and describe the United States as a rogue state for much the same reasons it tries to pin this label on others.[79] North Korea consistently plays this game. In August 2014, in response to the police shooting of an unarmed African American teenager and subsequent demonstrations and rioting in Ferguson, Missouri, the North Korean foreign ministry condemned the United States as "a country wantonly violating the human rights where people are subject to discrimination and humiliation due to their races and they are seized with such horror that they do not know when they are shot to death."[80]

Deviance can have complicated and unintended consequences. Ayse Zarakol documents this in the case of Turkey.[81] Stigmatization by Westerners made modern Turks worry about being forever victims of their stereotype as Eastern, backward, Asian, Muslim, and barbaric. It prompted a quasi-official narrative that "prohibits exposing oneself honestly to the outside world." Turks have constructed their own imaginary of the West that idealizes it but also attributes the worst kinds of anti-Turkish goals to Westerners. As Turks have internalized Western values and ambitions more than other Asians have, they are more obsessed with their "international stature, recognition, and acceptance." Zarakol argues that this sensitivity is the product of Ataturk's "Westernizing" program and belief that the only barrier to restoring Turkish glory was not being recognized as a Western state. This could make Turkey a role model for other Muslim countries and

[77] Ibid.
[78] Adler-Nissen, "Stigma Management in International Relations."
[79] Allman, *Rogue State*; Chomsky, *Rogue States*.
[80] Jonathan Cheng, "North Korea Pauses, Then Rips into U.S. over Ferguson," *Wall Street Journal*, 26 April 2014, http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/2014/08/28/north-korea-pauses-then-rips-into-us-over-ferguson/ (accessed 3 September 2014).
[81] Zarakol, *After Defeat*.

give Istanbul a key role in international relations because only Turks could explain the East to the West.[82]

Turkey was not alone in internalizing its stigmatization. Zarakol contends that something similar happened in Russia and Japan. All three countries were set apart from most other eastern lands by escaping colonization. Their leaders and elites adopted Goffman's strategy of attempting to become "normal" by "passing," that is, by behaving as Westerners. Their rejection only enhanced their insecurity. The Soviet Union, by contrast, embraced its "otherness" and sought thereby to establish its claim to leadership. The People's Republic of China followed suit.[83] In 1960, Rupert Emerson made a parallel argument about native elites in colonized countries; their failed attempts to gain acceptance by "passing" provided strong incentives for them to organize nationalist movements in which they could once again be regarded as "normal."[84] I made a similar argument about Irish nationalism.[85]

In *Peter Pan*, Captain Hook gave up the quest for prestige in favor of notoriety. The rigid social structure of his society left him with little choice. He could resign himself to a low station in life or rebel and become a villain and a deviant.[86] J. M. Barrie thought this dilemma endemic to the England of his day. Bertrand Badie maintains that political and economic changes in the post–Cold War world have created a similar choice for many actors, most notably in the Middle East, who lack mobility and whose self-esteem has been undercut.[87] The demonstrable superiority of the West in all kinds of domains is the engine of humiliation for other people and produces "the envy of impotence." Small and repeated humiliations, like consistently ranking low on well-publicized lists of infant mortality, education, and health care, heighten that feeling. The so-called New World Order is either nonexistent or heavily contested. International society and its leading states accordingly do little to improve conditions in the developing world, which engenders frustration and hostility. The resulting humiliation creates new fault lines and conflicts that replace classic interstate

[82] Ibid, pp. 6–9.
[83] Ibid., *passim*; Elias, "Introduction."
[84] Emerson, *From Empire to Nation.*
[85] Lebow, *White Britain and Black Ireland.*
[86] Barrie, *Peter Pan.*
[87] Badie, *Les Temps des Humiliés.*

ones, and is an underlying source of religious revival and terrorism directed against the West.

Only rarely do states engage in self-stigmatization. Postwar Germans created Nazi Germany as a negative "other" that they used to construct new national self-identifications. This "other" played a key role in the 1990s debate over NATO intervention in the former Yugoslavia. Those opposed to intervention spoke of their opposition to Germans ever using force again and those in favor insisted on the need to prevent another Auschwitz.[88] Arguably, Israel created diaspora Jews as a negative "other" and contrasted the independence and toughness of "Sabras" – native-born Israelis – with the supposed weakness of diaspora Jews in the face of anti-Semitism.[89] In Japan, proponents of competing national identifications have utilized the distinction between a normal and abnormal state to create a number of Japanese "others."[90]

Dominant and great powers are not the only states that benefit from adherence to existing social norms. Contrary to the claims of power transition theory, rising powers have equally strong incentives to follow norms. Most have no desire to overthrow and restructure the system, but rather hope to share in its advantages. Their leaders and peoples often crave acceptance as great powers, and to join this club they have to demonstrate their willingness to play by its rules. Postwar Germany and Japan, and China in recent decades, provide telling examples of this phenomenon.[91] Other states with an incentive to conform to international norms are newly independent states and countries formerly ruled by communist regimes or dictators, who seek the benefits of membership in regional and international organizations. As I write, Myanmar (Burma) has been signaling willingness to obey a range of international norms in return for the removal of sanctions and restoration and implementation of benefits that come with being a member in good standing in the international community.[92] Etel Solingen documents

[88] Cooper, "When Just Causes Conflict with Acceptable Means."
[89] Shelleg, *Jewish Continuities and the Sound Track of Israeli History*, p. 263.
[90] Hagström, "The 'Abnormal' State."
[91] See Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, passim, and *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4 for documentation.
[92] "Change Comes to Myanmar, But Only on the Junta's Terms," *New York Times*, 17 March 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/18/world/asia/18myanmar.html (accessed 23 August 2013). See the series of articles in *East Asia Forum*, 20 November 2012–13 August 2013, http://www.eastasiaforum.org/tag/myanmar/ (accessed 23 August 2013).

how democratic, export-oriented regimes that replace inward-looking, import substitution authoritarian regimes do their best to demonstrate adherence to international norms as a means of gaining foreign trade and investment. This is a compelling reason why such regimes discontinue ongoing attempts to build nuclear weapons.[93]

Deviance is nevertheless a common phenomenon in international society where the role of rebel is well known. It is often driven by the same set of motives as deviance in domestic society. The French Republic in 1789, the Soviet Union in 1918, and the People's Republic of China in 1949 were all stigmatized because of the nature of their regimes, and multinational coalitions intervened in unsuccessful attempts to overthrow the first two. The French Republic was arguably opposed to the existing European order from the outset. And Napoleon was intent on conquering Europe and installing pro-French puppet regimes everywhere French armies went.[94] For different reasons, the Soviet Union and China gradually sought and gained acceptance by others as legitimate actors.[95]

North Korea is the leading contemporary example of a state widely branded as deviant. It consistently violates international norms in its money laundering, terrorism, kidnapping of citizens of other countries, export of weapons, and efforts to develop nuclear weapons and delivery systems. President Ronald Reagan branded North Korea as a rogue state in July 1985, and the concept was further elaborated by the Clinton administration.[96] American conservatives denounce North Korea as a threat to American security and world peace, and some see the long arm of China behind Pyongyang's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.[97] The Bush and Clinton administrations applied the term "rogue state" to a number of other countries, most notably Gaddafi's Libya, Saddam's Iraq, and Iran. Washington sought to have these regimes stigmatized by other states as well and accordingly placed outside of international society and no longer subject to its protections. This would clear the way for economic sanctions and the possible use of force against them.[98]

[93] *Regional Orders at Century's Dawn.*
[94] Blanning, *Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars*; Doyle, *Oxford History of the French Revolution*, ch. 9.
[95] Jacobson, *When the Soviet Union Entered World Politics*, pp. 24–31.
[96] Allman, *Rogue State*; Litwak, *Rogue States*; Rotberg, *Worst of the Worst*.
[97] Triplett, *Rogue State*.
[98] Allman, *Rogue State*; Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*.

This strategy is an implicit recognition of the existence and powers of international society, and that even powerful actors can benefit from working within its norms.

Some states deliberately provoke criticism, condemnation, or sanctions from others or the community at large. Their leaders can be motivated by psychological and political agendas. Venezuela under Chavez, Iran of the ayatollahs, Peru of Evo Morales, and North Korea are widely regarded as rebels for domestic political reasons.[99] Libya under Gaddafi might be the best example of a psychologically motivated leader, as stigmatization was not necessary for him to consolidate power and arguably worked against the country's security and economic interests.[100]

Deviance can publicize discontent and win support from like-minded actors. It inevitably entails the price of varying degrees of exclusion from the community. In 1998, President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko expelled twenty ambassadors from the residential zone of diplomats in violation of diplomatic convention. The EU and the United States retaliated by denying visas to anybody associated with his regime.[101] Libya's Muhammar Gaddafi, Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, and Iran under the ayatollahs have been subjected to various degrees of sanctions. Since 2012, Iran has tried to optimize the strategy of maximizing the advantages of deviance while minimizing its costs.[102]

The rebellion of the so-called Non-aligned states following the 1955 Bandung Conference could be characterized as a more constructive rebellion by leaders and countries that refused to be drawn into the Cold War. Their collaborative efforts gave prominence to demands, widespread in the developing world, for greater inclusiveness.[103] The evolution of China's relations with the rest of the world can be analyzed as a reciprocal process of change. Beijing gradually gave up its role of a rebel and adopted that of a rising power seeking acceptance as a great

[99] Pargeter, *Rise and Fall of Gaddafi*; John Kuchera, "What Is Hugo Chavez Up To?," *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2012, http://www.wilsonquarterly.com/essays/what-hugo-ch%C3%A1vez (accessed 7 November 2013); Ellner, "The Contrasting Variants of Populism of Hugo Chavez and Alberto Fujimori"; Badie, *Les Temps des Humiliès*, pp. 166, 206–14.

