"Sellout" Ministries and Jingoes: China's Bureaucratic Institutions and the Evolution of Contested National Role Conceptions in the South China Sea

Evan Jones

Oakland University

This article extends the role theory literature on domestic role contestation process by specifically examining bureaucracies as potential advocates of competing national role conceptions. While recent scholarship on domestic role contestation affirms the influence of party politics and cabinet dynamics on role enactment, bureaucracies remain underexplored as key actors despite the presence of a robust literature that supports their relevance in the foreign policymaking process. This article draws on expectations from both the role theory and bureaucratic politics literatures to explain how bureaucracies contest national roles and how such contestation may be resolved. The article tests these propositions through the study of China's inter-bureaucratic contestation over its appropriate role in the South China Sea territorial disputes between 1979 and 1992. The article concurrently advances role studies on China by integrating them with more recent arguments about domestic role contestation. Traditionally, role theorists interested in China have either black-boxed the state or only focused on elite-mass role contestation, while this article explores intra-elite role contestation.

Introduction

In 2011 and 2012, role theorists made calls to parse out the ways in which national role conceptions (NRCs) are contested vertically (between elites and masses) and horizontally (among elites) (Cantir and Kaarbo 2012, 11–12). In response, scholars have explored role contestation between political parties (Brummer and Thies 2014) and elites (Thies and Wehner 2014). Nonetheless, there remains ample room for further exploration. This article is part of that effort, focusing on one aspect of the domestic political process—bureaucratic politics—that has not yet received as much attention.

Scholarship has shown that bureaucracies substantially impact foreign policy decision-making processes and implementation (Allison 1969, 1971; Halperin 1971; Allison and Halperin 1972; Halperin 1972a,b, 1974; Valenta 1975, 1991; Smith 1984; Hicks 1990; Spear 1993; Jones 1994, 1999, 2001, 2010, 2012; Holland

1999; Tayfur and Goymen 2002; Halperin and Clapp 2006; Zhang 2006; Marsh 2014). Although leaders usually outline policy goals and guidelines, they rarely have manuals at their disposal on how to achieve their desired ends. Therefore, leaders must rely on the expertise of bureaucracies to translate foreign policy visions into tangible action, thereby according bureaucracies perceptible influence over foreign policy.

Previous work on role location and role contestation processes emphasize ego-alter disagreements without paying mind to internal governmental procedures that precede ego-alter interactions. The unitary actor assumption is justified when two competing roles originate externally, but if role strain exists between two ego-derived roles, then this assumption "mask[s] important domestic political processes" (Brummer and Thies 2014, 3). Through integrating the role theory and bureaucratic politics literatures, I devise a few rudimentary assumptions about how and why bureaucracies act as role holders. I then develop a testable hypothesis to explore the ways in which bureaucracies compete with one another to advance their preferred NRCs and how the central government resolves potential role conflict to settle upon a single role for the state. The hypothesis is tested against China's militarization of the South China Sea (SCS) maritime disputes between 1979 and 1992[1] and illustrates how multiple bureaucracies can adopt different NRCs, compete with one another to enact them, and potentially self-induce role strain and breakdown in the role location process.

The case acts as a useful plausibility probe (Eckstein 1975; Gerring 2007, 118–19) for a number of reasons. First, the authoritarian nature of China's foreign policy decision-making apparatus—a core elite group led by the paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping—contrasts with the expectations of previous studies on domestic role contestation. Most work in this thread examines democratic governments where contestation over divergent roles is deemed most likely. Second, the simultaneous plurality and overlap of interests within democratic governments makes it difficult to isolate the drivers of domestic role contestation. Selecting a one-party state such as China allows us to focus exclusively on bureaucracies and control for a range of confounding factors, especially inter-party cleavages, which might influence domestic role contestation. Although elite or personal politics is a *de facto* component of Chinese policymaking, beginning in the Deng-era "informal groups have become increasingly oriented not merely to the maximization of power and the minimization of risk but to the promotion of policies designed to enhance their bureaucratic interests" (Dittmer 2002, 37). Finally, there are only two major actors competing for influence over China's maritime policy in the SCS in the period covered by the case, the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Limiting the number of relevant actors allows me to test the theory without complicating it beyond its current bounds.

The case study utilizes primary sources, including newspaper articles, official MFA statements, interviews with individuals involved in the policy debates, and secondary literature. Due to the nature of China's decision-making, minutes from internal debates and meetings are unavailable, so I must rely on circumstantial evidence, knowledge of Chinese politics, and scientific analyses by area experts to make informed inferences. I use the congruence method (George and Bennett 2005, 181–204) to test the strength or weakness of my hypotheses.

The case study demonstrates that domestic contestation over China's role in the SCS during the 1980s was driven by two bureaucratic actors: the MFA and PLAN. Each privately vied for a role that was reflective of their parochial interests while top leaders in the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) facilitated the

---

[1]While China employed force in 1974 to defend its claims to the Paracel Islands, it is in this period that China established an active naval presence in the Spratly Archipelago (which accounts for a vast majority of the contested territory).

rules of the game, employed role conflict resolution strategies including attention deployment and change in beliefs, and ultimately selected the *defender of national interest* role. I find no evidence that alter cues significantly influenced internal debates and considerable evidence that the Navy's preponderant institutional clout helped secure the enactment of its preferred NRC. The article contributes theoretically to literature on bureaucratic politics and domestic role contestation by integrating the two. Empirically, the article contributes to literature on China's behavior in the SCS by explaining an ideational shift in its approach to the territorial disputes.

Role Theory[2]

Imported into IR from sociology and social psychology in the 1970s, role theory initially provided a novel way of conceptualizing how states define their own identities and interact with one another in the international system. Since then the literature has integrated numerous approaches and theories in IR and foreign policy analysis with role theory to empirically test a broad list of propositions about state behavior. In recent years, there has been a definitional convergence of what constitutes a role. In this paper, I adopt the definition advanced by Harnisch, Frank, and Maull (2011, 8), which states that roles are "social positions (as well as a socially recognized category of actors) that are constituted by ego and alter expectations regarding the purpose of an actor in an organized group." Roles are endogenous to a socialization process including the actor, the primary recipient of the role, and relevant third parties.

Roles differ from policy actions in important ways. Whereas policies are discrete responses to a domestic or foreign issue, roles are ideational constructs which, consciously or unconsciously, inform leaders how to respond to external situations in accordance with a certain identity, set of values, or standards and norms (Walker 1987; Aras and Gorener 2010; Breuning 2013). As Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot (1996, 733) note, roles are "neither deterministic nor infinitely elastic." While specific policy actions may be evidence of a state inhabiting one role or another, multiple roles can sanction the same behaviors. Thus, one must observe a state's behavior over time to establish an operative role.

The process whereby roles are manifested is known as *role enactment*. It is a complex interactive process between the ego, alter, and audience. The *ego* is the actor executing the role or action, and the *alter* is the object receiving the behavior. In addition to the ego and the alter, the third member, or the *audience*, exists to validate role enactment through acknowledging it, providing cues to the role performer, socially tempering the role enactment with positive or negative feedback, and helping sustain role behaviors over time (Sarbin and Allen 1968; Walker 1979).

Each actor has a unique relationship with the concept of role. *Role conceptions* are the cognitive norms, beliefs, or preferences (Biddle 1986, 69) held by the ego. *Role expectations* are the cognitive norms, beliefs, or preferences assumed by the alter (Sarbin and Allen 1968, 497; Stryker and Statham 1985, 330–31; Biddle 1986, 69). Finally, *role location* is the actual process of interaction between the *ego* and *alter* where both try to locate the respective positions of one another (Thies 2010). Appropriate role enactment only occurs when both the self and the other successfully locate one another's positions. When the two disagree on the correct role for the ego or alter, significant problems can arise. For example, Thies (2013) illustrates how, in their infancy, both the United States and Israel had to

---

[2]This section only includes relevant terms from the role theory vernacular and summarizes the domestic role contestation portion of the literature. For readers interested in a more comprehensive review of role theory, see Thies (2010).

force via wars their role as sovereign state onto their significant alters, Britain and
Egypt, respectively. Later, both countries attempted to enact neutral roles in the
international arena, but these roles were rejected. The United States again fought
a war to defend its neutral role. Ultimately, both countries' current primary roles
have been shaped by a long socialization process between ego, alter, and audience
members.