[100] Vandewalle, *History of Modern Libya*, pp. 128–33.

[101] Badie, *Les Temps des Humiliès*, p. 207.

[102] Ibid., p. 211.

[103] Ibid., pp. 196–206; Hinton, *China's Turbulent Quest*, pp. 75–77; Mancall, *China at the Center*, pp. 421–22.

power. The dominant group of Western powers came to encourage this change and accept China as a great power. Beijing in turn conforms to many of the practices of the system it formerly opposed and has assumed responsibilities associated with great powers.[104]

Stigma and sanctions can make leaders and their states more recalcitrant, as it did with Weimar Germany after World War I. This also appears to have happened with Cuba, North Korea, and Iran, which may not have surprised the U.S. leaders and officials who labeled them deviants.[105] If stigma and sanctions had moderated these regimes or brought about their collapse, Washington would have achieved a foreign policy victory that helped substantiate its claim to hegemony. When they encouraged more recalcitrant rhetoric and policies, this too played into Washington's hands by providing evidence for its "axis of evil" claims. The threats posed by North Korea heightened the value of U.S. military capabilities and were expected to enhance American influence in northeast Asia and the Middle East.

Rebellion against system norms can also serve the interests of dominant states by allowing them to use their conflict with rebels to exercise greater authority within their sphere of influence. The Cold War can be analyzed in terms of this dynamic. High levels of conflict served the superpowers well – as long as it did not lead to war – because it justified alliances and helped transform them into more closely knit "blocs." At some point, Washington and Moscow discovered that it was safer to direct their hostility against third parties, and demonization of China nicely served this end.

The concept of deviance encourages us to reject the all-too-common assumption that there is some objective vantage point – invariably our own – from which to assess international conflicts and evaluate the behavior of others. Leaders, advisors, and analysts tend to assume that their positions are reasonable, if not just. They often fail to recognize the extent to which laws, norms, and practices reflect and support existing hierarchies, and that opposition to them can be considered appropriate and legitimate by those they label as deviants.

[104] Fravel, *Strong Borders Secure Nation*; Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?"; Foot and Walter, *China, The United States and the Global Order*; Reich and Lebow, *Good Bye Hegemony!*, ch. 4.

[105] George W. Bush, "State of the Union Address," 29 January 2002, Miller Center, University of Virginia, http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/4540 (accessed 10 December 2013).

Attributions of this kind are readily made self-fulfilling and can provoke confrontations or make existing ones worse. It was a cause of the downward spiral of U.S. relations with China in the 1950s and Iran in the late 1970s. Both conflicts were fueled by the same asymmetry: American leaders believed that they were defending an equitable status quo while Chinese and Iranian leaders believed they were opposing an unjust one.

Sanctions sometimes succeed in their goals, but stigma and the labeling of regimes and their leaders rarely do so. They are more likely to encourage deviance by strengthening and isolating target governments, as they seem to have done in North Korea, Cuba, Indonesia under Sukarno, and Iran. Arguably, this is also true of Israel. Stigma makes it correspondingly costlier for leaders of these regimes to change their practices or concede to outside demands, if they believe accommodation will provoke additional demands or threaten their security. This expectation is likely because negative labeling confirms beliefs in the hostility of those responsible for labeling and worst-case analysis of their goals. In the case of Iran and North Korea, it has been offered by these regimes to domestic audiences as evidence of their portrayal of the United States, respectively, as the "Great Satan" and "war mongering imperialist." Recognition of this phenomenon in the case of North Korea may finally be occurring in Washington. A well-informed observer reported in 2013 that "unnamed Pentagon officials suggest Washington is now questioning whether some of its actions may have contributed to the tension. CNN quoted one official as saying the U.S. would try to 'turn the volume down' on its rhetoric."[106]

## Conclusion

Conformity and deviance are generally treated as polar opposites in sociology and international relations. When analyzed through the prism of agency, they appear as parallel strategies. The difference between them is further blurred by recognition that people and states alike can toggle back and forth between these strategies as the opportunity arises or as circumstances dictate. The Soviet Union went from

[106] Lucy Williamson, "North Korea warns foreign embassies to prepare escape," *BBC*, 5 April 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-22045245 (accessed 5 April 2013).

deviant to co-constituent of the Cold War order, and its successor state Russia reverted from this status back to deviant in the aftermath of its military interventions in Georgia and Ukraine. These moves reflected conscious policy decisions by leaders intent on advancing their own and interests. The United States also changed in the perceptions of many other actors and world public opinion: from defender of the status quo to a deviant.

These examples challenge the conventional wisdom that conformity is a strategy of the powerful and deviance that of the weak. Strong and weak states alike can opt for either strategy. Traditionally, weak and threatened states are likely to support and uphold conventional norms, especially when they require self-restraint on the part of powerful actors. This is, after all, the basis for clientelist hierarchies in which the powerful are honored in return for providing practical rewards – security and material advantages – to the weak. Successful appeal to these principles can obviate the need for weak or threatened states to make the generally unpalatable and dangerous choice between balancing and bandwagoning.

Powerful states generally have incentives to uphold existing norms because they benefit from them. Dominant powers nevertheless can feel constrained by them and come to believe that their power would gain them more influence than they can achieve by upholding and acting within existing norms.[107] This is the calculation behind the pursuit of hegemony, although we must be careful about using the term "calculation," as this strategy is invariably counterproductive and there is usually evidence that leaders involved do not make any kind of thorough investigation of the risks and possible costs.[108] Other actors, often close allies, usually attempt to restrain them and may resort to labeling them deviants if their efforts fail.

Deviance is always a contested category. Actors rarely, if ever, proclaim themselves deviants, but are stigmatized by others. Deviance can be a powerful political weapon – for those who adopt and those who impose the term. Often these states and leaders are at loggerheads, and labeling only intensifies their conflict. On occasion, deviance and

[107] Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4.

[108] See Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, for the first account of this logic and its consequences; see Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4, for evidence from the modern state system.

labeling can be symbiotic, as both parties can reap gains from their respective behavior. These different dynamics have yet to be theorized or explored empirically.

Efforts at stigmatization and counter-stigmatization are always made with reference to a given set of norms. Widespread acceptance of these norms makes them more difficult to challenge, and actors who challenge them are more likely to be labeled deviants. They may also pay a higher price for their deviance. I hypothesize that the labeling of others as deviants is most common in two circumstances: when norms are extremely robust, and when they are very weak. In robust regional and international societies, stigmatization and shunning are easier to organize on a multilateral basis and are thus more likely to be effective. When norms are weak, rebellion is likely to be less costly, but there may be equal incentives by powerful actors to stigmatize and punish because of their fear that successful rebellion will encourage other actors to follow suit. Thucydides puts this argument in the mouths of the Athenian generals in the Melian Dialogue.[109]

Deviance can signal rejection of society and its values and norms, or it can be a strategy to change them. In this connection it is important to distinguish between values and norms. Sometimes they are reinforcing and other times they are not. Deviance can expose this contradiction, create dissonance in the minds of important actors, and thereby generate an incentive to bring practice into harmony with values. Civil disobedience in the U.S. civil rights movement is a case in point. The Non-Aligned Movement, while not as successful, ultimately had a significant impact. Domestic politics and foreign policy can sometimes interact in this connection. A telling example is the Western response to apartheid in South Africa. The British and American governments wanted to do business as usual and valued South Africa as a strategic ally in the Cold War. Public opinion in Britain and the United States, mobilized by anti-apartheid campaigners on the grounds that apartheid was incompatible with human rights, compelled the otherwise reluctant conservative governments of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher to endorse sanctions.[110]

My argument makes it apparent that norms, status seeking, rebellion, and stigmatization are closely connected, as the practice – or

[109] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 5.84–116.
[110] Klotz, *Norms in International Relations*.

changes in the practice – of any of them influences the conceptualization and practice of others. Of particular interest in this connection, I believe, is contestation between status quo actors and so-called deviants. It can serve as an important mechanism for change in two ways. It is a conduit for exposing contradictions between emerging or solidifying values on the one hand and practices on the other. It can help spread these values and their ability to inform practices, or it can intensify these contradictions and their associated conflicts. Changes in practice also have the potential affect values and their distribution in international, regional, and domestic societies. Agency is central to both processes and is a principal vehicle for change in international relations.

# 7 Challenges for Constructivism

In *The Politics and Ethics of Identity* I study identity at the individual and collective levels.[1] I find the concept inappropriate to the study of the practice of identity. I turn instead to the concept of self-identification and argue that what we think of as individual and collective identities are better understood as uneasy composites of multiple self-identifications. They derive primarily from our roles, affiliations, feelings about our bodies, and the understandings we have of our past. We possess a phenomenological self, the expression of interiority that allows us to reflect on these identifications and to some degree order and reshape them. It is captured nicely by Mead's formulation of the "I."

In this volume I argue that states have multiple identifications built around roles, affiliations, bodies (i.e., territories and people), and autobiographies. I explore key differences between states and people, the most important being the absence of an "I" in the case of the state. States are reifications, composites of institutions and people, and accordingly lack phenomenological selves. They are receptacles for identifications imposed on them by officials, politicians, media, intellectuals, and various political, ethnic, and interest groups. The extent that these multiple, competing, and conflicting identifications are adjudicated is through politics. This struggle is visible, sometimes acute, and fought out in diverse fora that include legislatures, courts, radio, television, films, social media, school texts, memorials, and commemorations. The agents involved seek to shape official and collective memory, as they are powerful political resources.