The path to successful role enactment is complex and often involves conflicting
expectations. Barnett (1993) and Tewes (1998) illustrate how states may have two
or more conflicting roles foisted upon them by external elements, that is, interna-
tional institutions or alter expectations. When an actor is unable to settle upon a
single role and tries to simultaneously enact two roles with incompatible behav-
ioral expectations, *interrole conflict* occurs. Additionally, the ego and other may
hold diverging expectations about a single role. This is known as *intrarole conflict*.
Rosenau (1987) posits that states develop various mechanisms, or *role scenarios*,
whereby they prioritize, depending on the situational conditions, what role
should be chosen within the role set to resolve *role conflict*.

Recently, scholars have given greater attention to domestic political sources of
inter-role conflict and role contestation. Brummer and Thies (2014) examine the
way competition between governing elites, multi-party coalitions, cabinet dy-
namics, and bureaucratic politics shaped Germany's selection of a new NRC im-
mediately following the end of World War II. They demonstrate that competition
between elites and cabinet dynamics significantly influenced the role contestation
process, while coalition and bureaucratic politics did so to a lesser extent.
Moreover, they find that there was scant effort by Chancellor Adenauer to ameli-
orate the role conflict that emerged prior to Germany's ultimate adoption of the
"faithful ally" role (Brummer and Thies 2014, 18). In another study, Thies and
Wehner (2014) examine the way in which elites in Mexico and Chile contested
new beliefs during the 1990s when both countries debated reorienting their for-
eign economic policy and joining the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.
Thies and Wehner find that executives acted to reconcile new and traditional be-
liefs to create a consensus over an appropriate NRC. While these studies highlight
various aspects of domestic role contestation, there remains a need to further
flesh out its contours. The literature on contestation has pointed to the import-
ance of looking inside the state, and scholars have identified several primary
actors, especially elites in cabinets and political parties. However, other actors like
bureaucracies remain understudied in this new strand of the literature.

The role theory literature has offered a beneficial framework with which to
study the behavior of states. By traversing multiple levels of analysis, role theory
often provides a richer account of why states go to war (Ghose and James 2005),
why states pursue liberal, internationalist foreign policies (Bergman 2007), how
presidential candidates navigate role conflict to frame their political platforms
(Abidguo 2008), and instrumental changes in a state's foreign policy (Aras and
Gorener 2010). In the case of China, most scholars treat China's international
role taking as determined by its manipulation of cultural and historical identities
in response to fluctuating external and internal demands (Shih 1988, 2012; Shih
and Yin 2013). Moreover, institutions have traditionally been treated as unitary
actors navigating a two-level role taking game, oftentimes appeasing nationalist
sentiments or invoking historical "victimhood" in response to alter expectations
to secure their preferred NRC (Brittingham 2007; Suzuki 2008; Tang 2008; Liao
2013). Harnisch, Bersick, and Gottwald (2016, 38–55), for example, argue that
China's bilateral roles with Japan and Western powers, namely the United States,
have changed in accordance with changes in its domestic historical self-
identification.

However, domestic audiences do not hold exclusive influence over China's his-
torical self-identification. Chinese elites also use rhetoric to alter domestic

conceptions for the sake of achieving political stability, especially in the case of its territorial disputes (Weiss 2014, as cited by Harnisch, Bersick, and Gottwald 2016, 54). Recent role literature on China, which examines potential role sources, has emphasized an idiosyncratic, "Chinese ideational" source (Chen 2016) or the emergence of roles via a complex altercasting process with its most significant others (Bersick 2016; Duggan 2016; Huotari 2016; Maslow 2016; Noesselt 2016; Thies 2016). On the whole, role theorists interested in China have briefly touched upon China's domestic role contestation, overly emphasized domestic audiences, and black-boxed the government—the scope of observations is limited to vertical role contestation. The proliferation of role studies on China would benefit from recent arguments about domestic contestation. China's government started on a path toward pluralization and bureaucratization in the 1980s that accelerated after Deng Xiaoping's departure in 1992 (Lieberthal and Lampton 1992; Lampton 2001; Wong 2005). Thus, we must look beyond central leaders and take into account the rise of "bureaucratic activism at all levels" (Lampton 2014, 55) to gain knowledge of the horizontal role contestation underwriting China's foreign policy role taking.

Bureaucratic Politics

Although role theorists studying China have overlooked horizontal role contestation, the importance of bureaucracies is consistent with the empirical record and a long-standing strand of literature in foreign policy analysis.[3] Within the renewed emphasis on analyzing domestic political processes, bureaucracies remain largely understudied. In light of this, one should ask whether insights about domestic role contestation and selection can be extended to bureaucratic actors.

The bureaucratic politics (BP) model, first developed by Allison (1969), is predicated on the competition between different elites to attain foreign policy outcomes beneficial to their bureaucracies. Governments are led by a cohort of independently influential elites that must share power (Allison 1969, 707). Securing favorable outcomes requires what Allison coins "pulling and hauling" between core actors. These core actors "use the power at his discretion for outcomes that will advance his conception of national, organizational, group, and personal interests" (Allison 1971, 171). Coalition building is a natural outcome of pulling and hauling as actors with similar interests coalesce into opposing groups and is an ancillary game of maneuvering and dominance-seeking like the broader decision-making process it is subsumed within (Allison and Halperin 1972; Marsh 2014). The entire progression is molded by the distinct bargaining advantages each actor has at their disposal and how they are implemented through different action channels.

---

[3]Jones (2012) provides a summary of BP studies that gives credence to validity of the model as well as illuminating its utility in foreign policy (Allison 1969, 1971; Halperin 1971, 1972a,b, 1974; Allison and Halperin 1972; Valenta 1975, 1991; Smith 1984; Hicks 1990; Spear 1993; Holland 1999; Jones 1994, 1999, 2001, 2010, 2012; Tayfur and Goymen 2002; Halperin and Clapp 2006; Zhang 2006; Marsh 2014). Recent work by Marsh (2014) reaffirms bureaucratic politics' explanatory utility in democratic regimes by producing a convincing account of Obama's decision to implement a troop surge in Afghanistan in December 2009. Bureaucracies have also been shown to be relevant forces in influencing the decisions of authoritarian states, for example the decision to invade Hungary in 1956, the decision not to invade Poland, the Sino-Soviet dispute, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Berlin Crisis, the 1967 and 1973 wars in the Middle East, the 1968 Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, détente, defense spending, and strategic priorities (Zagoria 1962; Brzezinski and Huntington 1964; Barghoorn 1966; Brzezinski 1967; Kolkowicz 1967; Triska and Finley 1968; Fleron 1969; Azrael and Johnson 1970; Aspaturian 1971, 1972; Hoffman and Fleron 1971; Dimant-Kass 1974; Schwartz 1975; Hough 1977; Hough and Fainsod 1979; Valenta 1991). All these studies find elements of organizational influence in shaping actors' preferences and determining outcomes, most prominently the 1968 decision to invade Czechoslovakia (Valenta 1975).

Bargaining advantages and action channels characterize the nature of interaction between competing actors. The former concept consists of an assorted means of leveraging one's position such as "control of implementation, control over information that enables one to define the problem and identify the available options, persuasiveness with other players (including players outside the bureaucracy), and the ability to affect other players' objectives in other games" (Allison and Halperin 1972, 50). The distinct bargaining advantages or disadvantages a player enjoys and who is allowed to play are all contingent upon action channels, or normalized protocols for producing particular types of actions (Allison 1969, 1971). Action channels determine which actors are involved in the decision, their "usual points of entrance," and their particular advantages or disadvantages (Allison and Zelikow 1999, 301). For example, in China, military intelligence filters upward from the PLA to the top leadership through the Central Military Commission, a direct and insular channel. This accords the PLA exceptional influence over national security affairs. Determining action channels is critical to determining policy.

Domestic Role Contestation and Bureaucracies

After reviewing the literature on domestic role contestation (Brummer and Thies 2014; Thies and Wehner 2014; Cantir and Kaarbo 2016b), I derived a number of hypotheses with the goal of unifying insights from bureaucratic politics and role theory. The hypothesis I present builds upon two basic assumptions and deals directly with the case study. A fuller array of theoretical possibilities is further discussed in the conclusion.

Both Brummer and Thies (2014) and Cantir and Kaarbo (2012) show political parties to hold NRCs and drive domestic role contestation. They also find bureaucracies to be bearers of NRCs, but less important in role contestation.[4] Their studies focus on democratic majoritarian systems where party politics is paramount. In autocratic systems where inter-party competition is absent, bureaucracies may fill the void, becoming more pronounced actors in the domestic role contestation process. Much like political credo colors a party's preferred NRC, bureaucracies' preferred NRCs are likely to reflect their parochial interests, perceptions, goals, and the stakes attached to any given role (Allison and Zelikow 1999, 298). Therefore, I generally assume:

> **A1:** *Different bureaucracies will have different national role conceptions.*

The shape of bureaucratic domestic role contestation is determined by the rules of the game, which "stem from the Constitution, statutes, court interpretations, executive orders, conventions, and even culture" (Allison and Zelikow 1999, 302). The rules of the game are a byproduct of the governmental system. In China, top leaders—as opposed to the constitution or statutes—hold unique authority in shaping the rules of the game via the party apparatus (see next section). Therefore, I assume:

> **A2:** *National-level leaders will establish the rules of the game.*

Playing the Game

How bureaucracies go about advocating their preferred NRC depends upon a number of factors, most notably action channels and bargaining advantages.

---

[4]It is important to distinguish bureaucratic roles, as utilized in the BP literature, from NRCs. Bureaucratic roles are tied specifically to each institution and its function within the government and in relation to other institutions.

Action channels coincide with different issue types, that is, national security, foreign affairs, economic policy, and so on, and determine who has what bargaining advantages. Bargaining advantages include access to decision-making bodies; control over information and resources; factional allegiances; agenda-setting ability; the ability to influence other agencies' objectives; and personal persuasiveness (Allison and Zelikow 1999, 300). Alter and audience cues are also potential bargaining advantages. As Breuning (2013) argues, "role entrepreneurs" must frame an NRC in ways enticing to the citizenry and build coalitions with other domestic political actors to successfully introduce a new NRC. Capitalizing on cues is one means of framing an NRC as desirable. Bureaucratic "role entrepreneurs" may try to utilize cues as a bargaining advantage if those cues reinforce the bureaucracy's preferred NRC. Conversely, cues can also reject a bureaucracy's preferred NRC, in which case they would be inclined to ignore or suppress the cues.

In every government certain bureaucracies usually wield more power than others. This may be due to historical factors, domestic political factors, or the action channel associated with a policy area inheres one bureaucracy with more authority. Thus, a "predominant leader" (Hermann et al. 2001 quoted by Brummer and Thies 2014, 7) may be able to "capture" the center and force their preferred NRC into being selected. Even if unable to capture the center, a dominant agency may be able to negate the effects of unfavorable alter cues, frame internal debates, and limit a weaker agency's voice. Conversely, it may be that no agency commands significant bargaining advantages either via cues or internal clout. Under these circumstances the center will maintain prevailing control over the foreign policy process and finesse an outcome either by selecting an NRC or by taking measures to resolve role conflict (Cantir and Kaarbo 2016a, 174–92). Alter cues combine with an agency's internal power to generate a composite bargaining advantage. Therefore, I hypothesize:

> **H1:** *If alter cues reject a dominant bureaucracy's preferred NRC, then bureaucratic politicking will ensue and the center will select an NRC for the country (most likely the dominant bureaucracy's preferred NRC).*

At each step in the process many intervening hypotheses exist that can condition the outcome. Figure 1 charts the scenarios and outcomes derived from interaction between alter cues and a bureaucracy's bargaining advantages. I focus on hypothesis pertinent to the case study and discuss other possibilities in greater detail in the conclusion.[5]

Role Conflict and Resolution

Role conflict often precedes selection and enactment. Students of bureaucratic politics will not find this surprising. The BP paradigm rests on the proposition that government action is "not chosen as a solution to a problem but rather result[s] from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unequal influence" (Allison and Zelikow 1999, 294). The FPA literature also recognizes role conflict as a norm rather than an anomaly (Brummer and Thies 2014, 7). I intend to explore the empirical manifestations of role conflict and its resolution. On the theoretical front, Sarbin and Allen (1968, 540–44) and Stryker and Statham (1985, 336–39) survey the strategies for resolving role conflict. They list four strategies: instrumental acts and rituals, attention deployment, change in belief system, and no or failed adaptation.

---

[5]I also merge the alter and audience into one observable entity, hereafter referred to as the alter or other. Differentiating them adds little value, as the audience has an insignificant role in the case study.
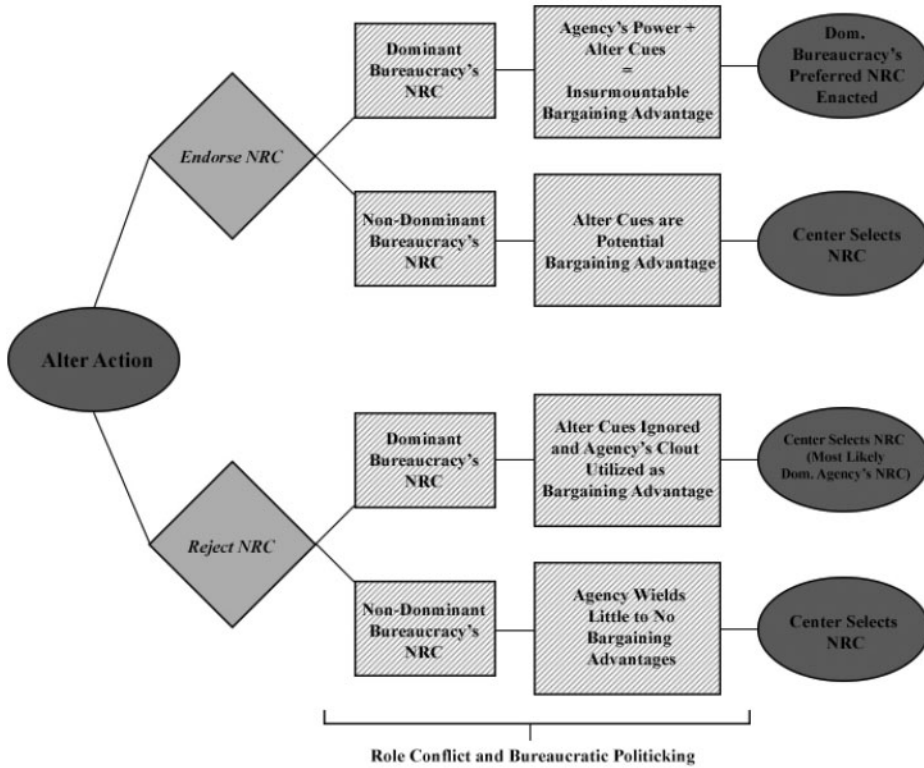
Figure 1. Conceptualizing bureaucratic role theory outcomes

Instrumental acts and rituals are actions taken by the ego to alter the external world so that a preferred role becomes achievable without inducing strain. Examples of this include merging roles into a new role, segregating roles so that conflicting roles are made appropriate to different circumstances, and physically removing oneself from the strain-inducing situation. Barnett (1993) illustrates how Egypt under Sadat alleviated the conflicting expectations of the "pan-Arabism" and "sovereign state" roles by focusing on each role's compatible expectations, ignoring incompatible ones, and ultimately merging the two roles into a new one.