External actors also attempt to influence national identifications. Regional and international societies are thinner than most of their domestic counterparts are and accordingly less able to impose identifications on states or socialize them to behave in specific ways. They

[1] Lebow, *The Politics and Ethics of Identity*.

exert their influence primarily by shaping and legitimizing roles; they have less authority over affiliations, bodies, and autobiographies. Regional societies can encourage affiliations with other actors, as the EU does in Europe. International society, acting through regional and international institutions, can indirectly affect state bodies by imposing territorial settlements or recognizing a state as sovereign over a particular territory. Less often we witness efforts by societies, or members of them, to influence the historical narratives of other actors.

National identifications are multiple and rise and fall in their relative importance as a function of context and priming and the skill of the agents who propagate them. Some identifications are reinforcing, but others are crosscutting. At the individual level, people try to deny or finesse contradictions in their self-identifications. Multiplicity and conflict make self-identifications – the constituents of so-called identities – inappropriate foundations for ethics.[2] For the same reasons national identifications are a poor foundation for or predictor of foreign policy. This is not to say they never shape interests or behavior, only that there is no direct correspondence between them and policy. A useful analogy can be drawn to the so-called national interest. Like identities, formulations of the national interest are multiple and intransitive, arise from domestic and foreign interactions, and are intensely political in character. It is rarely evident beforehand which conception of interest – if any – will be paramount in any given context or how determining it will prove. Explanations that work backward from behavior to interest risk circularity unless good independent evidence can be found to support the claim that the actors in question were consciously motivated by a particular framing of interest.[3] Researchers who use identities to predict or explain interests and behavior confront the same problem.

## Paradigms and "Identities"

Max Weber thought the first step toward making social science an ethical practice was for researchers to recognize how deeply they were

[2] Ibid., ch. 7.

[3] Realist explanations for the end of the Cold War encounter this problem. Oye, "Explaining the End of the Cold War"; Wohlforth, "New Evidence on Moscow's Cold War." See Lebow and Mueller, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," for a critique.

embedded in their own society and how their research questions and even findings reflected assumptions about the world that they rarely questioned.[4] There is no objective perch from which to study or evaluate one's own or other societies, only subjective ones that reflect our political and social values, commitments, and aspirations. We cannot easily step outside of our society and place within it, as Rawls quite unrealistically expects people to do in his "veil of ignorance" thought experiment.[5] With effort, we can become aware of our "priors" and the ways in which they influence our research, beginning with our choice of problems, the means we think appropriate to their study, what we consider relevant evidence, and how we evaluate it. By recognizing our subjectivity we can reduce at least some of its consequences. This recognition has the potential to make us more tolerant of the normative and intellectual commitments of others.[6]

Weber's caution is particularly germane to international relations theory. The realist, liberal, constructivist, and postmodernist paradigms can be understood as identity projects that build distinctiveness and solidarity by emphasizing their differences and asserting their superiority over one another. There are serious tensions between their intellectual claims and institutional goals that few leading researchers in these paradigms are willing to address.[7]

Many constructivists make identity their master variable, reflecting the widespread Western belief in its centrality to people and peoples. The importance of the politics of identity does not mean that the concept of identity is appropriate to its study. Identity the concept is the secular descendant of the soul, and coined for much the same reasons: to provide unity and consistency to people.[8] There is no evidence for the existence of a superordinate identity that can serve these ends. It is an illusion, albeit a comforting one for many people, but also a source of frustration, inadequacy, and unhappiness when they are unable to construct such beast and feel torn by multiple, sometimes

[4] Weber, *Profession and Vocation of Politics*; Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, ch. 3; Lebow, "Wissenschaftliche Wissenschaft."

[5] Rawls, *Theory of Justice*.

[6] Plato makes a similar argument in *Protagoras*, where he attributes empathy to *philia* and with it the recognition that our understanding of justice is parochial and not universal.

[7] Lebow, "International Relations Theories as Identity Projects."

[8] See Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*, ch. 1 for an elaboration of this claim and a genealogy of the concept of identity.

conflict identifications, just as people do by multiple, crosscutting commitments. In politics, so-called identity is at least as often a cause of division and conflict as it is of unity and solidarity. These conflicts are sometimes muted but often intense. Culture wars of this kind give rise to ontological *insecurity*.

The ontological security research program rests on the premise that we can find a refuge from stress in our identities. It is the latest academic repackaging of the Romantic illusion that people have independent inner selves waiting to be discovered and developed and relied on for a safe anchorage in the stormy sea of life. The search for ontological security is doomed to failure, and the belief that people or states can find it flies in the face of psychological reality. Constructivist scholars need to look inward, not to discover their identities, but to interrogate their commitments. They need to recognize the extent they too are products of a popular culture that emphasizes the fiction of identity and how their research in turn legitimizes it. This does not mean we should we give up the study of what is commonly called identity as much of politics revolves around it.

By turning to identity constructivists hope to trump realists, liberals, and Marxists by showing that interests derive from identities. However, with identifications, as with interests, the arrows of causation point in both directions. How we behave shapes our interests and understandings of who we are, just as they in turn influence our formulation of interests and our behavior.[9] It is rarely evident beforehand which way the arrow of influence will point – if perceived interests or strongly felt identifications will be determinate. Like interests, identifications are susceptible to manipulation. Actors invariably portray their initiatives as consistent with, even critical to, the survival of the perceived interests or self-identifications of key constituencies. Politicians everywhere do this to mobilize support for initiatives that may have little or nothing to do with the interests and identifications to which they appeal.

Despite these problems, realists and liberals are reluctant to give up interests as a master variable. Many constructivists are just as attached to so-called identities, and they are equally problematic. State identifications are as numerous, fluid, and inconsistent as individual ones are. This political-psychological truth is more evident within states because

[9] Bem, "Self-Perception" and "Self- Perception Theory."

their "identity" conflicts are more visible. Instead of being internal to the psyche, where they are frequently repressed, they are external and public. They have agents, and often constituencies, who propagate and defend them through their efforts to influence collective and official memory and sometimes impose these identifications on others through the levers of government, media, education, or religion.

Self-identifications are important in foreign policy, but more constructivists need to acknowledge that states, like individuals, have many different identifications that vary in appeal and salience.[10] We need to embrace this complexity, track the ways in which different identifications rise and fall in importance and the politics responsible for it. We must also learn more about the dynamics of their interaction and why they are used to justify policies at least as often as they are one of its causes.

Constructivists should also recognize that self-identifications are only one source of guidance for people. In *Constructing Cause in International Relations* I document the importance of visual frames of reference. I show how a series of developments in Renaissance art facilitated the emergence of individual autonomy in theory and practice. The project of autonomy in turn made identity a paramount concern.[11] There are other cognitive and emotional frames of reference that have little or nothing to do with identifications and are equally worthy of study by constructivists given their policy relevance. There is no reason why "identities" – or more properly, identifications – should be given ontological or analytical priority.

## National Identifications

In Chapters 3 through 5 I explored national identifications. Mead characterized individual self-identifications as the product of a constant interplay between the "Me," or social self, and the "I," or reflexive self. The former describes characterizations of us formulated by others.[12] Social psychologists stress the social nature of identifications, although they do not deny some possibility of self-fashioning.

[10] Cooper, "When Just Causes Conflict with Acceptable Means" and Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, are admirable exceptions.
[11] Lebow, *Constructing Cause in International Relations*.
[12] Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*.

Mead's "Me" and "I" do not capture the complexity of national identifications and their construction.[13] To the extent that states possess an "I," it is a very weak one. Leaders are only one source of national identifications and can disagree among themselves about how their state should be characterized. In authoritarian regimes, leaders have more ability to shape this discourse by virtue of their greater control over media. They can to some degree constrain the formation and spread of collective memory at odds with its official counterpart. Efforts of this kind can drive civil society underground and allow people to retain alterative understandings of their country. Czesław Miłosz and Katherine Lebow document this process in Stalinist Poland.[14]

States are not unitary actors like individuals who can reflect on, accept, reformulate, and sometimes reject identities others would foist on them. They are a collection of citizens and linked institutions in which large numbers of actors struggle to impose definitions on them supportive of their political goals and psychological needs. With a weak or absent "I" to resist or negotiate the "Me," state identifications are entirely social. When we consider state identities at the regional or international level, states once again differ from individuals in that they are subject to pressures not only from below but also from the outside from other actors. Governments and domestic societies are porous. Because states have weak "I"s at best, they generally have more identifications than do people, and many more of them in conflict.

The literature on identity tends to place it in domestic and international compartments. Constructivist scholars who use identity to understand foreign policy generally too often take it as a given. With notable exceptions, they rarely look at the ways in which national identifications are foci of domestic struggles and also the product of foreign interactions.[15]

People propagate national identifications in response to political and psychological needs. We know more about their political than psychological motives, as political science overwhelmingly emphasizes the latter. In part this is because political goals are more public and easier to observe or infer. It also reflects a distinct preference among social

[13] Thoits and Virshup, "Me's and We's."

[14] Miosz, *Captive Mind*, p. 54–81; Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*.

[15] These include: Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics*; Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy*; Gries, "China's New Nationalism"; Berenskoetter, *Friendship and Estrangement in International Relations*.

scientists for rationalist approaches to behavior. In practice, political and psychological and rational and irrational behaviors are difficult to distinguish. The drive for power is certainly psychological and widely recognized as a primary motive for entering politics. Power can be pursued as a means to other ends, in an instrumentally rational or irrational way.[16] Studies of twentieth-century leaders explore these relationships and sometimes attribute self-defeating political behavior to psychological needs to construct or maintain images of the self or ways of behaving closely associated with them.[17] Biographies of Woodrow Wilson, Adolf Hitler, and Richard Nixon suggest that political and psychological needs are more often crosscutting than reinforcing.[18] We need to break down the boundaries between psychological and political to explore how both kinds of needs find expression in efforts to construct or maintain particular national identifications – and what struggles over national identifications reveal about the psychological and political goals of actors.