Attention deployment, in contrast to instrumental acts, is a technique aimed at altering the inputs of the actor to alleviate role strain. The most common form of attention deployment is compartmentalization in which the actor ignores one of the incompatible roles in an otherwise conflict-inducing situation. In the case below, China's initial attempt to resolve conflict between the active independent role and defender of national interest role in the South China Sea centered on compartmentalizing the former to private debates while publicly espousing the latter.

Change in belief system occurs when an actor reinterprets one or more of the roles inducing cognitive strain. Reinterpretation may include altering role expectations; determining the "right of significant others to require the behavior (legitimacy of expectations)" (Sarbin and Allen 1968, 543); predicting the likelihood and nature of the consequences of role enactment; and prioritizing the role. Thies (2013) identifies multiple cases where the United States and Israel altered their role expectations to remove inconsistencies from their role sets. Compared with other resolution strategies, change in belief system requires less expenditure of energy.

No or failed adaptation may result when an actor chooses not to resolve role conflict or its attempts are unsuccessful. While individuals would suffer greatly from unresolved cognitive strain, governments may persist in such states for far longer or altogether ignore strain if they are powerful enough (Brummer and Thies 2014, 8). If powerful governmental actors believe protracted role strain may make the enactment of their preferred NRC more likely in the long term, they may impede role resolution strategies.

Chinese Foreign Policymaking in the Reform Era

China's governance structure is a complex grid that runs vertically and horizontally. Vertically, there are three functional systems: the party, the state, and the military. The three functional systems are cross-hatched horizontally at different levels of territorial administration: national, provincial, special districts, county, townships, and villages. As an authoritarian system, power in China flows downward from the top and does so exclusively through the party apparatus (Lampton 2014, 84). The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is not distinct from the other two parallel functional systems. Rather, the state, military, and territorial districts are subsumed within the all-encompassing party. The party wields control through the power of appointment—all promotions and positions are determined at the behest of the CCP (Lampton 2014, 85). This includes the quasi-private state-owned enterprises whose leaders are also vetted by the party.

Foreign policymaking mechanisms have remained largely unchanged over time, and so too have the norms and leadership attributes that guide foreign policy debates. The authority to make foreign policy decisions resides in the Central Committee of the CCP, with little to no authority delegated to other central or lower bodies. As Yang (1995, 91) states, "major issues are decided at the very top by party leaders or the elders who command the real power behind the scene, like Deng Xiaoping." Nonetheless, other bodies still maintain influence via "recommending power" (Hamrin and Zhao 1995, xl). Policy recommendations and implementation are primarily handled by the MFA, who may consult other relevant government organs such as the PLA (and vice versa) if an issue is interjurisdictional.

Among the norms and ethos that shape party behavior, *collective leadership* (Deng 1980) and *democratic centralism* are key. Both are misnomers. Maintaining the façade of collective leadership affords the party external legitimacy through the appearance of consensus-style decision-making. Although all Politburo members formally hold one vote, true collective leadership is seen as a source of instability, so there exists an informal hierarchy with the Supreme Leader possessing unparalleled authority, especially in the realm of foreign policy (Dittmer 2002, 22–23). *Democratic Centralism*, contrary to Western democratic ideals, creates an impetus for subordinates to obey their superiors without question and to maintain a unified stance on policy once a decision has been reached. Subordinates must creatively forge and navigate patron-client networks and use the power of their superiors to enhance their own influence. Framing one's personal or bureaucratic interests in terms of a superior's ideas is an effective method for advancing one's cause (Yan 1995, 7–9). Finally, if functional departments cannot reach a consensus on policy recommendations, then one of the Central Committee's Leading Small Groups (LSG)[6] will intervene and reconcile conflicts.

---

[6]Leading Small Groups are informal bodies that deal with different issue areas and include all the relevant policymakers whose agencies have jurisdiction or an important say in the issue area. They perform a wide range of roles, including coordination, consultation, cross-agency communication, oversight, and decision-making. See Miller (2008).

Relevant Actors

General Secretary. The general secretary of the party is selected from within the party ranks every five years and holds multiple, concurrent ranks within the party, state, and military leadership. He is the president within the state apparatus and serves as the chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC). The general secretary holds unequaled discretion over routine and daily national security. However, when it comes to major security decisions such as relations with major powers or wartime decisions, the PBSC will come to a collective decision (Sun 2013, 6–7).

Politburo Standing Committee. The PBSC acts as an official seal, formally endorsing decisions whose details are often meted out prior to meetings through a long drafting process (Wu 1995). The body is the last stop in a "process of politically legitimizing the preferences of leaders" (Wu 1995, 26). On issues of national security, the paramount leader exercises exceptional control, only bringing up for discussion issues which he "lacks full confidence in making an independent call" (Sun 2013, 7). These types of issues are usually crisis situations such as the 1999 US bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade or the 2001 EP-3 jet incident with the United States.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the ministerial level or equivalent, the MFA maintains the highest level of institutional influence in terms of foreign policy. Its main task is to implement PBSC-approved foreign policies (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015). The ministry has a direct supervisory role over nearly every issue pertaining to foreign affairs and relations with other countries[7] and wields authority by serving as a policy gatekeeper for ministerial-level bureaucracies. Lower-level bureaucracies must receive approval from the MFA prior to executing their plans for policy implementation to ensure they meet broad foreign policy prerogatives (Lu 2001). The ministry houses a number of regional divisions and topical departments, for example international arms control, bilateral and multilateral treaties, boundary and ocean affairs, external security affairs, and Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan affairs, and so forth (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015). During the period of the case study, both the Asian affairs department and the North American and Ocean affairs department held shared purview over the South China Sea issue.

People's Liberation Army. The PLA, China's umbrella military apparatus, houses the air force, missile forces, navy, and infantry (Chinese Government 2015). It has historically been guided by the Leninist principle of the "party (CCP) controlling the gun (PLA)."[8] Under the current and traditional structure, the military reports to the party through the Central Military Commission (whose chairman is generally the Party's general secretary) and then to the Politburo Standing Committee via the chairman.[9] However, there is little horizontal coordination between the heavily insular military and other foreign policy institutions that report through separate state and party conduits. Therefore, the PLA is generally seen as loyal to the party and not necessarily the state (Li 1999; Cheung 2001; Lampton 2014). The PLA officially oversees national security and sovereignty issues and holds little influence elsewhere, but may influence foreign policy through informal channels.

People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). As the naval warfare branch of the PLA, the PLAN was traditionally a riverine and littoral force with meager blue-water capabilities. As China economically modernized, this has changed, and naval modernization now ranks high on the list of security priorities (Lin 2012). There are three fleets: the North Sea Fleet based in the Yellow Sea, the East Sea Fleet based in the East China Sea, and the South Sea Fleet based in the South China Sea.

---

[7]The notable exceptions are Cuba and North Korea, where the CCP International Department has important oversight authority.

[8]The exception to this is the Cultural Revolution, when strong military factionalism dominated party politics.

[9]For more on the CMC, see Li (2002).

China's Role in the South Sea (1980-89)

By the opening of the 1980s, the South China Sea territorial disputes and its five primary disputants—Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam—had experienced phases of military escalation, diplomatic détente, and intense posturing. However, the conclusion of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982 permanently altered the nature of the dispute, incentivizing claimants to place national economic interests at the fore (Fravel 2008, 288–89). Within this changing context, the PLAN began advocating an explicit role for China to adhere to: *defender of national interest.* Countries that espouse this role exhibit certain behaviors: (1) the securitization of interests; (2) a willingness to act unilaterally; (3) preference for the use of force; and (4) a reluctance to accept diplomatic compromise.[10] Contrarily, the Chinese MFA adopted a different role: *active independent.*[11] The main elements of this role include: (1) an emphasis on diplomacy to achieve independence, self-determination, and commercial and strategic interests; (2) pragmatism and conciliation; and (3) relying on force when submission is the only other option. The primary difference between *defender of national interest* and *active independent* roles is not a specific policy prescription but divergent thinking on how best to categorize certain foreign policy issues—foreign affairs or national security—to achieve desirable outcomes.[12] Therefore, each bureaucracy's preferred NRC aligned closely with its bureaucratic interests. The adoption of either NRC would bring greater functional control over the SCS disputes to its respective promoter.