Modern social theory and psychology place great emphasis on the ability of society to shape individual beliefs, practices, and identities. Socialization is never complete. Actors are not infrequently subjected to competing forms of socialization, and this too allows them some choice. In the modern world, interiority is highly developed, and with it the reflexive self. In much of the Western world, societies are engaged in conflicting projects. They attempt to socialize, shape, and discipline people, but also encourage them to discover and develop their imagined inner selves. Reflexivity encourages people to think about the multiple roles they perform and the tensions among them – and those between their roles and their understanding of who they are or would like to become. Reflection promotes alienation and a heightened desire to engage in self-fashioning. Just how feasible the self-fashioning is depends on the nature of the society and the resources available to actors.

Two processes are at work here. The first is "outside in." It describes efforts by states and international actors to encourage or pressure states to reorder or reconstruct their national identifications. This is

[16] See Lasswell, Postscript to *Politics*, for the classic statement of these relationships.

[17] For example, Caro, *Power Broker* and *Years of Lyndon Johnson*; Short, *Mitterand*.

[18] George and George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House*; Langer, *Mind of Adolf Hitler*; Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger*; Lebow, "Caro's Lives."

likely to happen when these actors find existing identifications inimical to their interests or values. National identifications that are too expansive in their territorial claims or exclude, and possibly demonize, minorities are cases in point. The Poles and other Eastern Europeans were highly critical of early German postwar maps that showed the German Democratic Republic (DDR) as "Central Germany" and territories forfeited at the end of the War as "Eastern Germany." It was not until 1970 that the Federal Republic stopped referring to land formerly belonging to Germany east of the Oder-Neisse River line as "temporarily under Polish or Soviet administration." Israelis and Palestinians claim some of the same territory – some factions in each lay claim to all the territory of the other. In Germany and Israel these definitions of territory connect and express particular understandings of the nation. Following World War II, the occupying powers, but most notably the United States, compelled Germany to begin the painful but ultimately successful process of rethinking itself as a nation. More recently, the EU and the Council of Europe encouraged Eastern European states to follow Germany in addressing their pasts.[19]

Affiliations are also the focus of external attention. In the decades before 1914, Austria-Hungary was deeply torn by ethnic divisions and groups that developed primary affiliations with peoples and states outside of the Empire. Anti-Austrian national identifications were encouraged by nationalists, often in alliance with other states, such as Italy and Serbia. The Austrian German community was similarly divided with many Austrian German speakers expressing stronger sympathies for Germany than for Austria-Hungary. Following World War I, the victorious allies at Versailles prohibited the unification of Austria and Germany. In 1938, Hitler – himself an Austrian – had the Germany army occupy his homeland, where the invasion was widely cheered, and the country became part of the Third Reich.[20]

Histories too attract international attention, and possible sanction, when they construct narratives offensive to or demeaning of others. Turkey's denial of its genocide against Armenians and Japan's refusal to apologize convincingly for its crimes in World War II are cases in

[19] "Holocaust Remembrance Day," Council of Europe, 27 January 2014, http://hub.coe.int/27-january-holocaust-remembrance-day (accessed 2 February 2014).

[20] Sichrovkey, *Schuldig geboren*.

point. In December 2013, President Park Geon-hye of Korea told Vice President Joseph Biden that Japan would never gain the trust of Koreans until it took "sincere measures" to alter the perception that it wanted to glorify its wartime history, rather than repent.[21] The EU has encouraged Eastern European states to follow the German example in addressing its past on the assumption that doing so will contribute to democratization and good relations with neighbors.[22]

The second process is "inside out." E. E. Schattschneider observed that losers of political struggles often seek to expand the arena of competition in the hope of achieving a more favorable outcome.[23] This is a common phenomenon with respect to national identifications. Contributors to Stefano Guzzini's volume on geopolitics provide numerous examples of cross-border cooperation by groups hoping to use it to increase the appeal of their national definitions, and with it their political traction.[24] The political alliance of right-wing nationalist leaders Marine Le Penn in France and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands offers another example. Even adversaries may tacitly cooperate for this reason. During the Cold War, the superpowers benefited from their mutual demonization. It allowed the United States to create a national identification for itself as the "leader of the Free World," while the Soviet Union portrayed itself as its counterpart in the socialist bloc. Such identifications provided distinctiveness and a sense of superiority and could be mobilized to support large military budgets that provided another source of national pride and identification.

Groups, factions, or political parties often seek – or seek to reject – membership in supranational organizations and support from other states as ways of strengthening or consolidating particular national identifications.[25] Pressures can flow downward as well as upward. Mikhail Gorbachev envisaged a radically reformed Soviet Union, with a different set of priorities and identities than those fostered by his predecessors. He was opposed by a coalition that included ideological hardliners, bureaucrats with a vested interest in the Cold War,

[21] Mark Landler, "Biden tries to soothe Asian tension," *International New York Times*, 7–8 December 2013, pp. 1–2.
[22] Dimitrova and Pridham, "International Actors and Democracy Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe."
[23] Schattschneider, *Semisovereign People*.
[24] Guzzini, *Return of Geopolitics in Europe?*
[25] Solingen, *Regional Orders at Century's Dawn*.

and leaders of Warsaw Pact countries. Gorbachev encouraged reform in these countries as a means of undercutting opposition to him at home.[26]

## Roles and Justice

Regional and international societies attempt to regulate behavior largely by means of roles. They establish the criteria for recognition and performance. Traditionally, a state became a rising and power and then perhaps a great power by displaying military prowess. Rising powers most often made war against weaker states or once great but declining great powers. They joined coalitions in wider wars in which existing great powers were arrayed on opposite sides. They never attacked dominant powers on their own, and rarely great powers, as these were the states whose leaders had the power to admit or deny them their entrance into the elite "club."[27]

Aspiring great powers had additional hoops through which to jump. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they had to demonstrate cultural and scientific accomplishments in the form of palaces, museums, opera and ballet, public works, and other forms of city beautification. Becoming a great power required wealth, but it had to be spent in approved-of ways. The markers of great powers evolved rapidly. In the late nineteenth century, colonies, fleets, exploration, and great engineering works became *de rigueur* as did certain kinds of cultural and sporting achievements. By mid-twentieth century, globe-spanning airlines, nuclear weapons, power projection capabilities, Nobel prizes, and space exploration were at the top of the list. With great fanfare and publicity, China signaled its arrival as a great power by building an impressive high-speed railway network, hosting a summer Olympics, landing an unmanned probe on the moon, and having New York banks handle the IPO for its internet giant Alibaba. The IPO raised $21.8 billion for Alibaba, the largest sale of new stock ever.[28]

[26] Lévesque, *Enigma of 1989*.

[27] Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4.

[28] Jeremy Blum, "China high speed trains will soon receive wi-fi," *South China Morning Post*, Chris Buckley, 1 February 2014, http://www.scmp.com/news/china-insider/article/1416712/chinas-high-speed-trains-will-soon-receive-wi-fi (accessed 1 February 2014); "As Rover Lands, China Joins Moon Club," *New York Times*, 14 December 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/15/world/asia/china-lands-probe-on-the-moon-report-says.html?_r=0 (accessed 15

The most significant change, noted in Chapter 4, is that military prowess has declined in relative importance. Great powers are still expected to have sizeable and capable armed forces, and be prepared to use them to maintain order when requested by appropriate regional or international organizations. Unlike previous rising powers, China did not become a great power by warring against its neighbors. Its claim rests primarily on its size, population, economic development, and responsible participation in a wide range of international institutions. Germany, Japan, Brazil, and India claim great power status on roughly similar grounds. They are large countries, although only India comes anything close to China in size and population. Germany and Japan are extremely wealthy and have used their wealth to improve the material well-being and quality of life of their citizens and, relatively speaking, give substantial foreign aid. India and Brazil are less well off but claim to represent the developing world. The Scandinavian countries and Canada, although not seeking recognition as great powers, achieved enhanced standing on the basis of their wealth, foreign aid, peacekeeping, and agenda setting.

The use of military force in the absence of international support in the form of authorization from NATO or the United Nations is almost certain to decrease the standing of a regional, rising or great powers. The Argentine junta's invasion of the Malvinas-Falklands in 1982, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 all led to a decline in standing for these regimes and governments, as did the Anglo-American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

The responsibilities of great powers have increased in the postwar era and these states are expected to perform more services for the international community. They include safeguarding its material as well as the physical welfare, as economic management has increasingly become international and collaborative. Great powers have more

December 2013); Michael J. De La Merced and Neil Gough, "Chinese Internet Giant Alibaba Plans to Issue I.P.O. in New York," 25 September 2013, http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2013/09/25/alibaba-said-to-shift-target-from-hong-kong-to-u-s-for-i-p-o/?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3As%2C{%221%22%3A%22RI%3A11%22} (accessed 4 September 2014); Michael J. de la Merced, "A Soaring Debut for Alibaba," *New York Times*, 20 September 2014, http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2014/09/19/a-soaring-debut-for-alibaba/?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&version=HpSum&module=first-column-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news (accessed 20 September 2014).

responsibility for physical and economic security, but there is widespread recognition that they cannot do this alone. They must negotiate a wider base of support on such issues as trade, non-proliferation, humanitarian intervention, and climate control. The failure of the 2009 Copenhagen climate summit, due in large part to their inability to do so, offers an object lesson.[29] The 1997 treaty to ban landmines indicates that great powers no longer have a monopoly on security issues with global implication. The United States strongly opposed this initiative from the outset, but ultimately acceded to it when a group of medium and small states, supported by INGOs, put together a coalition too large for Washington to undermine or ignore.[30] The landmines treaty was an unusual achievement; great powers still function as gatekeepers and agenda setters, but rising powers have blocking or initiating power on some issues.[31] As a general rule, the more political initiatives replace military ones as the accepted modus operandi for great powers, the more reliant great powers become on the support of other actors.