Case Study

In Southeast Asia, the 1980s touched off with an ever-burgeoning interest in exploiting maritime resources, namely oil, in the South China Sea. The first time the MFA mentioned the sea's natural resources as being part of China's irrefutable sovereign claim was in 1976 (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1976). On September 27, 1979, the MFA mentioned natural resources in an official statement in the *Renmin Ribao.* Thereafter, claims to natural resources became a staple in official statements. The change coincided with China's opening up of the oil industry to foreign investment and launching of a bid to award drilling concessions in the South Sea (Qin 1997). China's rivals were also intensifying their activities in the region and outpacing China. In 1980, the Philippines expanded its holdings in the Sea to eight features, and Malaysia claimed a 200-nautical-mile Exclusive Economic Zone. Between 1980 and 1985, China responded with preliminary aerial surveys carried out by the PLAN, the establishment of the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), research operations by the Oceanographic Bureau, large-scale naval cruises carrying a multitude of military and non-military professionals alike, and a comprehensive survey of the Spratlys conducted by the South Seas Oceanic Research Bureau of the Chinese Academy

---

[10]I have formulated this role based on statements from different Chinese actors, but the role has been most consistently present in the writings of Chinese military scholars. For recent articulations of this role, see Cao (2011) and Lin (2012).

[11]Holsti (1970, 262) advances two possible constructions of the "active independent" role. The first suggests that adherents to this role implement foreign policy decisions based on narrow consideration of national interests without regard to others. The second implies greater diplomacy, with an emphasis on "independence, self-determination, possible mediation functions, and active programs to extend diplomatic and commercial relations to diverse areas of the world." I adopt the latter in this paper while including the Chinese notion of establishing "harmonious relationships" as a diplomatic tool for extending national interests. This revised role is compatible with pragmatism and conciliatory approaches to advance national interests.

[12]These roles are context-driven role conceptions. They abstract away from historical or cultural narratives of China's relations with Southeast Asia, such as the tributary roles of suzerain and vassal state (Womack 2006), to provide a logical explanation of China's behavior in the disputes.

of Sciences.[13] Despite China's growing assertiveness, between 1983 and 1987, China's rival claimants acquired three new reefs in the Spratlys while China had acquired no new territory. The MFA continued to issue protests and reiterate China's rights (Lei 1988, 205, 207; Lu 1995, 56). Within those statements, China's voice shifted toward greater assertiveness.

A press release published on April 15, 1987, stated that "the Chinese government reserves the right to recapture the rights of these islands [Paracels and Spratlys] at the appropriate time" (Lei 1988, 42). This represents a marked difference in the type of warnings issued by the Ministry. Until 1979 the Ministry's statements reiterated Chinese claims, issued "strong protests" of rivals' actions, and drafted proposals for a potential peaceful resolution, but had not threatened to defend Chinese interests (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1979a,b,c). China's strategy followed a form of soft diplomacy, where sustained engagement was tempered with constant protest, yet lacked corresponding threats. When the value of the claims was perceived to be rising because of the burgeoning oil potential in the sea, Chinese thinking on their role evolved from a willingness to discuss Chinese claims to an impetus to enforce them. These behavior traits reflect core elements of the *defender of national interest* role.

Cues from Beijing's rivals indicate a rejection of China's more assertive stance. In 1982, the Philippine government placed the South Sea higher on the political agenda; the prime minister traveled around the islands, and President Marcos mandated that the Defense Ministry increase their military presence (Ocampos-Kalfors 1983). Malaysia seized Swallow Reef and two more reefs in 1983 and 1986, respectively (Lei 1988). By the end of 1987, Vietnam also secured two new features, Barque Canada Reef and West Reef, and opened its offshore oil industry to foreign investors to improve its capacities in the Sea (Lei 1988, 204; Fravel 2008, 289). Heightened tensions on all sides signaled that China's changing role in the Sea was unacceptable.

While China spoke with one voice, debates over its role occurred in private. Multiple internal sources indicate that the MFA was committed to diplomacy with rivals via negotiations as a potential means of resolving the conflict (Shambaugh 1996, 273; Swaine 1996, 375). Although MFA statements more strongly echoed *defender of national interest* sentiments as the decade progressed, they continued to engage in bilateral diplomatic meetings with Vietnam. Thus, their actions mimicked the role they appear to have been privately vying for—*active independent*. According to Li (1999, 322), "many PLA officers…had accused the MFA as the 'sellout' ministry (*maiguo bu*) for advocating negotiations during the heated internal debates over ways to resolves the Nansha (Spratly) Islands crisis in 1988."

Domestic and foreign policy under Deng centered on economic modernization. Such reforms would require large oil inputs (Garver 1992) and rapid technological acquisition and development. In response to these needs, the leadership began promoting individuals with prior experience in technology, science, and industry. In 1979, the Deputy Director of the State Administration for Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense and PLAN Chief of Staff, Liu Huaqing, was promoted to PLA Deputy Chief of Staff and thereafter Commander of the PLAN, Member of the Communist Party Central Committee, and Vice-Chairman of the CMC.

Under Admiral Liu, the Chinese Navy reiterated the *defender* role and framed it in terms of Deng's plans for economic development. Liu carried significant political clout and utilized formal and informal channels to encourage China to take a more assertive stance in the South China Sea (Garver 1992). Between May 1983 and 1984, the PLAN carried out numerous naval voyages to the Spratly Islands. In 1985, General Secretary Hu Yaobang even attended one such mission, reaffirming

---

[13]See Yan (1987, 482); China National Bureau of Oceanography (1988, 404–5); and Breeze (1983).

the senior support for asserting China's rights (Xu 1999). The presence of such a notable Party figure on a naval mission indicates successful lobbying by Admiral Liu, as the Chinese press reported Hu was there to signal Chinese resolve to defend its interests (Zeng 1986). Liu capitalized on informal channels such as public forums and interviews to advocate for a strong Chinese presence in the sea. He also authored an editorial published on November 23, 1984, in the *PLA Daily* arguing the centrality of a modern navy to "defend our vast territorial waters and our legal maritime rights and interests" (Liu 1984).

Admiral Liu took advantage of his direct access to China's top leaders. In his memoir, he recalls how in discussions with Vice Chairman Zhao Ziyang he framed the issue as a matter of national security requiring a military response:

> I briefed him on the situation on those islands. I said that protecting the Nansha was primarily a task for the Navy…In terms of military struggle, the favorable condition was that our naval force was superior in quantity and quality. Our disadvantage was that the area was far away from our base, and this made it difficult for us to conduct air defense, furnish supplies, and defend the islands and reefs there. But these difficulties could be overcome. (Liu 2004, 101)

By the time Vietnam challenged China's position in the Spratlys in early 1988, the issue had already transitioned into a national security action channel where the military was dominant and the MFA had little to no input. Although Liu did endorse the "use of multiple tactics such as diplomatic, political, military, and economic means" to advance Chinese interests, he made clear that "in this struggle blood and death would be unavoidable" (Liu 2004, 104). In the debates, discussion of China's power balance with Vietnam appeared as a matter of operational protocol, an issue to be reported once the decision was underway (Liu 2004, 101–7). By March, Liu had effectively persuaded Zhao Ziyang and the central leadership to use force to defend China's position on Fiery Cross Reef. In doing so, China affirmed its enactment of the *defender of national interest* role.