If we step back from these cases to changing expectations about the roles of great and lesser powers in international society, it might best be explained by reference to an underlying shift in values. All societies incorporate principles of justice. Fairness and equality, or some combination of them, lie at the core of all robust social orders. Fairness implies that goods or benefits should go to those who have done the most to produce them or, alternatively, to those who need them the most. Equality demands an even distribution, or alternatively, equal opportunities to acquire benefits. The first definition of fairness was the dominant principle of all warrior-based honor societies. It was the core principle of regional and international societies until quite recently. States gained honor by their military prowess, and the resulting hierarchy gave the great powers extraordinary authority. This hierarchy and authority were justified on the basis of the alleged responsibility of the powerful for the maintenance of order and survival of the society and its members.[32] To be sure, lesser powers, and even less powerful great powers, were not altogether happy with this arrangement. To exercise

[29] Larson and Shevchenko, "Managing Rising Powers."
[30] Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*, ch. 3.
[31] Narilkar, "Introduction."
[32] See Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, ch. 4 for a discussion.

their authority, the great powers had to couch it, if not yet, in egalitarian language, in terms that provided enough psychological cover for others to acquiesce. At the Congress of Vienna, Mark Jarrett suggests, the great powers concealed their "collective hegemony … behind a mask of seeming restraint"[33]

In the modern age, equality replaced fairness as the dominant value. By the early nineteenth century, as noted, perceptive aristocrats like Talleyrand and Tocqueville recognized that regimes and policies increasingly had to be justified with reference to equality. This was readily apparent in the debates surrounding the American constitution in the 1780s. In Federalist Number 62, James Madison wrote that "the government ought to be founded on a mixture of the principles of proportional and equal representation."[34] The U.S. constitution created a bicameral legislature, with the Senate based on equality – each state had equal representation – and a House of Representatives based on proportional representation – seats were awarded on the basis of population.

The principle of equality penetrated regional and international societies only slowly. For centuries, Europeans did not concede equal status to most non-Christian political units. This gradually changed, and in the first decade of the twentieth century Japan was treated as a first-class power. However, in the United States, Japanese Americans were viewed as second-class citizens, and Japan was asked to limit emigration.[35] It was not until the second half of the twentieth century that liberal democracies became the norm, so much so that authoritarian regimes were increasingly described as outliers, if not downright deviants.

Regional and international institutions today often represent uneasy compromises between fairness and equality. In the EU, there is an inner circle of large states, but each state in the EU has one vote. On constitutional questions there is a liberum veto. In the UN, each member state has one vote in the General Assembly, but a small number of great powers dominate the Security Council. At the creation of the UN in 1945, President Franklin Roosevelt insisted that the effective

[33] Jarrett, *Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy*, p. 180.
[34] Madison, Federalist 62, in Hamilton, Madison, and Jay, *Federalist Papers with Letters of 'Brutus,'* p. 391.
[35] Reynolds, *Long Shadow*, p. 120; Shimazu, *Japan, Race, and Equality*, pp. 80–96.

peacekeeping would depend on the great powers because smaller powers would lack the requisite military means. This invocation of responsibility was used to limit the membership of the Security Council.[36] Over time, the Security Council was expanded to include a rotating representation of other states. This practice has strengthened the claim of equality as the norm.[37] Perhaps for this reason analysis of General Assembly debates from 1991–2009 reveals that the Security Council suffers from a legitimacy deficit.[38]

Brazil and India maintain that the Security Council should having a more representative circle of permanent members, but to date all proposals for change – described as "reforms" by their advocates – have been resisted by the permanent members. Developing countries have been more successful outside of the UN. In 1999, the Group of 7 (G7) finance ministers morphed into the Group of 20 (G20) to become more inclusive. In 2008, the G20 finance group was elevated to the G20 leaders or heads of government group. G20 nationals have taken a rising share of senior positions in global organization like the IMF and the World Bank. According to Robert Wade, "[R]ising economic multipolarity is being translated into rising multilateralism."[39] This has been made possible by the increasing legitimacy of equality as a value and the ability of states such as Brazil, India, South Korea, and South Africa to mobilize it in support of their claims.

Equality has made other inroads, which include recognition of non state actors and their growing importance in security and economic affairs. The monitoring activities of the International Atomic Energy Commission and the Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor are central to arms control regimes.[40] States that are not great powers but economically important have been increasingly included in bodies responsible for international economic management.[41]

[36] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1941, vol. 1, pp. 355, 363–66.

[37] On the growing shift from fairness to equality in the United Nations, see Bourantonis, *History and Politics of UN Security Council Reform*; Hurd, "Myths of Membership"; Pouliot, "Setting Status in Stone." Russia is now the mainstay of the fairness position, consistently emphasizing efficiency over equality.

[38] Binder and Heupel, "Legitimacy of the UN Security Council."

[39] Wade, "Protecting Power."

[40] On the last of these, see Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor, http://www.the-monitor.org/ (accessed 13 January 2014).

[41] Bayne and Putnam, *Hanging in There*; Hajnal, *G8 System and the G20*.

The principle of equality is not only invoked by rising powers like China, India, and Brazil; it encourages their assertiveness.[42] They feel freer to push their policy agendas. The Western powers, while not fully responsive, are more accommodating than great powers would have been in the past because otherwise they would be less able to mobilize support from these powers for their own initiatives. This change is not merely a function of the distribution of power, as realists would allege, but of a shift in the relative appeal of competing principles of justice.

Both principles of justice seek to regulate and limit the use of force. Fairness is associated with a clientelist hierarchy in which those at the apex receive honor in return for providing security and material assistance to those lower down the pecking order. Those at the top have the thickest rule packages. They are expected to exercise self-restraint in coercion and the use of force against less powerful actors who are members of the society. By this means weaker actors seek to protect themselves by honoring powerful ones and accepting their leadership. As noted, in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, the principle of fairness was used to justify a hierarchy with great powers at the top with responsibilities for system management. In practice, the principle of fairness was only partially successful in preserving the freedom and interests of the less powerful. This was presumably one of the reasons fairness began to lose legitimacy in international relations. In the Pacific Rim, a clientelist hierarchy functioned far more effectively during the Ming Dynasty.[43] Shogo Suzuki contends that it was also a feature of Japanese political and social life.[44]

David Kang, among others, argues that this clientelist arrangement accounts for the glaring discrepancy in the frequency of war between the European and East Asian regional systems. From 1368 to 1841 – from the onset of the tributary system to the Sino-British Opium War – there were only two wars involving China, Korea, and Japan. These episodes aside, the three countries maintained peaceful and even friendly relations, which became more stable as they became more powerful. The key to peace was the unquestioned dominance of China

[42] Narilkar, "Introduction"; Alden and Schoeman, "South Africa's Symbolic Hegemony in Africa."

[43] Clark, "Sino-Korean Relations under the Ming"; Kang, *China Rising* and *East Asia Before the West*.

[44] Suzuki, "Europe at the Periphery of the Japanese World Order."

and its reluctance to expand territorially at the expense of its "civilized" neighbors. Other states accepted China's primacy and sought to benefit from it culturally and economically. Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese elites copied Chinese institutional, linguistic, and cultural practices, which in turn facilitated closer and more productive relations with China.[45]

Less powerful states are provisionally willing to accept the leading role of great powers in maintaining physical and economic order, but are deeply resentful of initiatives they believe advance the interests of these actors at their expense. The discourse of equality provides the vehicle for such actors to reject and resist these initiatives. Efforts by Western states to address global warming are a case in point. Leaders of developing economies maintain that they should not be subjected to the same restrictions as they are poorer and lag behind the West in economic growth. Opponents of the Non-Proliferation Treaty also invoke the principle of equality. The treaty incorporates this principle as it calls on the nuclear powers to build down and ultimately do away with their weapons as the quid pro quo for other states refraining from acquiring them.[46]

Realists err in equating material capabilities with power and power with influence. Material capabilities are an important basis of power, but even this cursory discussion indicates that power does not automatically translate into influence. Attempts to do so through bribes and threats, even when successful, consume resources, often at a prodigious rate. They often fail to gain the compliance that is sought. The United States provides more than $1.7 billion of military aid to Egypt and $3 billion to Israel every year, about a third of the aid it provides worldwide.[47] It is not evident what it gets in return.

[45] Kang, *China Rising* an *East Asia Before the West*, pp. 82–106; Cohen, "China's Rise in Historical Perspective"; Nathan and Scobell, *China's Search for Security*; Scobell, China's Use of Military Force; Kelly, "A 'Confucian Long Peace' in Pre-Western East Asia?"; Chanda, "When Asia Was One."

[46] Daryl Kinball, "The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) at a Glance," *Arms Control Association*, August 2012, http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nptfact (accessed 29 December 2013).

[47] Vaughn Aubuchon, "U.S. Foreign Aid Summary," no date, http://www.vaughns-1-pagers.com/politics/us-foreign-aid.htm; "U.S. Foreign Aid By Country," *Huffington Post*, 30 August 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/30/us-foreign-aid-by-country_n_1837824.html (both accessed 15 January 2014).

The most effective form of influence is persuasion. An actor attempts to convince others that it is in their interest to do what it wants. When successful, other actors are often willing to contribute resources toward the common goal. Persuasion builds on shared values and interests and advocates initiatives that build on accepted practices. If a state asks others to accept its leadership, it must convince them that it will not pursue objectives beyond commonly agreed-on goals. Material capabilities can be critical to influence, but just as important are the choice of appropriate goals and the political skills necessary to form and maintain coalitions. Persuasion is greatly assisted by past leadership success, which creates a degree of trust and propensity to cooperate again. Cooperation helps build shared, if not common, identifications that make cooperation and persuasion more likely in the future. Coalition building and implementation of common policies require what is best described as political and moral power, not only material capabilities. Depending on the nature of the initiative, it also benefits from institutional and technical expertise.