On the surface, China's determination to execute this role despite alter and audience rejection appears to be the direct result of horizontal cohesion of NRCs. Yet, multiple sources indicate that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) served as the institutional source of the *defender* role while the MFA merely followed suit, despite internal disputes. This reveals support for assumption one. Both the PLA and MFA served as institutional repositories for different roles, each of which reflected their respective interests. Private accounts of early debates indicate that the discussion was not limited to the use of force, but also included diplomatic strategies proposed by the MFA. The lack of public records of these disagreements is consistent with the norm of *democratic centralism*, which prohibits all public dissension.

The findings also support assumption two. The center selected which actors would have a voice in policy debates and what type of information would be solicited from whom. By promoting certain individuals to higher decision-making posts, namely Admiral Liu Huaqing to Vice-Chairman of the CMC, top leadership implicitly accorded the PLAN with greater bargaining advantages. By virtue of the rules of the game and the military's political prowess as represented by Admiral Liu Huaqing, the PLAN established itself as the dominant bureaucracy in the domestic role contestation process.

Taken together, this evidence supports hypothesis one. The alter consistently rejected the *defender* role, and bureaucratic politicking ensued. One can infer that the MFA either failed to advantageously coopt these cues in internal debates, was politically outmaneuvered by the military, or, most likely, some combination of both occurred. Liu's petitioning efforts, close relationships with senior-level civilian leadership, and articulation of the *defender* role in terms of Deng's economic

vision represent a superior use of bargaining advantages. The center facilitated role conflict resolution through attention deployment and change in belief system. First, the *active independent* role was never publicized. It was further compartmentalized when debates over the issue shifted into national security-related action channels. Second, Chinese leaders determined that its neighbors had no right to delegitimize the *defender* role and began recalculating what the consequences of forcefully enacting it might be. Thus, the ultimate decision to enact the *defender* role rested with the top leaders, but the military, and especially the Navy, was crucial in introducing and promoting the role.

Conclusion

This article commenced with the intention of introducing bureaucratic politics into role theory, namely, to test the plausibility of China's bureaucracies as "role entrepreneurs" in the domestic role contestation process. The paper's findings support my main hypothesis and help flesh out how bureaucratic politicking over NRCs can occur in practice. In the 1980s, two Chinese agencies, the MFA and PLAN, competed behind closed doors to enact their preferred role. A combination of institutional strength and implicit authorization by the central leadership benefited the PLAN. However, the *defender of national interest* role faced pushback from China's littoral neighbors, leading China to forcefully enact it. The results of the study suggest that different bureaucracies within China adhered to different NRCs. Moreover, those role conceptions appear to broadly coincide with each actor's respective bureaucratic interests. Although I was not primarily concerned with this relationship, it is a possible confirmation of a key tenet of bureaucratic politics: actors' interests are informed by their respective organizational mission. The veracity of this potential relationship is a valuable path for further research.

The case only explores one possible path of the tentative bureaucratic role theory model: when alter cues reject the preferred NRC of a dominant bureaucracy. In this instance, we find that cues have little impact on the outcome and the center retains control over role selection, although it is more likely to choose the dominant agency's preferred NRC. However, there are many additional variables available for further study, including: (1) the coherence/incoherence of alter cues; (2) the coherence/incoherence of audience cues; (3) the power balance between alter/audience and ego; (4) the existence of a bureau championing a role (one bureau/no bureau); and (5) the domestic dominance of a bureau. Each variable can combine and translate into different bargaining advantages during the role contestation process.

For instance, coherent alter or audience cues may serve as a more effective bargaining advantage in cases where no bureaucracy is dominant, whereas incoherent cues may have a negligible effect or favor a certain bureaucracy if it can selectively coopt cues in support of its NRC. Power dynamics are an important intervening factor that shapes the socialization process, suggesting there should be greater efforts to integrate structural theories of IR with role theory (Thies 2013). Cues from powerful others are likely to be more influential in domestic debates, as the consequences of enacting roles hinge on the response of others in the international system. There could also be a discrepancy between cues and the NRCs championed by bureaucracies, where the other tries to socialize the ego into a role that no bureaucracy favors. Finally, there must be greater research on instances where there is greater parity between bureaucracies so that the impact of cues can be better tested. Bureaucratic role theory will benefit from future studies that explore these variables in different contexts.

The findings of this study also have a number of broader implications for the role theory literature. First, alter and audience members appear to have a smaller impact on the role location process than initially postulated in the literature. Not

only did China's alters lack the ability to effectively shape its ego conceptions, but their rejection of China's preferred role proved fruitless. As opposed to drawing on alter expectations as potential origins for roles, future researchers may find greater utility by looking to intrastate actors such as bureaucracies or other institutions and elites as role sources. Second, ambiguous or inconsistent role enactment by countries may not stem from a breakdown in the external role location process but signal discord among elites. Thus, treating the top leaders as facilitators of a broader domestic role contestation and not simply as sources of roles themselves brings role theory more closely in line with the complexities of collective foreign policy decision-making. It also reaffirms Cantir and Kaarbo's (2016a) insistence on the centrality of domestic role contestation to NRC selection. On this front, the article highlights the need for future research to further investigate horizontal role contestation among Chinese elites. The current role theory literature on China gives deference to the voice of China's civilian audience in the domestic role debate at the expense of contending voices within the government. Taken together, the case study's insights suggest that efforts to locate a state's favored role may be reduced to, depending on the action channel, examining its most dominant bureaucracy's preferences.

Beyond role theory, the article also has other theoretical implications. By bringing national role conceptions and role expectations into bureaucratic politics, we help identify a potential source and content of bureaucratic disputes. Whereas the bureaucratic politics literature often sees budget allocation or control over specific decisions as the primary content of disputes, it may be that bureaucracies are much less myopic than this in the grand scheme of their politicking. Scholars of bureaucratic politics may benefit from taking their research in a new direction, focusing on national role conceptions as opposed to bureaucratic roles as a central variable.

References

Abidguo, Ebere R. 2008. "Defender of the Faith: The Challenges of Nigeria's 2007 Presidential Election." *Politikon* 35: 223–45.

Allison, Graham. 1969. "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis." *American Political Science Review* 63: 689–718.

——. 1971. *The Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis.* Boston: Little, Brown.

Allison, Graham, and Morton Halperin. 1972. "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications." *World Politics* 24: 40–79.

Allison, Graham T., and Zelikow, Philip. 1999. Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, 2nd ed. Multiple locations: Longman.

Aras, Bülent, and Aylin Gorener. 2010. "National Role Conceptions and Foreign Policy Orientation: The Ideational Bases of the Justice and Development Party's Foreign Policy Activism in the Middle East." *Journal of Balkan and near Eastern Studies* 12: 73–92.

Aspaturian, Vernon V., ed. 1971. *Process and Power in Soviet Foreign Policy.* Boston: Little, Brown.

——. 1972. "The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex—Does It Exist?" *Journal of International Affairs* 26: 1–29.

Azrael, Jeremy R., and Chalmers Johnson, eds. 1970. *Change in Communist Systems.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Barghoorn, Frederick C. 1966. *Politics in the USSR.* Boston: Little, Brown.

Barnett, Michael. 1993. "Institutions, Roles, and Disorder: The Case of the Arab States System." *International Studies Quarterly* 37: 271–96.

Bergman, Annika. 2007. "Co-Constitution of Domestic and International Welfare Obligations: The Case of Sweden's Social Democratically Inspired Internationalism." *Cooperation and Conflict* 42: 73–99.

Bersick, Sebastian. 2016. "China and the EU: Trade and National Role Conceptions." In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by S. Harnisch, S. Bersick, and J. C. Gottwald, 226–45. New York and London: Routledge.

Biddle, Bruce J. 1986. "Recent Developments in Role Theory." *American Review of Sociology* 12: 67–92.

Breeze, Richard. 1983. "AFP Report Navy Developing Amphibious Force." Hong Kong AFP, July 10.

Breuning, Marijke. 2013. "Roles and Realities: When and Why Gatekeepers Fail to Change Foreign Policy." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 9: 307–25.

Brittingham, Michael A. 2007. "The 'Role' of Nationalism in Chinese Foreign Policy: A Reactive Model of Nationalism and Conflict." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 12: 147–66.

Brummer, Klaus, and Cameron G. Thies. 2014. "The Contested Selection of National Role Conceptions." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 11: 1–21.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew. 1967. *The Soviet Bloc, Unity and Conflict.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew, and Samuel P. Huntington. 1964. *Political Power, USA/USSR.* New York: Viking Press.

Cantir, Cristian, and Juliet Kaarbo. 2012. "Contested Roles and Domestic Politics: Reflections on Role Theory in Foreign Policy Analysis and IR Theory." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8: 5–24.

———. 2016a. "Agents in Structures: Insights from Cases of Internal Role Contestation." In *Domestic Role Contestation, Foreign Policy and International Relations*, edited by Cristian Cantir and Juliet Kaarbo, 174–92. New York and London: Routledge.

Cantir, Cristian, and Juliet Kaarbo. 2016b. *Domestic Role Contestation, Foreign Policy and International Relations.* New York and London: Routledge.

Cao, Ruichen. 2011. "Xifang daguo jueqi shijiao xia zhongguo haiquan yu haiyang da zhanlue tanxi" [Analysis of China's Sea Power and the Oceanic Grand Strategy in the Western Perspectives of a Rise of Major Power]. *Dalian haishi daxue xuebao [Journal of Dalian Maritime Affairs]* 5: 92–95.

Chafetz, Glenn, Hillel Abramson, and Suzette Grillot. 1996. "Role Theory and Foreign Policy: Belarussian and Ukrainian Compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime." *Political Psychology* 17: 727–57.

Cheung, Tai Ming. 2001. "The Influence of the Gun: China's Central Military Commission and Its Relationship with the Military, Party, and State Decision-Making Systems." In *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000*, edited by David M. Lampton, 61–90. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

China National Bureau of Oceanography. 1988. *1986 Zhongguo Haiyang nianjian [1986 China Oceanographic Almanac].* Beijing: Haiyangju [Bureau of Oceanography].

Chinese Government. 2015. "Organizations of the Central Military Commission (CMC)." Accessed May 19, 2015. http://www.gov.cn/english/2005-09/02/content_28477.htm.

Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 1976. "PRC Foreign Ministry Statement." *Renmin Ribao*, June 15.

———. 1979a. "The Letter Delivered to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's Embassy by the PRC's Foreign Ministry." *Renmin Ribao*, April 14.

———. 1979b. "A Proposal of Eight Principles on Resolving Sino-Vietnamese Relations by PRC Chief Delegate Chao Nianlong at the Second Meeting of the Sino-Vietnamese Foreign Ministers Conference." *Renmin Ribao*, April 27.

———. 1979c. "PRC Foreign Ministry Statement." *Renmin Ribao*, September 27.

———. 2015a. "Departments." Accessed May 14, 2015. http://www.gov.cn/english/2005-09/02/content_28477.htm.

———. 2015b. "Main Responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC." Accessed May 14, 2015. http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zyzz_663306/.

Deng, Xiaoping. 1980. "Dang he guojia lingdao zhidu de gaige" [The Reform of the Leadership Systems of the Party and the State]. Speech given to an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Beijing, China, August 31.

Dimant-Kass, Ilana. 1974. "The Soviet Military and Soviet Policy in the Middle East 1970–1973." *Soviet Studies* 26: 502–21.

Dittmer, Lowell. 2002. "Modernizing Chinese Informal Politics." In *The Nature of Chinese Politics: From Mao to Jiang*, edited by Jonathon Unger, 3–37. New York: M. E. Sharpe.

Duggan, Niall. 2016. "China's Changing Role in Its All-Weather Friendship with Africa." In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, 207–25. New York and London: Routledge.

Eckstein, Harry. 1975. "Case Study and Theory in Political Science." In *Strategies of Inquiry: Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 7, edited by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, 79–138. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Fleron, Frederic J., ed. 1969. *Communist Studies and the Social Sciences.* Chicago: Rand McNally.

Fravel, M. Taylor. 2008. *Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Garver, John. 1992. "China's Push through the South China Sea: The Interaction of Bureaucratic and National Interests." *China Quarterly* 132: 999–1028.

George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ghose, Gauvav, and Patrick James. 2005. "Third-Party Intervention in Ethno-Religious Conflict: Role Theory, Pakistan, and War in Kashmir, 1965." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 17: 427–45.

Halperin, Morton. 1971. "Why Bureaucrats Play Games." *Foreign Policy* 2: 70–90.

——. 1972a. "The President and the Military." *Foreign Policy* 50: 310–24.

——. 1972b. "The Decision to Deploy the ABM: Bureaucratic and Domestic Politics in the Johnson Administration." *World Politics* 25: 62–95.

——. 1974. *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.

Halperin, Morton, and Priscilla Clapp. 2006. *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.

Hamrin, Carol Lee, and Suisheng Zhao. 1995. "Introduction: Core Issues in Understanding the Decision Process." In *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders*, edited by Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao, xxi–xlviii. New York and London: M. E. Sharpe.

Harnisch, Sebastian. 2016. "China's Historical Self and Its International Role." In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, 38–58. New York and London: Routledge.

Harnisch, Sebastian, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, eds. 2016. *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order.* New York and London: Routledge.

Harnisch, Sebastian, Cornelia Frank, and Hans W. Maull, eds. 2011. *Role Theory in International Relations: Approaches and Analyses.* New York: Taylor & Francis.

Hermann, Margaret G., Preston, Thomas, Korany, Bahgat, and M. Shaw., Timothy 2001. "Who Leads Matters: The Effects of Powerful Individuals.." *International Studies Review* 3: 83–131.

Hicks, D. Bruce. 1990. "International Competition over Foreign Policy-Making: The Case of the U.S. Arms Sales to Iran." *Policy Studies Review* 9: 471–84.

Hoffman, Erik P., and Frederic J. Fleron, eds. 1971. *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy.* London: Buttersworth and Company.

Holland, Lauren. 1999. "The U.S. Decision to Launch Operation Desert Storm: A Bureaucratic Politics Analysis." *Armed Forces & Society* 25: 219–42.

Holsti, Kalevi J. 1970. "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy." *International Studies Quarterly* 14: 233–309.

Hough, Jerry F. 1977. *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hough, Jerry F., and Merle Fainsod. 1979. *How the Soviet Union Is Governed.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Huotari, Mikko. 2016. "Finding a New Role in the East Asian Financial Order." In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, 145–68. New York and London: Routledge.

Jones, Christopher M. 1999. "Trading with Saddam: Bureaucratic Roles and Competing Conceptions of National Security." In *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence*, edited by Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick, 267–85. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

——. 2001. "Roles, Politics, and the Survival of the V-22 Osprey." *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 29: 46–72.

——. 2010. "Bureaucratic Politics and Organizational Process Models." In *The International Studies Compendium*, edited by Robert A. Denemark, 151–168. London: Blackwell.

——. 2012. "Bureaucratic Politics." In *The Routledge Handbook of American Foreign Policy*, edited by Steven W. Hook and Christopher Jones, 118–131. New York: Routledge.

Kolkowicz, Roman. 1967. *Institutions in Conflict: The Soviet Military and the Communist Party.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Lampton, David M.. ed. 2001. *The Making of Chinese Foreign Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

——. 2014. *Following the Leader: Ruling China, From Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Lei, Ming, ed. 1988. *Nansha zigu shu Zhonghua [The Spratlys Are China's Since Ancient Times].* Guangzhou: Guangzhou junqu silingbu bangongshi [Guangzhou Military Region Headquarters Office].

Li, Nan. 1999. "Organizational Changes of the PLA, 1985–1997." *China Quarterly* 158: 314–49.

———. 2002. "The Central Military Commission and Military Policy in China." In *The People's Liberation Army as Organization*, edited by James C. Mulvenon and Andrew N. D. Yang, 44–45. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Liao, Ning. 2013. "Presentist Cultural Memory: Chinese Nationalism as Constraint Beijing's Foreign Policy Making." *Asian Politics & Policy* 5: 543–65.