Persuasion ultimately rests on legitimacy – of the initiative and the leader and state in question. Drawing on Weber, Ian Hurd defines legitimacy as a "normative belief by an actor that a rule or institution ought to be obeyed. It is a subjective quality, relational between actor and institution, and defined by the actor's perception of the institution. The actor's perception may come from the substance of the rule or from the procedure or source by which it was constituted."[48] An oft-cited example is the Bretton Woods system, set up in 1944. Rather than dictating its preferences to other Western powers, the United States made concessions to make the resulting institutions and practices more palatable to them. American self-restraint and the rule of one-state-one-vote through which these institutions function also built legitimacy and with it an acceptance of American leadership that lasted arguably into the 1970s.[49] In more recent decades, the United States has shown a marked penchant for unilateralism when it cannot gain the support of other key actors, and sometimes even when it can.[50]

The principle of equality can be interpreted in different ways, and some actors use it to justify claims for inequality that really rest on the

[48] Hurd, "Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics."
[49] Ikenberry, *After Victory*; Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*, p. 63.
[50] See Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*, for documentation and discussion.

fairness principle. Brazil and India seek seats on the Security Council to gain status and, in effect, to differentiate themselves from their neighbors by attaining a higher status with more privileges. They cloak their goals in the language of equality; they assert that global South would have a larger voice on security matters. They encounter opposition from neighboring states who see through their rhetorical sleight of hand.[51] Hobbes observed that status is a relational quality; if everyone has honor, nobody does.[52] High-status actors are generally reluctant to diminish their standing by granting high status to new comers. Newcomers to clubs, neighborhoods, or tenured faculties are often the most reluctant to admit others. Not surprisingly, China has joined the other permanent members of the Security Council in stonewalling demands for expanding the great power membership of the Security Council.

Demands for equality and recognition have the potential to provoke paranoia, not only opposition. This is evident in the reaction of many Americans to the rise of China. Congressional committees, journalists, and some academics make dire predictions about Chinese foreign policy goals.[53] Polls indicate that U.S. public opinion is deeply concerned about the loss of status associated with the possible rise of China to economic preeminence. In 2011, 36 percent considered economic globalization a positive development, compared to 60 percent in 2001.[54] There is also an overreaction to the seeming rise of Brazil, India, and South Africa and exaggerated fears of their opposition to the Western economic order and their willingness and ability to cooperate together against it. Wikileaks made public a classified

[51] Shaw, "African Agency?"

[52] Hobbes, *De Cive*, 1.1.

[53] Robert Kaplan, "Don't panic about China," *Atlantic*, 28 January 2010; "China military 'closing key gaps'," BBC News, 25 August 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/world-asia-pacific-14661027 (accessed 25 August 2011); Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 400, "China's Unpeaceful Rise," *Current History*, 105 (2006), pp. 160–62, and "Trouble Brewing in the 'hood," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 August 2011, p. 11; Friedberg, "Future of U.S.-China Relations"; Layne, "Waning of U.S. Hegemony – Myth or Reality?"; Mosher, *Hegemon*; Halper, *Beijing Consensus*. See Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!*, ch. 4 for a critique.

[54] Jon Cohen and Peyton J. Craighill, "More in U.S. Grow Wary of Globalization," *Washington Post*, 29 January 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/28/AR2011012806137.html (accessed 5 February 2014).

memo by a senior American official who wrote: "It is remarkable how closely coordinated the BASIC [Brazil, South Africa, India, China] group of countries have become in international fora, taking turns to impede U.S./European Union initiatives and playing the U.S. and EU off against each other."[55]

In reality, the United States and other Western countries continue to set the economic and financial global agenda. In a recent survey of innovations in transnational governance, Hale and Held found no successful Southern-led initiatives.[56] Robert Wade contends that in contrast to the West, China and the Southern economies have been unable to coordinate their policy agendas. For this reason the United States made well-coordinated and successful efforts in 2012 to prevent the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) from further analyzing the global financial crisis. At the World Bank, Washington mounted equally successful efforts in 2008–10 to craft "voice reform," thus sidetracking more major changes, and in 2012, against major opposition, to keep the presidency in U.S. hands.[57] The United States was nevertheless stymied in its effort to create an "Alliance of Democracies" in 2004, as it was widely perceived as a means of creating a new hierarchy with itself at the apex.[58]

There is an important trade-off that the United States and other great powers must at some point confront. The steeper the status pyramid, the more standing those at the top have. This is why they resist demands by others to share their offices and the status they confer. Robust orders nevertheless require that high-status actors recognize rising actors and accommodate them. Some accommodation is consistent with maintaining the high status of actors making the accommodation. Clubs that people want to join have higher standing than those they do not. Denying everyone membership will discourage people from seeking entry and sooner or later marginalize the club. Admitting new members of the right kind can reaffirm the status of

[55] Cited in Wade, "Protecting Power."
[56] Hale and Held, *Handbook of Transnational Governance*, p. 25.
[57] Wade, "Protecting Power."
[58] Ivo K. Daalder and Robert Kagan, "The Next Intervention," *Washington Post*, 6 August 2007, p. A17; Ivo K. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, "An Alliance of Democracies: Our Way or the Highway," *Financial Times*, 6 November 2004, http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2004/11/06globalgovernance-daalder (accessed 1 January 2014).

the club and its members. So it is with the great power "club" and the various institutions run or dominated by the leading political and economic powers.

The United States and other great powers are moving slowly in the direction of accommodation. They recognized China as a great power and agreed to some important changes in the G5, the World Bank, and other institutions. These changes are not attributable to change in relative power; Washington and its allies are still able to stonewall most changes they do not want.[59] They have occurred because the actors seeking it have successfully challenged the legitimacy of the status quo and have mobilized support among third parties by couching their demands in the language of equality. American leaders found resistance too costly in the circumstances and made the minimum concessions to satisfy these actors.

Fairness is more consistent with hierarchies; indeed, it is the principal justification for them. Equality is anti-hierarchy, unless it can be shown that all actors were treated equally at the outset and that the resulting hierarchy is the product of the skill and diligence of the actors at the top.[60] The spread of the principle of equality accordingly makes it more difficult for states seeking higher status to differentiate themselves from others. It also makes it more difficult for high-status actors to demand special privileges. Of equal importance, it reduces the political value of any hierarchy because in a world where the principle of equality is dominant there is no longer any "natural" right to lead. This in turn reduces the prestige associated with high-status roles.

Those states seeking higher status have accordingly been compelled to couch their claims for differentiation in the language of equality. Other actors see through this ploy and hasten to point out the contradictions between claims for status and the principle invoked to justify it. This is particularly true of states that consider themselves peers of those who hope to move up at their expense. The world's dominant power remains intent on pushing its claim for hegemony, and with it its right to lead. As we have seen, this is a nonstarter, not only because of the way in which American unilateralism has aroused widespread opposition but also because the very idea of hegemony is unacceptable. Hegemony represents outright rejection of the principle

[59] Ibid.
[60] Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, makes reference to both.

of equality and is bound to be opposed by others for this reason. For critics, it is also a violation of the principle of fairness because, since the end of the Cold War, the United States, more than before, has used its power to pursue policies that many regard as damaging to international economic and political stability.[61] American leaders and foreign policy intellectuals fail to recognize these political truths and will pay an even bigger price in lost status.

## The Future of International Society

I attempt to explain, or at least to track, the evolving character of international society in terms of roles, their rising and falling legitimacy, appeal to actors, and shifts in their performance. Significant too are changing conceptions of affiliations, bodies, and biographies. There is a complex interplay among these several sources of national identifications, and between them and the structure and practices of international society. Changes in one national identification often require, or inspire, adjustments or more significant changes in others, as do changes in values and practices in domestic, regional, and international societies.

Societies socialize their members to fill appropriate roles, make acceptable affiliations, and develop certain kinds of understandings about their bodies and their pasts. By these means societies establish hierarchies, legible interactions, and to some degree, behave in predictable ways. Actors always retain some degree of autonomy, and the powerful ones almost invariably have more choices. When such actors carve out new roles, affiliations, relationships to their bodies or the past, and create discourses to justify them, they bring change to their society. It is likely to be more far-reaching when others accept these changes as legitimate. The catalysts of change are by no means always powerful actors. Changes in society, like those in language, are often the product of uncoordinated behavior by many ordinary people. They may be effective even when resisted by powerful actors. Recent examples in English include the gradual disappearance of adverbs, the use of "myself" for "I," and the increasingly arbitrary use of apostrophes. In Germany, for many decades now, English words and phrases have become increasing common in spoken and written German. In France,

[61] See Reich and Lebow, *Good-Bye Hegemony!* on this point.

the august French Academy has primary responsibility for regulating and protecting the language but has been notoriously unsuccessful in keeping English words and expressions from the French tongue.[62]

Domestic and regional societies are nested in international society. The mechanisms for change at each level are similar, although their consequences are not because these societies differ in the number of actors, the variety of available roles and affiliations, the kinds of relationships to bodies that are possible, and the ways in which histories are developed. The study of domestic change often focuses on institutions because legislatures, courts, civil service, school, and corporations shape the reward structure. There are fewer institutions in international society and they have less overall authority. Roles are a more important mechanism for establishing and regulating practices, and accordingly of maintaining order and retarding – or introducing – change.