Lieberthal, Kenneth, and David M. Lampton. 1992. *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lin, Hongyu. 2012. "Zhongguo haiyang zhanlue kunjing: chengyin yu duice" [The Difficult Conditions of Chinese Maritime Strategy: Cause and Policy]. *Xiandai guoji guanxi [Contemporary International Relations]* 8: 14–16.

Lin, Limin. 2012. "Pojie bian hai kunju shi zhongguo da zhanlue qi dai jiejue de shiji mingti" [Breaking Up the Predicament at the Maritime Borderline Is the Urgent Issue of the Century to Be Resolved]. *Xiandai guoji guanxi [Contemporary International Relations]* 8: 41–42.

Liu, Huaqing. 1984. "Naval Commander Stressed Navy's Role in National Construction." *PLA Daily*, November 23.

———. 2004. *Liu Huaqing Huiyilu [Memoirs of Liu Huaqing]*. Beijing: Jiefangjun Chubanshe [People's Liberation Army Press].

Lu, Ning. 1995. *Flashpoint Spratlys!* Singapore: Dolphin Press.

———. 2001. "The Central Leadership, Supraministry Coordination Bodies, State Council Ministries, and Party Departments." In *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000*, edited by David M. Lampton, 1–38. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Marsh, Kevin. 2014. "Obama's Surge: A Bureaucratic Politics Analysis of the Decision to Order a Troop Surge in the Afghanistan War." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10: 265–88.

Maslow, Sebastian. 2016. "China and Japan: Partner, Rival, and Enemy?" In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, 188–206. New York and London: Routledge.

Miller, Alice. 2008. "The CCP Central Committee's Leading Small Groups." *China Leadership Monitor* No. 26. Hoover Institution.

Noesselt, Nele. 2016. "China and Socialist Countries: Role Change and Role Continuity." In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, 171–87. New York and London: Routledge.

Ocampos-Kalfors, Sheilah. 1983. "Easing Towards Conflict." *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 28, 38.

Qin, Wencai. 1997. *Shiyou shiren: zai haiyang shiyou zhanxian jishi [Oil Brigade: The Record of the Battle for Offshore Oil]*. Beijing: Shiyou gongye chubanshe [Oil Industry Press].

Rosenau, James N. 1987. "Roles and Role Scenarios in Foreign Policy." In *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, edited by Stephen G. Walker, 44–65. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Sarbin, Theodore R., and Vic L. Allen. 1968. "Role Theory." In *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 2nd ed., edited by Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, 488–567. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.

Schwartz, Morton. 1975. *The Foreign Policy of the USSR: Domestic Factors*. Encino, CA: Dickinson.

Shambaugh, David. 1996. "China's Military in Transition: Politics, Professionalism, Procurement and Power Projection." *China Quarterly* 146: 265–98.

Shih, Chih-Yu. 1988. "National Role Conception as Foreign Policy Motivation: The Psychocultural Bases of Chinese Diplomacy." *Political Psychology* 9: 599–631.

———. 2012. "Assigning Role Characteristics to China: The Role State Versus the Ego State." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8: 71–91.

Shih, Chih-Yu, and Jiwu Yin. 2013. "Between Core National Interests and a Harmonious World: Reconciling Self-Role Conceptions in Chinese Foreign Policy." *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 6: 59–84.

Smith, Steve. 1984. "Policy Preferences and Bureaucratic Position: The Case of the American Hostage Rescue Mission." *International Affairs* 61: 9–25.

Spear, Joanna. 1993. "Governmental Politics and the Conventional Arms Transfer Talks." *Review of International Studies* 19: 369–84.

Stryker, Sheldon, and Anne Statham. 1985. "Symbolic Interaction and Role Theory." In *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 3rd ed., edited by Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson, 311–78. New York: Random House.

Sun, Yun. 2013. "Chinese National Security Decision-Making: Processes and Challenges." Brookings Institution Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies.

Suzuki, Shogo. 2008. "The Importance of 'Othering' in China's National Identity: Sino-Japanese Relations as a Stage of Identity Conflicts." *Pacific Review* 20: 23–47.

SWAINE, MICHAEL D. 1996. "The PLA in China's National Security Policy: Leaderships, Structures, Processes." *China Quarterly* 146: 360–93.

TANG, SHIPING. 2008. "From Offensive to Defensive Realism: A Social Evolutionary Interpretation of China's Security Strategy." In *China's Ascent: Power, Security and the Future of International Politics*, edited by Robert S. Ross and Zhu Feng, 161–62. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

TAYFUR, FATIH, AND KOREL GOYMEN. 2002. "Decision-Making in Turkish Foreign Policy: The Caspian Oil Pipeline Issue." *Middle Eastern Studies* 38: 101–22.

TEWES, HENNING. 1998. "Between Deepening and Widening: Role Conflict in Germany's Enlargement Policy." *West European Politics* 21: 117–33.

THIES, CAMERON G. 2010. "State Socialization and Structural Realism." *Security Studies* 19: 689–717.

———. 2013. *The United States, Israel, and the Search for International Order: Socializing States.* New York and London: Routledge.

———. 2016. "The US and China: Altercast Roles and Changing Power in the 20th Century." In *China's International Roles: Challenging or Supporting International Order*, edited by Sebastian Harnisch, Sebastian Bersick, and Jörn-Carsten Gottwald, 97–109. New York and London: Routledge.

THIES, CAMERON G., AND LESLIE WEHNER. 2014. "Role Theory, Narratives, and Interpretation: The Domestic Contestation of Roles." *International Studies Review* 16: 411–36.

TRISKA, JAN F., AND DAVID FINLEY. 1968. *Soviet Foreign Policy.* New York: Macmillan.

VALENTA, JIRI. 1975. "Soviet Decision-Making and the Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968." *Studies in Comparative Communism* 7: 147–73.

———. 1991. *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968: Anatomy of a Decision.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

WALKER, STEPHEN G. 1979. "National Role Conceptions and Systemic Outcomes." In *Psychological Models in International Relations*, edited by Lawrence Falkowski, 169–210. Boulder: Westview Press.

——— 1987. "National Attributes as Sources of National Role Conceptions: A Capability-Motivation Model." In *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, edited by S. G. Walker Durham, 94–103. NC: Duke University Press.

WEISS, JESSICA C. 2014. *Powerful Patriots. Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations.* New York: Oxford University Press.

WOMACK, BRANTLY. 2006. *China and Vietnam: The Politics of Asymmetry.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

WONG, YIU-CHUNG. 2005. *From Deng Xiaoping to Jiang Zemin: Two Decades of Political Reform in the People's Republic of China.* University Press of America.

WU, GUOGUANG. 1995. "'Documentary Politics': Hypotheses, Process, and Case Studies." In *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders*, edited by Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao, 24–38. New York and London: M. E. Sharpe.

XU, GE. 1999. *Tiemao gu haijiang: gongheguo haizhan shiji [Steel Anchors Consolidating Maritime Frontiers: Records of the Republic's Naval Battles].* Beijing: Haichao chubanshe [Tide Press].

YAN, GUOYU, ed. 1987. *Dangdai Zhongguo Haijun [The Modern Chinese Navy].* Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe [China Social Sciences Press].

YAN, JIAQI. 1995. "The Nature of Chinese Authoritarianism." In *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders*, edited by Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao, 3–14. New York and London: M. E. Sharpe.

YANG, GEORGE. 1995. "Mechanisms of Foreign Policy-Making and Implementation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs." In *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders*, edited by Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao, 91–100. New York and London: M. E. Sharpe.

ZAGORIA, DONALD S. 1962. *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956–1961.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

ZENG, JIANHUI. 1986. "Hu Yaobang Visits Xisha Islands Troops on New Year's." *Renmin Ribao*, January 2.

ZHANG, QINGMIN. 2006. "Bureaucratic Politics of U.S. Arm Sales to Taiwan." *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1: 231–65.