Domestic, regional, and international societies interact in important ways. Changes in values and practices in any of these societies can stimulate changes in others or stiffen opposition to them. Consider the phenomena of autonomy and equality. Philosophers and sociologists have documented their emergence in philosophical discourses, and political scientists have studied their application to domestic societies and, more recently, to international institutions and practices.[63] Richard Tuck argues for the initial appearance of autonomy in international society, where it subsequently came to influence domestic practices. The emergence of sovereign – that is, autonomous – political units of equal legal standing facilitated this development among individuals within domestic societies.[64] As with many kinds of change, the appeal and spread of autonomy of actors and equality of units may best be understood as an interactive, even co-constitutive process.

The rise of China illustrates this phenomenon at the international level. For China to enter international society it had to reorient its

[62] Henry Samuel, "French Académie française battles to protect language from English," *Daily Telegraph*, 5 February 2014, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/8820304/Frances-Academie-francaise-battles-to-protect-language-from-English.html (accessed 5 February 2014).

[63] For their emergence in discourses, Taylor, *Sources of Self*; Seigel, *Idea of Self*; Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity*.

[64] Tuck, *Rights of War and Peace*.

foreign policy and its domestic economic structure and policies. The move toward a capitalist economy was a strong incentive to reach an accommodation with the major industrial powers of the Pacific Rim and the West. These countries in turn had to make various compromises to accommodate China. China became a great power, and recognized as such. The role of great power does not exist apart from the society that creates it and determines how it is performed. However, expectations about that role change, and China's acceptance as a great power, have created new possibilities and controversies about the role. China's new importance in international affairs in turn creates new pressures for change at home, from top down and bottom up. We cannot study outside views of China's role as a great power or Chinese views of their country's role in isolation from the interaction between China and other great powers.[65] Nor can we study China's foreign and domestic policies without factoring in how they interact. Domestic, regional, and international politics and economics are tightly coupled.

While developments in one domain can generate pressures to implement them in others, there is no requirement for consistency or symmetry across different levels of society. Even within societies we find striking differences in values and practices in different subcultures. Some of these subcultures have generated hierarchies, and some of them are reactions to existing hierarchies. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the most important hierarchy throughout much of Europe was based on birth. Aristocrats, and wealthy people who married or bought their way into the aristocracy, were at the top of society. They led different lives from ordinary people, were subject to different laws, and the gap between them and commoners in wealth was generally extreme. Their practices were admired and emulated by many lower down the hierarchy. In late nineteenth-century Germany and Britain, middle-class readers were drawn to illustrated magazines that depicted court life. Socially mobile people in both countries bought books on manners, hoping to mimic the practices of the upper classes to present themselves as more cultured. Many wealthy German and Austrian bourgeoisies assimilated aristocratic values and practices.[66] In today's world, where appetite has supplanted the quest

[65] Jones, "Constructing Great Powers."

[66] Rosenberg, *Imperial Germany*; Veblen, *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution*; Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, ch. 7.

for honor and wealth has upstaged standing, people are more interested in the lives of the wealthy. The long-running American television show "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" – which spawned knock-offs elsewhere in the world – is indicative of this fascination. Hierarchy is accordingly a double-edged sword. It can undermine the self-esteem of those at the bottom but enhance it when they take pride in the accomplishments of their elite or hope to move closer to, even join, it.

This phenomenon has resonance in international relations. Many great powers have mimicked dominant powers, and rising powers have done the same with great powers. France under Louis XIV was for a long time the dominant power in Europe, and Louis celebrated and solidified his status through various forms of display, most notably *grandes bâtiments*. His pride and joy was Versailles, a collection of palaces, pavilions, gardens, and lakes built during the last three decades of the seventeenth century.[67] Other European leaders built palaces and gardens modeled on Versailles, copied French clothing styles, learned French, and emulated the country's culture.[68]

Eighteenth-century leaders did not on the whole make sharp distinctions between themselves and their states. They sought to attain personal *gloire* (standing) by gaining higher status for their state. This was achieved by a mix of military success and conspicuous consumption, with the French court establishing the markers for both. Rising powers traditionally spent an extraordinary percentage of their disposable income on their military and, along with dominant powers, were the kind of state most responsible for initiating war.[69] Contrary to the predictions of power transition theory, rising powers never started wars against great or dominant powers to demonstrate their prowess, but picked on smaller states or declining great powers.[70] Miles Kahler, among others, argues that the BRICS are equally cautious.[71]

[67] Elias, *The Court Society*, pp. 42–65; Olwig, *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic*; Blanning, *Pursuit of Glory*, pp. 428–36, 440–42, 534–35.

[68] Blanning, *Pursuit of Glory*, pp. 449–50, 502; Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, ch. 6.

[69] Ibid; Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4.

[70] Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, ch. 4.

[71] Kahler, "Rising Power and Global Governance"; Burgess, "Brazil as a Bridge Between Old and New Powers?"; Foot and Walter, *China, the United States, and Global Order*; Breslin, "China and the Global Order"; Zonglei and Yu "China's Search for an Innovative Foreign Policy"; Kent, *Beyond Compliance*; Hirono, and Lanteigne, *China's Evolving Approach to Peacekeeping*.

In the twentieth century, appetite was a more openly acknowledged and acceptable motive for people and states. Liberalism – in theory and practice – holds out wealth as the most rational goal. In international relations, rich states gain status independently of the size and effectiveness of the armed forces. Poorer countries want to emulate the developed West and Japan, and much of the Pacific Rim has succeeded in doing so. In the 1990s, there was a rush to join the EU among former communist countries in the expectation that it would accelerate an improvement in their material well-being.[72] Markers of standing have shifted accordingly. In the course of the nineteenth century, emphasis began to be put on expenditures that benefited the population rather than the rulers. This included parks – open to everyone – urban infrastructure in the form of monuments, clean water, sewage systems, public transportation, street lighting, museums, opera houses, and concert halls, and national achievements like shipping lines, successful sports teams, and colonies. Colonies were questionable as a public good, although there is little doubt that imperialism was extremely popular among the middle and working classes.[73] In the second half of the twentieth century, international airlines and airports, highways, high-speed trains, atomic power, and space travel became important markers, and so too did top-ranked universities, social welfare, and longevity.

In the course of the last 150 years there has been a noticeable shift to markers of status more closely connected to the general welfare. In recent decades we have witnessed a parallel shift away from military prowess – the traditional means by which honor is won – toward expenditures that benefit one's own people and those of other countries. They take the form of foreign assistance, peacekeeping, sponsorship of regional and international initiatives, and hosting international organizations and meetings. Both shifts are reflections of the deeper one from the principle of fairness to equality.

The principle of fairness has not disappeared, and contemporary international society reveals a marked tension between it and the principle of equality. Fairness justifies the hierarchy with dominant and great powers at its apex in contrast to equality that recognizes

[72] Moravcsik and Vachudovà, *National Interests, State Power, and EU Enlargement*; Schimmelfennig, "Community Trap."

[73] For evidence on Britain and Germany, see Lebow, *Cultural Theory of International Relations*, ch. 7.

the equality of all units.[74] Has the hierarchy based on the principle of fairness become an atavism in today's world and therefore unlikely to endure? I offer a more cautious assessment. Equality is the discourse of those with less power, wealth, and status. Actors at the top, or upwardly mobile in status, tend to support fairness, insisting on special privileges. All domestic societies incorporate hierarchies – indeed, they are based on them – so there is no reason to expect international society to be any different. The key issue is not the existence of hierarchies, but the extent to which those not at their pinnacles are reconciled to them. This will depend on the extent to which dominant and great powers conform to existing ethical standards, do not blatantly abuse their power, and resort to practices and rhetoric that enhance, not undermine, the self-esteem of others. Hans Morgenthau wisely observed that power must be legitimated or masked to be effective.[75]

My argument attributes change primarily to value transformations that work their way through societies of all kinds. If they originate, or become most pronounced in domestic societies, they generate pressures for similar practices in regional and international societies. Changes do not take place automatically, but require actors to introduce and struggle for them. As the direction of change in modern society is away from hierarchy toward equality, those who have the most to lose from such a transformation are the most powerful actors and must somehow be convinced to acquiesce. This problem is not unique to international society, as we have many examples of it in domestic societies in the last two centuries. Almost everywhere in the West it has been – and still is being – fought out with respect to minorities of all kinds. As a general rule, powerful actors are more likely to accept change when they come to see opposition to it as more threatening to their power and status. Sharing power can emerge as an attractive option when it ensures retention of many privileges from which the existing elite benefits. The accommodation of the British aristocracy to the rise of the industrial and commercial classes, and both of them to the working class, is best explained in these terms.[76]

[74] Bukovansky, Clark, Eckersley, Price, Reus-Smit, and Wheeler, *Special Responsibilities*, pp. 5–11.

[75] Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, p. 145 and *Decline of Democratic Politics*, p. 59.

[76] Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*; Carradine, *Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*.

Support for hierarchies is likely to wane and possibly break down when elite actors repeatedly violate accepted values and practices, and in the process threaten the self-esteem, wealth, or security of other actors.[77] Dramatic instances of this kind of behavior can provoke outrage. In April 2012, King Juan Carlos felt the need to apologize to the Spanish people for going on a safari in Botswana, reportedly to shoot elephants, while his compatriots were suffering at home due to the economic crisis.[78] In New York, banks and bankers have been exposed in one crooked deal after another, often at the expense of smaller investors. In November 2013, JP Morgan Chase had to shell out $13 billion to settle legal claims against it for misleading the public over toxic loans.[79] This was the fifth of its major payouts since the financial crisis.[80] In 2015, Deutsche Bank was fined $2.5 billion for rate rigging.[81] Bankers have not apologized. In London, bankers who happily took huge bonuses from banks bailed out by public funds have not been sensitive to public opinion.[82] In Britain and the United States, jokes about bankers largely replaced those about lawyers. In Britain, the Conservative government of David Cameron defended the bankers and sought to prevent the EU from putting a cap on banker bonuses.[83]

[77] Lebow, *Theory of Political Order.*

[78] "Spain King Juan Carlos sorry for Botswana hunt trip," *BBC*, 18 April 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17752983 (accessed 20 November 2013).

[79] Ben Protess and Jessica Silver Greenberg, "In Extracting Deal from JP Morgan, U.S. Aimed for Bottom Line," *New York Times*, 19 November 2013, http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2013/11/19/13-billion-settlement-with-jpmorgan-is-announced/?_r=0 (accessed 20 November 2013).

[80] Dominic Rushe, "JP Morgan to pay $13bn as it admits it misled the public over toxic loans," *Guardian*, 20 November 2013, p. 2.

[81] Ben Protess and Jack Ewing, "Deutsche Bank to Pay $2.5 Billion to Settle Rate-Rigging Case," *New York Times*, 23 April 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/24/business/dealbook/deutsche-bank-settlement-rates.html; Frances Coppola, "Deutsche Bank's Record Fine Reveals its Rotten Heart," *Forbes*, 25 April 2015, http://www.forbes.com/sites/francescoppola/2015/04/25/deutsche-banks-record-fine-reveals-its-rotten-heart/ (both accessed 17 July 2015).

[82] Jill Trenor, "RBS bankers get 950m in bonuses despite 1.1b loss," *Guardian*, http://www.theguardian.com/business/2011/feb/24/rbs-bankers-bonuses-despite-loss (accessed 20 November 2013).

[83] Heather Stewart, "Osborne bats for banker's bonuses citing risk to City from EU cap," *Guardian*, 25 September 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/sep/25/osborne-bankers-bonuses-eu-cap (accessed 20 November 2013).

Cameron's Tories were seen as the party of the rich, so much so in 2012 that one of their ministers publicly speculated – incorrectly, as it turned out – that it could cost them the next election.[84]

Much of this dissatisfaction would not have arisen a century ago. The appeal of equality as a value has made inequality more unacceptable, especially when it is blatant and when others are suffering. The same phenomenon is apparent in international relations where, as noted, American insistence on hegemony falls on deaf ears, not because the United States lacks sufficient power to be a hegemon, but because hegemony is unacceptable. The fact that Washington is perceived to have abused its power to pursue selfish goals at the expense of others makes its claims to hegemony even less acceptable. In the words of Robert Gilpin, the United States has moved away from role of multilateralism to become "unilateral and self-centered."[85] The United States is widely recognized as a dominant power, but this status no longer confers special privileges as it did to dominant powers in the past. Nor is the United States emulated by others nowadays, the way dominant powers such as France and Britain were in the past. The self-congratulatory American discourse of "soft power" is largely for domestic consumption.

The role of great power has also become more precarious in principle, although several states aspire to the role. In practice, great powers are welcomed by public opinion in many countries as a counterweight to the United States. Public opinion polls around the world indicate hopes for countries such as China, India, and Germany to exercise more influence at the expense of the United States. Public opinion in Europe, extremely sympathetic to the United States after 9/11, reversed itself and came to consider it a greater threat to world peace than North Korea.[86] In Britain, those with favorable opinions of the United States dropped from 83 percent in 2000 to 56 percent in 2006. In other countries, the United States underwent an even steeper

[84] Andrew Grice, "Tories are a party for the rich, say voters," *Independent*, 22 December 2009, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tories-are-a-party-for-the-rich-say-voters-1847268.html (accessed 21 November 2013); Patrick Wintour, "We are still seen as party of the rich, say Tory minister, *Guardian*, 20 November 2013, pp. 1–2.

[85] Gilpin, *Challenge of Global Capitalism*, p. 11.

[86] BBC News, 18 March 2003, reported in *The Age* (Melbourne), 6 March 2007, p. 7.

decline.[87] The low point was reached in 2007, when an opinion poll carried out for the BBC World Service in twenty-seven countries found that 51 percent of respondents regarded the United States negatively, a figure surpassed only by their negative evaluations of Iran (54) and Israel (56).[88] Since the Iraq War, the United States has undergone a shift in its profile from a status quo to a revisionist power.[89] While the presidency of Barrack Obama had a positive effect on these ratings, the United States still trailed other advanced industrial states in terms of popularity. Among Western countries, no country generated as many *negative* responses as the United States did (34 percent) in terms of global influence.[90]

Much of the opposition to the United States is a reaction to its foreign policy, most notably its military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, but also its holding of prisoners without trial at Guantanamo and its use of drones to attack suspected terrorists in many countries. It is worth considering the counterfactual that there would still be considerable opposition to any powerful country that sought to throw its weight around. The powerful have always been resented but more so in an epoch where the principle of equality has become paramount.

The principle of equality entered international society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the creation of the Westphalian order.[91] The state became the principal actor, and all states were recognized as juridical equals. The concept of sovereignty became the dominant discourse in international relations and over the centuries became a co-equal practice in international relations. The rule of one state, one vote is the norm in most international institutions and fora.

[87] The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "15-Nation Pew Global Attitudes Survey," 13 June 2006. A series of subsequent Pew surveys reflect this view as a continuing theme.

[88] *The Age* (Melbourne), 6 March 2007, p. 7.

[89] This last point is also made by Reus-Smit, "Unipolarity and Legitimacy."

[90] See the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA), *Global Views of United States Improve While Other Countries Decline*, WorldPublicOpion.org, 10 April 2010, http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/views_on_countriesregions_bt/660.php (accessed December 22, 2010).

[91] This evolution and its causes are a highly contentious issue. For some of the relevant literature, see Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*; Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors*; Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan*; Teschke, *Myth of 1648*; Symposium, "1648 and the Myths of Westphalia."

Great power status and the privileges traditionally associated with it are more difficult to sustain. This does not mean that international society has become significantly more equal.

In domestic politics, the status dilemma has been eased by the emergence of multiple hierarchies that allow people to seek standing in diverse ways. It finesses the relational nature of honor and standing because excellence and recognition in one domain does not in any way detract from what others achieve in others. In theory, it makes it possible for anybody with any kind of talent to achieve a certain degree of standing through hard work and the recognition their accomplishments bring. It allows more people to build self-esteem.

International society is much less diverse. Until recently, it has had a single hierarchy based on military power. This limited the number of actors that could achieve high standing and encouraged wars, as conquest was the principle means of achieving standing.[92] International society has fewer actors, which limits, by definition, the number of others routes by which status can be achieved. Some pathways have nevertheless opened up. Neutrals achieve status in different ways than do great powers, as do middle-power states like Sweden and Canada. In a global society it is also possible to achieve status as a regional as opposed to great power. Wealth has become an end in its own right, and not just means of building larger and more powerful military forces, or buying allies as Britain routinely did at the height of its power. Wealth is understood as a means of building healthier and happier societies, not only at home but abroad as well, as it makes foreign assistance possible. Since the era of Louis XIV, France claimed standing on the basis of its civilization, and China does so today. The United States, the French revolutionary republic, the Soviet Union, and China demanded status on the basis of their novel political systems. Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Taliban in Afghanistan assert standing on religious grounds; they all attempt to construct political and social orders that reflect their visions of Islam.

It is still an uphill struggle to move the international system away from its single hierarchy and narrow focus on military power and particular kinds of conspicuous consumption. Change is now under way and accelerating, although it meets resistance in theory and practice.

[92] Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, found standing the principal cause of 62 percent of wars involving great and rising powers fought since 1648.

Drawing on hegemonic stability theory, realists and liberals insist that American dominance is necessary to world order – despite all the evidence that there is no hegemony and that American foreign policy is often inimical to the international political and order.

International relations theory needs to become more conscious of the extent to which mainstream realist and liberal theories are at their core justifications for American primacy. We need alternative understandings that build on the concept of society and are sensitive to its changing values and practices. They must theorize the diverse ways in which actors seek status within existing hierarchies or by pioneering new ones. Modern Western societies have benefited enormously from the development of multiple pathways to status and the increasing opening of old and new pathways to actors regardless of birth, "race," ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. For such pathways to status to proliferate in international society, it will ultimately require acceptance and accommodation by those at the top of the traditional hierarchy. Diversity of this kind could also prove a useful means of finessing the tensions created by the conflict between the principles of fairness and equality. The greater the number of ways of achieving status, the larger the number of states that can attain it and the less likely international conflict will become.

As in domestic societies, smart actors are likely to invest their resources to maximize their chances of gaining status in one or more high-status hierarchies. Scandinavia, Canada, Switzerland, Japan, and South Korea have done this. The next few decades are likely to be characterized by more acute struggles in domestic and international societies. Within countries, actors and interest groups will push for different routes to national status. Some will pursue traditional routes to status, as in Japan, where the Abe government has increased its military budget and is exploiting rising tensions with China toward this end.[93] Conflicts over hierarchies and the status they confer will also become more acute at the international level. Different states will make different choices about how to seek status and make claims about the relative importance of competing hierarchies. Which of them are legitimate and which confer more status than others? It is not evident how

[93] Pyle, *Japan Rising*; Hemmings and Karoke, "Shinzo Abe"; Peter Lee, "Yakasuni Blues," *Counterpunch*, 27–28 December 2013, http://www.counterpunch.org/2013/12/27/yasakuni-blues/ (accessed 29 December 2013).

such conflicts will be resolved – or indeed, if they will. It does seem clear that all claimants will appeal to the court of international public opinion in the languages of fairness and equality, but mostly the latter.

The shift from the principle of fairness to that of equality has important long-term implications for regional and international societies and the conduct of international relations. It creates a new set of constraints and opportunities that actors of all kinds are just beginning to understand and exploit. Their policies in turn have the potential to hasten this transformation – as do theories of international relations that foreground this process.

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